

# Melanie Daniel

## Late Bloomers

May 17 - June 23, 2018



**Asya Geisberg Gallery** is pleased to present “Late Bloomers”, the fourth solo exhibition of **Melanie Daniel**. With crowded narrative paintings in psychedelic teals and pinks, and papier-mâché sculptures of fantastical plants, the artist introduces us to a desolate sun-drenched paradise in the near future, where earnest characters try to reconnect with nature and rebuild their post-cataclysm world. Wistfully Luddite or charmingly naïve, these mostly young homesteaders go through digital detox, keep bees, garden, and perform nonsensical or futile functions, absurd yet poignantly necessary. The well-intentioned folk seem imbued with an overwrought sense of urgency that echoes our current exhaustion and malaise. And yet, Daniel celebrates their attempted resistance with lucid figuration, manically vibrating pattern, and giddy coloration with acidic overtones, belying the pathos underneath.

An androgynous figure sells artisanal ice cream while nearby a corporate ice cream truck burns, symbolic of an insurgent or guerilla activism, ineffectual and oddly humorous. A man meditates, surrounded by an elaborate water-recycling system, while beekeepers resemble space explorers on Mars. Whether reviving crafts or engaging with wildlife, the earnest youths populating Daniel’s paintings show the pervading duality of a disillusioned post-9-11 generation, rife with both utopian and dystopian narratives.

A series of sculptures with a DIY aesthetic suggests bizarre specimens collected from a greenhouse gone awry. Constructed by the denizens of this futurist world, they could also be an attempt at replicating or reviving the extinct, in a Mad Max post-apocalyptic sense of necessity. Has the environment become so wrecked that they rely on artificial plants and flowers? Faced with meager resources, these people recycle or invent what they can’t find – like the cow constructed by a young carpenter. In one painting, worshippers face enclosed pods of clustered animals and plants, suggesting a cult of desperate or confused souls. In Daniel’s imagination, we are never sure of what exactly is accomplished through these efforts, but her insistent style lends itself to their idealism.

*After studies in Canada, Melanie Daniel completed her BFA and MFA at Bezalel Academy, Israel. Daniel has had numerous exhibitions in Israel and abroad, including solo exhibitions at the Tel Aviv Museum of Art, Israel, Chelouche Gallery, Tel Aviv, Ashod Museum of Art, Israel, Shulamit Gallery, Los Angeles, Kelowna Art Gallery, BC, and Noga Gallery of Contemporary Art, Tel Aviv, among others. Her work is included in collections such as the Tel Aviv Museum of Art, Harvard Business School, and the Brandes Family Art Collection. She has received press in publications such as Newsweek, Frieze, Haaretz, CBC/ Radio Canada, The Huffington Post, Beautiful Decay, and the Artists Magazine. Daniel is the recipient of a Pollock-Krasner Foundation Grant, a New York Foundation for the Arts Grant, the 2009 Rappaport Prize for a Young Israeli Painter, a Creative Capital Grant, and the NARS Foundation Residency in New York City. She is currently the Padnos Distinguished Artist-in-Residence at Grand Valley State University, MI.*



*Guerilla Ice, 2018  
Oil on canvas, 48" x 48"*



*DIY Ranch, 2018  
Oil on canvas, 24" x 19"*