

Set designer of 'Pee-wee's Playhouse' goes to 'Grey Lagoons' in new Dallas show

Cartoonist and painter Gary Panter celebrates his return to Texas with the solo exhibition at Keijsers Koning gallery.



By **Kendall Morgan**

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Gary Panter's "Crow," 2025. Black ink on paper. 7 × 8.5 inches.

KEIJSERS KONING

The Dallas Morning News

From underground punk comics to fine gallery walls, Gary Panter's edgy imagery has made quite a mark on pop culture. Perhaps best known for his punk-rock everyman character Jimbo and his Emmy-winning set design for *Pee-wee's Playhouse*, Panter is as prolific as ever at age 75. And his three new series on view in the solo "Grey Lagoons" exhibit at Keijzers Koning gallery have the same avant-garde appeal as the Roxy Music song from which it draws its name.



Gary Panter's "Mazinger," 2025. Colored ink on paper. 8.5 x 11 inches.

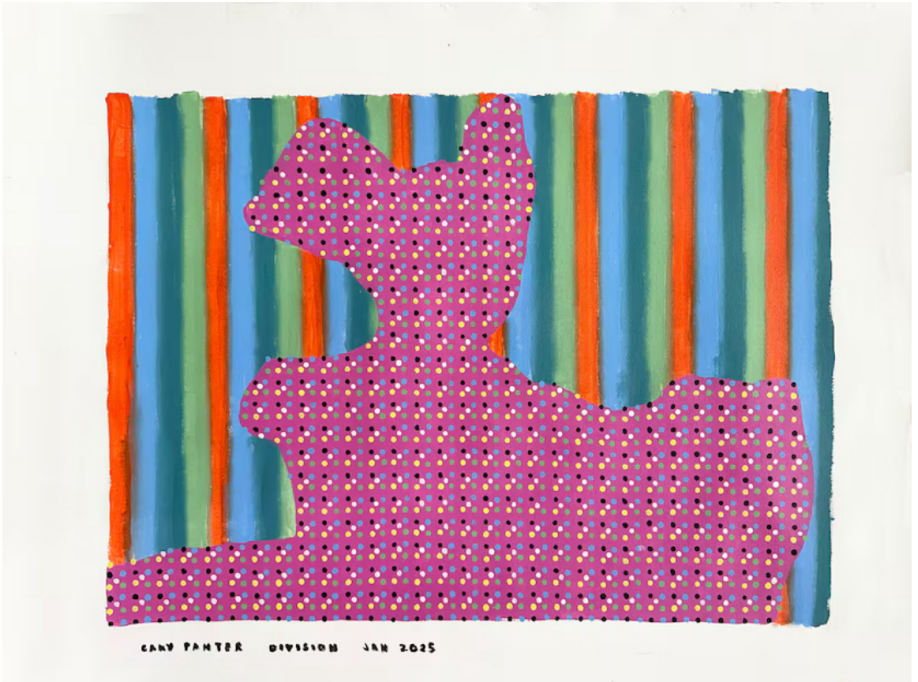
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Panter's newest series of minimalist dot compositions on canvas play with abstraction via vivid shapes and patterns. Sketches inspired by everything from anatomy books to cave paintings meld narrative and abstraction to liberate the linear form. And his cartoony portrayals of cereal mascots and Looney Tunes stars deliver a heady dose of nostalgia to anyone raised on Saturday morning cartoons.

Having recently moved back to Sulphur Springs, Panter says local influences have made their way into his work, from the old concrete factory office he took over as his new home to the colors and patterns of Mexico.

The Dallas Morning News

“Mexico is a big influence on my use of color, which I also brought to the *Pee-wee* show,” he said. “I’ve been using blended stripes and dots, which come out of shapes from road repair or peeling walls. It’s integrating forms from everything in your life and restating them.”



Gary Panter's "Division," 2025. Acrylic on unstretched canvas. 22 × 30 inches (image), 28.5 × 39 inches (canvas).

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The Dallas Morning News

Having worked for years as a commercial illustrator as well as a professor at New York's School of Visual Arts (where he taught from 2001 to 2019), Panter is finally luxuriating in the time to explore as many media and methodologies as he chooses.

"I've done about 60 paintings since I came back to Texas, which is unusual for me," he said. "My brain is kind of feverish, and my dreams are awesome, big-budget dreams. I'm just going to have to do what comes next — basically, ideas come from ideas."

Details

"Gary Panter: Grey Lagoons" is on view at Keijsers Koning gallery through Dec. 19, 2025. 150 Manufacturing St., Suite 201, Dallas. Open 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., Wednesday to Saturday. keijserskoning.com.