



**BRETT NEAL, b. 1962**



Brett Neal is a British artist who has been creating a diverse body of work for over 30 years. Notably his achievements over the years include a host of portraits of the great and good. Overwhelmingly the artist is known for his love of perfection and simplicity.

Neal studied formally in the UK at Eastborne College, followed by various apprenticeships in wood sculpting and gilding, painting restoration under Antonio di Medido, marble sculpture in Italy, etching and stained glass in France. Throughout his career, he has had the opportunity to work under and alongside well-known modern and contemporary artists including David Hockney, Francis Bacon and Gilbert and George.

For many years starting in 1985, Neal moved between France and the US creating commissioned portraits in both oil and marble for esteemed patrons. He eventually opened a gallery and workshop in Vence, France with a large staff assisting in the production and sales of his art. Despite his success, Neal grew disillusioned with the art world and felt it all became too bureaucratic. He explains, "I felt I was no longer an artist – I was running a business. So I went back to being what I am best at, with paint and a brush." In 2006, Neal moved to Thailand where he continues to work today.

Brett Neal isn't at all impressed by the concept of art as something pretentious. Adhering to his ideology, much of Neal's recent work is a spin on that by the great masters of modern world. Within a context that doesn't seem to make sense, he incorporates famous images of Picasso, Dubuffet, Lichtenstein and Matisse into his paintings and sculptures, teasing viewers out of their comfort zone and bringing forth questions like 'what makes sense?' and 'who defines it?'

Channeling the great pop artists of the 20th century, Neal's latest 'Ultramixer' series features humorous juxtapositions, combining fine art imagery with a jumble of vintage cartoons, advertising and memorabilia; reminding us not to take art too seriously.