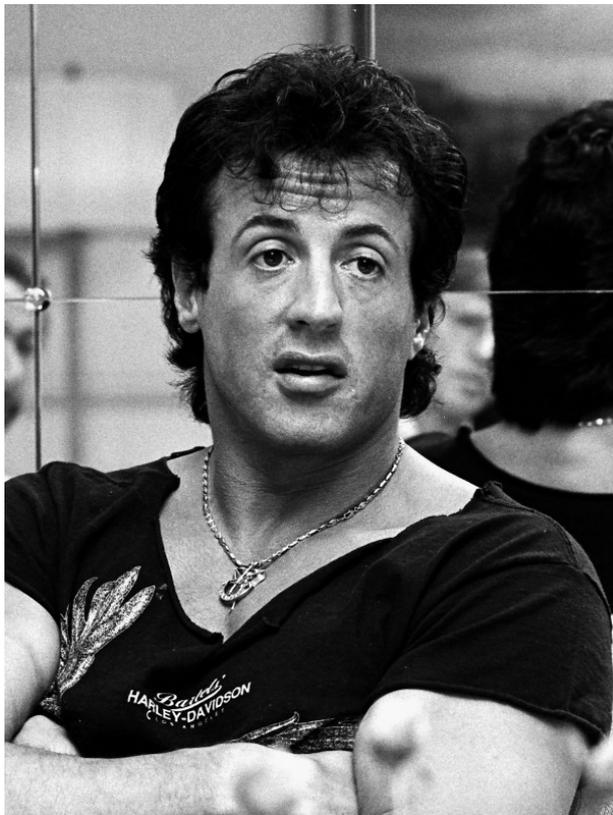


Sylvester Stallone Honored With Medallion and Museum Show on French Riviera

Cait Munro, Wednesday, May 13, 2015

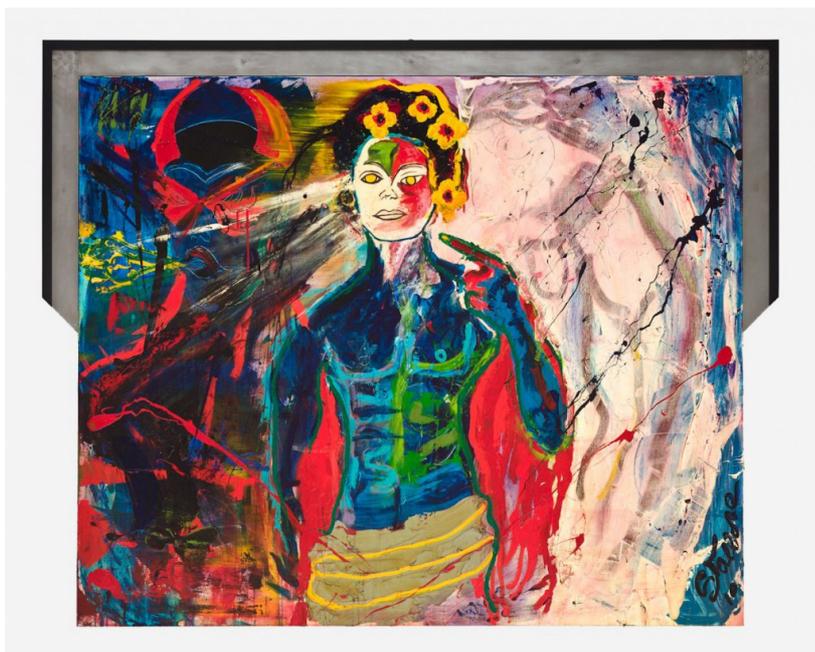


Sylvester Stallone in 1988.
Photo: Wikipedia.

Sylvester Stallone, the iconic movie star of *Rocky* fame, is the latest celebrity to create a buzz by picking up a paintbrush (see [We Rank 16 Celebrities Aspiring to Art World Recognition—Who Will Win?](#)). For his artistic inclinations, he's earned a retrospective titled "Real Love: Paintings 1975–2015" at Nice's [Musée d'Art Moderne et d'Art](#)

Contemporaine. During the show's VIP-only opening dinner and reception on May 16, Stallone—or "Sly," as he's affectionately called by his dealers at Galerie Gmurzynska—will also receive a medallion of the city of Nice, to be presented by mayor Christian Estrosi.

Many of Stallone's paintings are inspired by his films, while others reference fellow celebrities, ensuring that they will probably be a hit with pop culture-savvy museumgoers, but could be panned by critics bored of the art world/celebrity spectacle (see San Francisco Art Institute Professor Critiques Paintings by James Franco, Johnny Depp, and Others). Michael Jackson, James Dean, and Stallone's ex, Danish model and actress Brigitte Nielsen, all make cameos in the show—on the canvas, of course.



Sylvester Stallone, *Untitled (Michael Jackson)* (2010).

"I always felt that Michael Jackson was one of the great dichotomies," Stallone said in a 2011 interview with Galerie Gmurzynska's Mathias Rastorfer (see Mathias Rastorfer on the Arrogant Naivté of Today's Art World and the Future of Galleries and Fairs). "[He was] an illusionist even more than a singer...he created a character that wasn't even him anymore...There was an evil side...a theatrical evil."

Prior to finding success as an actor, Stallone dreamed of a career as a visual artist, and the household name he has created for himself in Hollywood has finally led to success in selling his art.



Sylvester Stallone, *Family Ties* (2013).

"There is a public face and a private face. And I feel the same way about art. It's a collage of emotions. And when you can transfer that onto the canvas, it's an amazing feeling," he said in a press release.

In his 1975 painting *Finding Rocky*, which, bizarrely, predates the 1976 release of the film, Stallone "effectually previsions the challenges of fame and the increasing blurring of the boundaries separating his assertive screen identities from his actual personhood in the public eye," according to a press release.

Many of Stallone's recent works are larger, moodier, and more abstract, with large swaths of black and white splashed with his favorite color, blood red. Inspired by Abstract Expressionist greats, "Real Love" will be their first time on public display.