

[home](#)



Search

[Culture](#)

...S IN THE GAME, ARTIST BILLY SULLIVAN IS “STILL, LOOKING”

[Entertainment](#)

[Design](#)

An incredible compendium of paintings and photographs from the hand of a New York original.

[Music](#)

[Style](#)



by [Miss Rosen](#) Jun 8th, 2016



Photo: Christian Smoking.

Billy Sullivan is Brooklyn born and bred, a True Yorker, if you will. He came up in the 1960s, at a time when the underground walked the street. The High School of Art and Design had just opened and Sullivan and Jackie Curtis were classmates. It was destiny. In 1969, the fringe had centered itself in New York City.

Also: [Books](#) | [Vik Muniz](#)

Like any True Yorker, Sullivan never left. He wore see-through bikini underpants to his interview with the draft board and was promptly excused from service in Vietnam. He failed out of Parsons School of Design then went to the School of Visual Arts on Scholarship. He started going to places like Arthur, the first non-membership club to put a velvet rope and the door, welcoming the likes of Rudolph Nureyev, Tennessee Williams, and Leonard Bernstein.



Cookie, 2016

By the early 1970s, Sullivan was in the swing of things, becoming a part of the underground, art, and fashion scenes, taking photographs that would become templates for his work in oils and pastels, as well as multi-part slideshow installations. Sullivan's world is a sensuous affair, a space where beauty is a

current, like electricity in the air. Taken as a whole, his work captures the *joie de vivre* at the turn of the twenty-first century, an enchanted world of art, freedom and possibility.

A selection of Sullivan's works made over the past forty years has been collected for *Still, Looking. Works 1969 – 2016* (Edition Patrick Frey). Taken as a whole, the effect is like opening a treasure chest. Gem after gem pour forth with every turn of the page, each work a study of the sheer joy of existence, of the majesty of peace, pleasure, and exuberance. The book feels like a personal album of stories unspoken but understood, of a million encounters in the dark and the light.



Jackie Curtis, 1969

Still, Looking is just this: a visual journey that encapsulates the artist as witness, telling the story he observes when he's in his element. His was a story straight out of *New York* magazine, bold face names in the place to be, revealing a side of city life that could best be described as Bohemian Idyll. Sullivan shows his friends, family, lovers and muses, as well as the worlds and demimondes in which they move: clubs, ateliers, rumpled hotel rooms and elegant beach houses. There's a languor and a luxury that pervades every page, the luscious sense of being in the thick of things, as both participant and observer, the exchange of energies sparkling like electricity.

Still, Looking. Works 1969 – 2016 is a pleasure to have and to hold, each page sparkling and rippling as beauty unfolds. The temporal nature of the photographs upon which he bases his work renders Sullivan's paintings with a fresh, timeless sensibility. They do what art does best: defy the passage of time, offering eternal life to their subjects.



Jane Carm, 1971

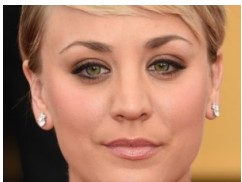
All artworks: © Billy Sullivan, courtesy of Edition Patrick Frey, 2016.

Miss Rosen is a New York-based writer, curator, and brand strategist. There is nothing she adores so much as photography and books. A small part of her wishes she had a proper library, like in the game of Clue. Then she could blaze and write soliloquies to her in and out of print loves.

[SHARE](#)
[TWEET](#)

[Billy Sullivan](#)[Edition Patrick Frey](#)[Still Looking](#)

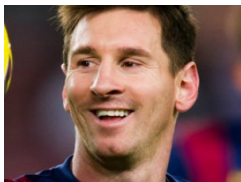
OTHER STORIES



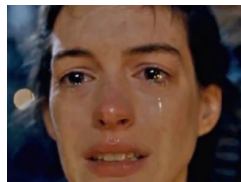
Sketchy Things Everyone Just Ignores About Kaley Cuoco



World's Most Unusual Yacht Could Cost \$250M To Build



Messi Reportedly Outbids Ronaldo for World's Most Expensive Car



How Anne Hathaway Became The Most Hated Celeb In Hollywood

RELATED ARTICLES