

## MEL RAMOS

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**Born:** 1935, Sacramento, CA  
Lives and works in Oakland, CA and Spain

### **Education:**

1958 MA, Sacramento State College  
1957 BA, Sacramento State College  
1954-55 Sacramento Junior College  
1955-56 San Jose State College

### **Overview:**

In 1954 Ramos began studying art and art history at Sacramento Junior College and California State University under Wayne Thiebaud. In 1958 he took up a teaching post at Elk Grove High School and at California State University. The subjects of his own works of the early sixties are taken from the world of comic books.

After participating in the exhibition "Pop Goes the East" at the Contemporary Art Museum in Houston in 1963, the artist established himself as one of the main representatives of Pop Art beside Warhol, Lichtenstein and Rosenquist with the first exhibition of his own at Bianchini Gallery in New York the following year.

In the mid-sixties, Mel Ramos turned to the depiction of single female figures. Pin-up girls from advertisements and magazines are draped over painted commercial articles to parody the trivial and glamorous gestures of the advertising industry. A solo exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art in San Francisco took place in 1967. In 1972, the artist presented his work at the Utah Museum of Fine Arts in Salt Lake City, followed by the exhibition "Pop Art" at the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York in 1974. In 1977 Ramos had a retrospective at the Oakland Museum of California.

In 1980 he took up a chair at California State University in Hayward. At this point the painter became interested in self-portraits and landscape painting. In 1986 Ramos received the National Endowment for the Arts Visual Artists Fellowship Grant. In that year he participated in an exchange of scholarship holders between America and France, followed by travels to Sicily and Tenerife in 1987 and 1991. Since 1992 the artist has lived and worked in California and Spain. Ramos' comments about his art are succinct: " I make sure that my pictures are not too erotic and that they always have a trace of humor. I make sure they are 'in good taste.' Either you understand it or not."

### **Selected Exhibitions:**

- 2014      *Everybody Loves a Hero!*, Scott Richards Contemporary Art, San Francisco  
2010      *Sweet Tooth*, Scott Richards Contemporary Art, San Francisco, CA  
2004-05   *Solo Exhibition*, Robert Sanderson Modern and Contemporary Art,  
            London, UK  
2001      *Pop Art: US/UK Connections*, Menil Foundation, Houston, TX  
1999-00   *Mel Ramos*, Galleria Civica di Modena, Palazzina Dei Giardini Corso  
            Canalgrande, Modena, Italy  
1996      *Attention to Detail (Realism in All Forms)*, Louis K. Meisel Gallery,  
            New York, NY  
1990      *California A To Z and Return*, The Butler Institute of American Art,  
            Youngstown, OH  
1985-87   *American Realism: Twentieth-Century Drawings and Watercolors from the  
            Glenn C. Janss Collection*, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, CA  
1985      *Art in the San Francisco Bay Area 1945-1980*, Oakland Museum of  
            California, Oakland, CA  
1983-84   *Twenty-Five Years of the Artists Contemporary Gallery*, Crocker Art  
            Museum, Sacramento, CA  
1979      *Selections from the Frederick Weisman Collection of California Art*,  
            Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, DC  
1978      *Art About Art*, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY  
1977      *Retrospective*, Oakland Museum of California, Oakland, CA  
1976      *Painting and Sculpture in California: The Modern Era*, San Francisco  
            Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco, CA  
1974      *Pop Art*, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY  
1970      *Pop Prints*, Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY  
1969      *Human Concerns*, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY  
1967      *Solo Exhibition*, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco, CA  
            *Pop Art*, Galleria del Leone, Venice, Italy  
1964      *Solo Exhibition*, Bianchini Gallery, New York, NY  
1963      *Pop Goes the Easel*, Contemporary Art Museum, Houston, TX

### **Selected Public Collections:**

Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, NY  
Arkansas Arts Center, Little Rock  
Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto, Canada  
Crocker Art Museum, Sacramento, CA  
Franklin House Collection, San Francisco, CA  
The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, NY  
Indianapolis Museum of Art, IN  
Kunsthhaus Darmstadt, Germany  
Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, IL  
Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY  
Museum Moderner Kunst, Vienna, Austria  
National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC  
Neue Galerie Stadt Aachen, Germany

Plattsburgh State Museum Art Museum, Plattsburgh, PA  
 Oakland Museum of California, CA  
 The Rose Art Museum, Brandeis University, Waltham, MA  
 St. Mary's College of Maryland, Boyden Gallery, St. Mary's City, MD  
 Samuel Dorsky Museum of Art, State University of New York, New Paltz  
 San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, CA  
 Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC  
 Seattle Art Museum, WA  
 The Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY

### **Selected Books:**

- 1965 Rublowsky, John. Pop Art, Basic Books, New York  
 1966 Sedgwick, John. Understanding Modern Art, Random House, New York  
 1966 Lippard, Lucy. Pop Art, Praeger-Random House, New York  
 1969 Arnason, H.H. History of Modern Art, Prentice Hall-Abrams, New York, pp.567, 601, 1064  
 1969 Compton, Michael. Pop Art, Hamlyn House, Middlesex, England  
 1969 Russell, John and Suzi Gablik. Pop Art Redefined, Praeger Publishers, New York  
 1972 Hunter, Sam. American Art of the 20th Century, Harry N. Abrams Inc., New York,  
 1972 Sternberg, Jacques. Kitsch, Academy Editions, London, England  
 1974 Gerdts, William. The Great American Nude, Praeger Publishers, New York  
 1974 Plagens, Peter. Sunshine Muse. Praeger Publishers, New York  
 1974 Wilson, Simon. Pop, Thames & Hudson, Ltd., London, England  
 1975 Battcock, Gregory. Super Realism, E.P. Dutton Co., New York  
 1975 Claridge, Elizabeth. The Girls of Mel Ramos, Playboy Press, Chicago, IL  
 1975 Pierre, Jose. An Illustrated Dictionary of Pop Art, Eyre Methuen, London, England, pp.37, 126  
 1977 Adams, Hugh. Art of the Sixties, Phaidon Press, Ltd., Oxford, England, pp.72-73  
 1980 Field, D.M. The Nude In Art, Hamlyn Publishing Group, London, England, pp.122-126  
 1981 Selz, Peter. Art in our Times, Harry N. Abrams, Inc., New York  
 1980 Albright, Thomas. Art in the San Francisco Bay Area 1945-1980, University of California Press, Berkeley  
 1985 Martin, Alvin. American Realism - 20th Century Drawings and Watercolors [From the Glenn C. Janss Collection], San Francisco Museum of Modern Art in Association with Harry N. Abrams, Inc., New York, pp.109 Illustration, 149, 222  
 1986 Arnason, H.H. History of Modern Art, [third edition], Harry N. Abrams, Inc., New York, pp.448, 471  
 1988 Ward, John L. American Realist Paintings 1945-1980, UMI Research Press, Ann Arbor, MI, p.149, 277, 278  
 2004 Kuspit, Donald. Mel Ramos, Pop Art Fantasies: The Complete Paintings, Watson-Guptill Publications, New York  
 2010 Turner, Cherie Louise, Sweet Tooth, Scott Richards Contemporary Art, San Francisco, CA. Catalog with color reproduction