

Willful Wondering

PATRICIA BELLAN-GILLEN
DRAWINGS 2010-2016

“Disorderly Notions: Somewhere in my brain, personal narrative mixes with fairytales. Historical events intertwine with the imagined and a veil of nostalgia blurs the border between fact and fiction. Archetypal imagery moves about in the temporal lobe with cartoon characters and recent news flashes picked from the Internet join the sagas of black and white television. My drawings and mixed media works use these bits and pieces of visual history...the stones and bones of memory...to suggest a narrative and remix our stories. These disorderly notions are exploited and employed in an attempt to engage the viewer’s associative responses and to jar the forgotten memories and the senses of wonder and wondering that lay quietly below the surface.

The sounds and meanings of words move me. After years of studying cultural, dream, mythological and religious symbols, I am beginning to believe that the most important signs are the images that appear and keep pressing on one’s mind with no explanation...unexpected but oddly recognizable visions that flash across the brain when words and phrases like “phantom limb,” “history and legend,” “earth centered universe” or “separation of church and state” are heard...or the nascent compositions that appear while revisiting the pages of vintage Mad Magazines or hearing the refrain “DA-DA...DA-DA-DA-DA” from the old Rocky and Bullwinkel Show. Honoring these puzzling visages maps the direction that I have begun to follow. This body of work combines ideas and imagery generated through study and research with ideas and imagery that are felt, intuitive and enigmatic.

The work also celebrates a return to the fundamental act of drawing.

I welcome provocation and puzzles. I would like my work to confront the viewer simultaneously with beauty and awkwardness and to mediate grace with humor. I want to achieve a weird elegance.

I place great trust in the viewer.”

— Patricia Bellan-Gillen

“A WORLD OF DISORDERLY NOTIONS, PICKED OUT OF HIS BOOKS, CROWDED INTO HIS IMAGINATION.” — Miguel de Cervantes

Patricia Bellan-Gillen is represented by **JAMES GALLERY** in Pittsburgh.