

Burton Morris



Building on the legacy of Pop Art masters of the 1960's-70's, artist Burton Morris presents his personal world of popular American icons that put a delightful spin on everyday objects and motifs. In his post-Pop style, Morris boldly projects an enticing mood of happiness, high energy and fun.

Morris' forbears were Andy Warhol, Roy Lichtenstein, Tom Wesselmann and Red Grooms. Morris imbues his art with his own impeccable style and optimism.

The artist's distinctive sword-like slashes suggesting shards of energy come from his study of woodcut prints. Two of his heroes are Albrecht Durer and Rockwell Kent. Durer used similar hatching in the sixteenth century whilst Twentieth century American artist Rockwell Kent illustrated books and designed bookplates with such lines.

Burton Morris was born in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania in 1964. Like the late Pop artist Keith Haring, Morris felt an early attraction to Belgian artist Pierre Alechinsky's paintings that resemble fantastic comic strips. Both artists saw the Belgian's large exhibition in the International Series at the Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh, in 1977. Morris earned his bachelor of fine arts degree at Carnegie Mellon University in 1986. Upon graduating, Morris worked in advertising as an art director, creating television commercials. It was then that he began developing his post-Pop drawings.

The artist established the Burton Morris Studios in 1990. That year he began making his small post-Pop icons more impressive by enlarging them. He also tightened his brushwork into his present precise style. He would choose one subject per composition to create what he calls "an instant happening" for the viewer. In his paintings, Morris energizes every day images with his unique style. Subjects such as a steaming coffee cup, a swirling martini and a dancing popcorn box all take on a new life under his paintbrush.

Burton's first major opportunity was to be taken on by NBC to produce artwork for the hit US sitcom, "Friends", something Burton continued to do for the full 10 year run of the show. This proved to be a stepping stone to even greater things. Morris has created signature images for the 76th annual Academy Awards, the 38th Montreux Jazz Festival, The Andre Agassi Foundation and the 2006 Major League Baseball All-Star Game. He was selected by the International Olympic Committee to create 35 original paintings regarding the spirit of the Olympic Games. The International Olympic Museum hosted a one-man exhibition in Lausanne, Switzerland, during the 2004 Summer Olympic Games in Athens, Greece. The same exhibition later toured in New York in 2011 and in Singapore at ION Orchard Gallery in 2012. More recently, Pennsylvania's largest history museum, the Heinz History Center, which is an affiliate of the Smithsonian Institution, presented a 20 year retrospect of Burton Morris' work from September 2013 to May 2014.

Burton Morris original artworks are displayed internationally in galleries and museums, and are featured in the collections of The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences and The Jimmy Carter Center amongst many others. One-man exhibitions include Sotheby's of Amsterdam and the Hickory Museum of Art. Morris' artwork has been exhibited in 20 cities, 8 different countries across 3 different continents.

Celebrity owners of Morris' work include Oprah Winfrey, Roy Disney, Stan Lee, Brad Pitt, Jennifer Aniston, Keanu Reeves, Donald Trump, Jay Leno and President Sarkozy of France. Among corporate owners, Morris can include the likes of Chanel, Microsoft, Sony, Apple, Rolex, Samsung, Kellogg's, Heinz, Absolut Vodka and Coca Cola.

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