

## 'Between Nightmares and Fairytales'

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Adam Handler's "Angel Around Here."

The halls of many art museums and galleries have heard the comment, “I could do that,” or maybe even “My kid could draw that.” Westchester artist Adam Handler’s work in an upcoming exhibition at the Madelyn Jordon Fine Art Gallery takes that perception and challenges it head on.

Handler’s first-ever solo exhibition of works on paper, titled “Between Nightmares and Fairytales,” explores the space between the childlike and the unsettling. Characterized by bright colors, busy backgrounds and primitive, simplistic figures, Handler’s work is a mishmash of influences from Medieval and Renaissance art to Folk and Outsider styles.

“Adam does paintings primarily as a painter, but actually his works on paper and his drawings are kind of freest and there’s just something magical about them,” said Madelyn Jordon, the Scarsdale gallery’s owner. “His drawings, they’re free, he’s developing new imagery. There’s something very appealing about them. And, he’s always wanted to do a drawing exhibition. It’s really a survey of all his drawings in the past couple of years.”

Though Handler, who graduated from SUNY Purchase, does not create art that is overly detailed or complex, the heavy backgrounds created by him pushing down hard on the oil stick and the graffiti-like figures at the forefront have an impact. Some of his common imagery includes flowers, tulips, women and girls.

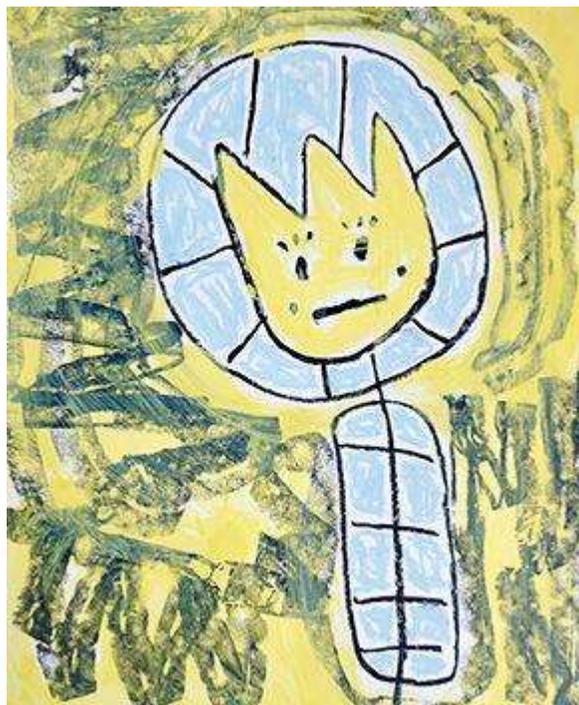


Adam Handler's 'Garden Skull.'

“The title of the exhibition is his work in a nutshell. On one hand they’re childlike and look very sweet and kind of simple,” said Jordon. “But yet some of them are downright frightening looking. There’s always kind of a little edge to all of his work and it comes across. For me there’s always a little edge to that figure. She could look sweet, she can be pretty, but there is something, something psychological going on there.”

Handler said his most recent inspiration has been revisiting the many fairy tales and Disney movies he consumed as a child with his 3-year-old son. He had met Jordon when he was 16, while helping his grandparents who were picture frame cutters in Brooklyn, and remembered her years later when it came time to exhibit his own art.

“Fairytale are always kind of scary and have stuff for adults in them. It’s always about the character fall and you always see them go together,” said Handler. “A lot of the pieces being shown here are gonna play with the border between the mythological and the fairytale, sometimes being sweet and sometimes being scary. People kind of see a different reality.”



Adam Handler's 'Little Tulip Friend.'

Handler usually works with canvas, acrylic and oil stick and makes pieces much larger than the ones in the gallery exhibition. The medium of paper changes not only the size but the perspective, said Handler, as he works with the paper on a table or the floor as opposed to a canvas on a wall.

“I’ve always wanted [to do this] for years and years because everything ... every experiment, every idea begins on paper,” said Handler. “It’s exciting, it’s kind of

almost a vulnerability because of paper. It’s more free and sensitive.”

The exhibition will be salon style with 35 drawings ranging from very small to large. Jordon is excited to showcase Handler, as she said young artists carving a path in the major art world is rare in Westchester. She sees him as a local artist creating a promising career.

“This exhibition just gives you a way into his psychology.... it’ll be personal and, and it’ll really show who he is,” said Jordon. “I think you get a better insight into who he is and kind of what’s going on. It’s a more direct kind of look into his instincts and what he’s trying, without being so planned as big paintings.”