



Animals Take the Spotlight in “Kingdom Animalia”

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by Pat Rogers

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SAG HARBOR, NY-

Animals as muse are the subject of the exhibition “Kingdom Animalia” opening at Dodds and Eder on Saturday. The group show presents a diverse range of works by 14 artists. Linking them together is the connection the artist feels with the subject and the larger implication of a world shared by animals, humans and nature.

“The artists have express their response to living among animals in a shared environment that is sometimes at odds with man-made or natural adversity,” said curator Kathy Zeiger. “Understanding an animal’s vulnerability or being a witness to the quiet dignity these animals express, it hearten us all to be aware, give pause and take action.”

Artists exhibiting in the show are Caitlyn Shea, Colin Goldberg, Dan Welden, David Bonagurio, Llewellynn Fletcher, Marc Dimov, Mark Wilson, Rachel Meuler, Randy Willier, Roz Dimon, Scott Bluedorn, Steve Miller, Vito DeVito and Will Ryan.

“Kingdom Animalia” will be on view from Sept. 28 through Nov. 10, 2013. An Opening Reception will be held on Saturday from 5 to 7 p.m. Midway through the opening, Dodds and Eder also becomes the site for the Sag Harbor Americana Music Festival’s afterhours party dubbed The Twilight Lounge (held from 6 to 9 p.m.)

The impetus for “Kingdom Animalia” was found in an ink on paper drawing of a screech owl by Scott Bluedorn, said Zeiger. Central to the image are dark and widened eyes that seem to radiate an emotional connection from the non-verbal world of animals to the verbal one of humans.

“It’s a powerful piece,” said Zeiger. “People love it. The eyes just pull you in. It got me thinking about animals and our connection to them. We are the environmental stewards for animals in their habitat. We have to take care of their habitat for them to survive.”



“Screech Owl” by Scott Bluedorn, 2012. Ink on Paper.

So began a quest to uncover the best art portraying animals the East End could offer. The cooler days of fall, that seem to encourage a slower pace and noticing (or spending time) in nature, was another reason the animal focus seemed apropos, said Zeiger.

After visiting multiple studios, she found the works that grabbed her also channeled a connection between the subject and the artist who made the work. The works in “Kingdom Animalia” demonstrate a tie of some sort between humans as caregivers and the animals that depend on human action and consciousness to ensure the habitats they need to live are not destroyed

Zeiger’s journey led her to select a variety of art: realism by Vito DeVito, hyperelectrified digital works by Roz Dimon, surrealism by Rachel Meuler and abstracted sculpture by Llewellynn Fletcher. Animals portrayed range from reptiles of the Amazon (Steve Miller), to bears of the United States (Mark Wilson) and symbolic animals as spirit guides or conjurers of mythology, and animals, birds and reptiles as muse for the imagination.



Artwork by Rachel Meuler.



Artwork by Llewellynn Fletcher.

In each artwork, the artist’s emotional relationship to the subject is an important part of the piece, said Zeiger.

“We co-exist together,” said curator Kathy Zeiger. “The artists have been inspired by animals and they inspired everyone else.”



Detail of “Bear Patch” by Mark Wilson.

Zeiger hopes that viewers of the exhibition will be inspired to take a moment to ponder their own relationship with animals and the responsibility we each hold to ensure their habitats remain hospitable. Driving along the roads of the Hamptons, wooded areas are constant reminders of places shared with deer, foxes, raccoons, birds and other creatures, said Zeiger.

“Animals, indigenous to various habitats on and off the East End of Long Island, rely upon humans to be their environmental stewards for generations forward,” she said. “This group exhibition features contemporary artists, each one interpreting a personal connection, purposeful or organic.”



“a long flight you say admittedly there’s baggage thinking travels well” by Will Ryan and Randy Willier.

“Kingdom Animalia” is the first exhibition Zeiger is curating on the East End. Previously, she has curated exhibits and art events in New York City for organizations including “No Longer Empty,” a public arts organization that brings art to vacant real estate, and Young Artists of St. Jude’s, with the next art fundraiser taking place at C24 Gallery in Chelsea on Oct. 21, 2013.

In the Hamptons, Zeiger is the founder and director of [ArtWalk Hamptons](#), which hosts periodic walking tours of galleries in the villages of East Hampton, Sag Harbor and Southampton plus the hamlets of Bridgehampton and Amangansett.

BASIC FACTS: “Kingdom Animalia” will be exhibited from Sept. 28 through Nov. 10 at Dodds and Eder, 11 Bridge St., Sag Harbor, NY 11963. www.doddsandeder.com.

An Opening Reception will be held on Saturday from 5 to 7 p.m. The Twilight Lounge (live music and libations) will take place there from 6 to 9 p.m. as part of the Sag Harbor American Music Festival. The exhibition is curated by Kathy Zeiger.

Dodds and Eder is open Thursdays through Mondays from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

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