

From the Private Collection of Philip Slein

Dragon, Crab and Turtle

22 May through August 2021

Dragon, Crab, and Turtle is pleased to present a fascinating, dense and soul-revealing exhibition created by artist, art dealer and collector extraordinaire Philip Slein. Here in St. Louis and over the course of several decades, Slein has amassed hundreds of paintings, sculptures, pop culture paraphernalia, earthenwares, signage, carpets, books, stereo equipment, architectural elements and various miscellanea from around the globe. His incredible museum-quality stuff at times feels familiar: talking with him can sometimes make you think you are catching up with a long lost relative but other times his knowledge is so esoteric that you feel like you are speaking with an old world antiquities dealer in some exotic land where you understand nothing of the language or culture. The many objects on display represent only a small fraction of Slein's total collections (Dragon, Crab and Turtle is exhibiting an estimated 15% of the essence of his things)—and each individual piece attests to Slein's great respect, interest and knowledge behind the work of artisans, craftsmen, artists and all types of creative workers. Even though he does not teach world art history and hasn't traveled much, he has learned so much behind each of the objects that he has become a preeminent connoisseur in fields related to global historical and material culture. He has therefore "traveled" extensively through his collection and thanks to his collection; he would surely make a fascinating community lecturer or university lecturer in anything related to his fields of interest. Slein and his stuff deserve a serious platform to showcase the captivating level of material culture still potentially available in this lesser known American city, and we are thrilled to be able to exhibit his collections and introduce them to a wider audience. In sum, this show is an elixir—an essential tonic in the face of mass-produced and mass-consumed 21st-century Walmart-esque anonymousness that we are forced to face daily. Slein will be at the exhibit to explain his pieces and answer any questions. Some of his own paintings and sculptures are also part of the show.

In case you are from St. Louis and were wondering about his high school, Philip Slein (b. 1968) went to Ladue. He then earned his MFA from Washington University in St. Louis. After teaching line drawing for several years he opened an art gallery while steadily collecting artworks and objects, creating private large-scale installations within his residences. Slein also specializes in satirical and amusing political cartoon drawings and paintings. He lives and works between St. Louis City and St. Louis County, Missouri.

From the Private Collection of Philip Slein opens Saturday 22 May 2021 at Dragon, Crab and Turtle (2814 Locust Street, STLMO) and will be on view Saturdays and by appointment throughout the summer. For news and gallery updates, please follow our Instagram account @dragoncrabturtle. Please e-mail dragoncrabandturtle@gmail.com for further information.