

IMAGINE

The most powerful tool each of us have is our imagination – we can create alternate realities, bend the laws that govern the world we live in or dream up fantastical beings that have never been pondered by another... and we can do it all in our mind. That sentiment could not hold truer than with respect to the arts. An artist, with an imagination at their disposal, can create anything... and further, a capable artist can share their imagination in ways others cannot – visually. The genre of Imaginative Realism, to put it simply, is the art of the unseen – things that never existed or might exist in a distant future.

Rehs Contemporary's upcoming exhibition, Imagine, aims to highlight that ingenuity of the artist's mind. Opening Saturday, April 28th, from 1-6PM at their 57th street gallery, works by Ani Art Academy students, alumni and instructors will be on display alongside a contingent of contemporary icons working in Imaginative Realism. Rehs teamed up with Pat Wilshire, founder of Illuxcon (the world's largest annual showcase of Contemporary Imaginative Realism) to bring together an influential group regarded as some of the finest artists working in the genre. Among the featured icons are Boris Vallejo, Julie Bell, Donato Giancola, David Palumbo, Tenaya Sims, Michael C. Hayes and Eric Velhagen... Works by Anthony Waichulis, Timothy Jahn, Edward Dillon, Kevin Moore and a juried selection from the Ani Art Academies will be featured as well. This exhibition will give viewers an opportunity to see the heights that Imaginative Realism can be taken to, while also providing a chance to see up-and-coming artists who are exploring the field – the future of Imaginative Realism.

The beauty of the genre is that it allows for exploration within as well as outside of ourselves, all inside the framework of highly skilled, technically proficient realism. As Anthony Waichulis (Founder of the Ani Art Academies) says, "When developing our curriculum, we sought to minimize particular aesthetic influences so as to purposefully create a deficit that would be filled by the personal preferences, interests, and cultural perspectives swirling within the individual. I believe this strategy promotes creative development alongside the more conventional (technical) skillset that will eventually need to draw from it." This approach allows for an expressive and evocative investigation of the human experience while providing the foundation for creating meaningful works of art that are relevant to our contemporary lives.

As Wilshire notes, "This fresh insight is nowhere more prevalent in the younger generation of artists. Raised with this foundation of the fantastic, it is a natural, obvious progression for young artists to want to share their own 'vision of never,' utilizing their highly proficient, skills-based training to illuminate their deepest inner vision." The selection of imaginative works by Ani Art Academies students that comprises the bulk of Imagine demonstrates the powerful results, bringing the next generation of imaginative realists to the walls of Rehs Contemporary alongside established masters of Imaginative Realism - the artists who are responsible for growing the genre from its late 20th century status as a byproduct of the publishing industry to a vital artistic movement that sits at the vanguard of contemporary realism.

WHEN

Opening Reception: April 28, 2018 1PM - 6PM

Monday - Friday: April 30 - May 18th 10AM - 5:30PM

All other times by appointment

WHERE

Rehs Contemporary Galleries

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Catherine Acosta "Esperanza" Oil on panel, 20 x 16 inches



Deborah Lloyd "Just Imagine" Oil on panel, 11 x 11 inches



Donato Giancola "Life Seeker" Oil on panel, 48 x 36 inches



Julie Bell "Aldebaran" Oil on panel, 24 x 18 inches



Victoria Steel "Familiarity Breeds Contempt" Oil on panel, 18 x 20 inches



Vince Natale "Stormbringer" Oil on panel, 15 x 27 inches