

MELISSA DEAN : artist statement

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I am fascinated with our oversaturated visual culture, fundamentally driven by consumerism. With this idea, I utilize consumer objects as a surrogate for this circumstance. I work with the represented object: the view presented to the consumer in the mail order catalog and store flyer. The images are representations of representations, and therefore no longer any kind of physical object, but the idea of and the desire for the object. For me, these works are both a celebration and criticism of a postmodern consumerist visuality. A concurrent theme in the work is the idea of everyday surveillance: not necessarily the surveillance performed by those in power, but the pedestrian, panoptic scrutiny in which everyone participates daily. Whether in a consumerist or a social context, we are always observing and comparing – ourselves to others, others to others, ourselves to objects, objects to objects – in order to construct a conception of self through constant examination.