

# Expansive Expressions



This August marks not only the return of Arcadia Contemporary's highly anticipated annual *Five and Under* exhibition, but also its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The focal point of this year's show is a stunning selection of over 150 works of art—all of which will be available for \$5,000 or less.

Arcadia Contemporary owner Steve Diamant says, "The same thing excites us every year—the opportunity to see and make available amazing works from both new and established artists that we think are not only well-executed, but very well priced."

The exhibition will feature more than 50 artists, some of whom are familiar faces to the gallery. Many of the artists, however, will be partaking in *Five and Under* for the first time.

Collectors can expect the same great variety in style and subject matter, and they can also expect to see a riskier selection of works in this year's show.



**1**  
Brian Haberlin,  
*Jenny*, watercolor  
and wax on paper,  
11 x 14"

**2**  
Caren Wynne-  
Burke, *Escape*, oil  
on panel,  
30 x 30"

**3**  
Miriam Hoffmann,  
*The Riddle*, oil on  
linen, 20 x 16"



3

“I think we might have gotten a little more ‘daring’ in the imagery that is included in the exhibition as we have seen what collectors have responded to over the course of the exhibitions over the last 10

years,” says Diamant.

One such work is *Jenny* by comic book designer and painter Brian Haberlin. Through the use of watercolor and wax on panel, *Jenny* depicts a stun-

ning, tattooed young woman posing atop a pile of textiles with varying textures and hues.

“This piece was an excuse to play with fabric textures, color and human forms





5



6

in watercolor," says the artist. "The idea is that the patterns on cloth are not just limited to cloth but also to flesh, meaning her tattoos. For example, there is another forearm [not Jenny's, but another model's] behind and above her. Once you know it's a forearm you see it as such but if you don't know, it's just another piece of fabric. I like the question: 'Is that fabric or flesh?'"

Contrasting this colorful work is another female portrait by artist Miriam Hoffmann titled *The Riddle*, a somber oil painting that spans 20 by 16 inches.

Hoffmann shares, "*The Riddle* is part of an exploration into the concept of eternal recurrence—the idea that our lives and experiences repeat on an endless loop and how one might feel when confronted with reality. This painting, along with its counterpart *The Vision*, represent my dual perspectives on the idea of facing life's endless patterns—one steadfast and bold, empowered in her choices; the other weary in her resolve and watchful for challenges in the distance."

The exhibition will also feature a number of still lifes, including a large-scale acrylic by William Lazos aptly named *Wedding*. Despite its size, Lazos masterfully portrays the light and reflections seen throughout in crystal clear, high-definition.

"*Wedding* is a moment in time at my friend's daughter's wedding reception," says Lazos. "It captures the tranquility and spectrum of an ordinary object. The water in the glass could easily represent what water is—the source of life."

Also capturing an ordinary yet remarkable moment in time is Caren Wynne-Burke's architectural oil

*Escape*. "I am painting backdrops for a movie that will never get made or a stage play never to be performed," she says. "Growing up and working in Los Angeles and being on the back lots of movie studios really informed my perception that architecture gives meaning to a larger story."

Another not-to-miss work in *Five and Under* comes from dreamscape artist Jason Wheatley, who's best known for his fanciful depictions of exotic animals. Inspired by Japanese artwork, Wheatley's *Plucking the Plume* showcases a playful array of animalia.

"My intent was to create a whimsical yet contemplative tableau that invites viewers into a space where reality intertwines with the surreal," says Wheatley. "The focal point of the composition is the interaction between two monkeys and a blue heron. The scene is set in an imagined interior, a serene sanctuary that blends elements of a traditional still life with a touch of fantastical whimsy."

The artist continues, "The blue heron, with its elegant and composed demeanor, contrasts with the monkey's playful mischief. Its calm acceptance of the situation hints at a deeper, almost mystical understanding between the creatures. The second monkey, positioned at the top of the composition, serves as a silent observer, reflecting the viewer's own role in this scene as a witness to the unfolding narrative."

*Five and Under* opens with a reception on August 15 from 6 to 8 p.m. and hangs through September 1. ●

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**4**  
**Sebastian Galloway,**  
*Spring 2*, oil on copper,  
16 x 12"

**5**  
**William Lazos,** *Wedding*,  
acrylic on canvas,  
36 x 24"

**6**  
**Jason Wheatley,**  
*Plucking the Plume*, oil  
on linen, 20 x 30"