

**Stephen D'Onofrio: Artist Statement**

This new body of work revisits a continued idea that I have drawn from throughout my practice. With these new paintings, I am once again looking at centuries-old, mostly European still lifes-- more specifically focusing on the produce that was/is a prevailing subject matter in the genre. There is something captivating about the vapid subject matter's ability to stay relevant throughout history. I not only find these works to be technically stunning but also think there is something about the subject matter's perseverance over time that is existentially reassuring. I find the transition of this subject, from the hands of old master painters to mass-produced prints, patterns, and art, delightfully fascinating. As humans, we are just as interested in reproducing images of produce as we always have been, if not more. Whether it's tiny fruits printed on textiles for clothing, clip art fruits used in countless surface design applications, cheap mass-produced still life home decor, or, artists like myself who continue to explore this subject matter in today's context. This new body of work aims to pay homage to the greatness of the produce paintings of the past while highlighting the new forms they have taken today.