

Adam Grosowsky: *New Work - Faces, Landscapes, and Nudes*
December 4, 2024 - January 25, 2025

**Opening Reception and First Friday Art Walk:
Friday, December 6, 5:30-7:30 pm, with Artist Talk at 6:00 pm**

Karin Clarke Gallery is pleased to present Eugene figurative painter Adam Grosowsky's *New Work: Faces, Landscapes, and Nudes*, an outstanding series of oil paintings on canvas. Most are on a grand scale, with some smaller formats also included. This new work embraces a plurality of subject matters, such as Grosowsky's famed outsized portraits and interiors with nudes, as well as piano scenes and equestrian figures. Local landscapes are also generously represented.

Grosowsky's latest outsized portraits are as arresting as ever. They feature young women, often looking down or away, seemingly lost in thought, and just as often accompanied by a bird – a falcon, say, or a cockatoo. The immense faces, partially lit, as well as the bird's white plumage, stand out against a background of rich blacks. This dramatic tonal contrast commands the viewer's attention, as do the artist's bold use of color and his expressive, gestural, seemingly casual brushstrokes.

In a couple of full-length portraits, a seated woman holding a cat leans forward, the skirt of her strapless green gown billowing around her. Here, the sharp value contrast is enlivened by this additional burst of greens, yet the mood remains pensive, the female figure entirely self-contained in the company of her feline.

Nude figures are among Grosowsky's recurring subjects. In this series, one sits with her back to the viewer, doing her hair in the company of colorful koi. Others recline, perhaps reading, perhaps languidly gazing toward the light framed by a window, or toward something, someone, invisible to the viewer. While these nude scenes similarly showcase Grosowsky's signature use of chiaroscuro, there is a shift toward abstraction as the geometry and structure of the interior setting drive the composition. Precisely orchestrated lines and planes intersect across the picture plane, highlighting Grosowsky's compositional flair.

A similar tilt toward abstraction is at work in a series of piano lesson scenes – a return to an early theme for Grosowsky – with their bold graphic quality, flattened perspective, high value and color contrast, and limited but often vivid palette. Sometimes, a pattern of organic forms in the background adds further visual interest. Here in particular, Grosowsky makes a striking use of negative space.

Grosowsky's new landscapes are inspired by local rural scenes. One painting lets us stand on the edge of grass fields at the beginning of autumn, facing an old barn and a small hill below a vast tumultuous sky. With another piece, we get to watch from afar the bright ochres and dark greens of Mt Pisgah's oak savanna pitted against vivid blues up above. Elsewhere, a man and his dog walk away from the viewer across brown and yellow fields, while a murder of crows flies across a fierce sky in which blues and whites collide with echoes of the earth tones below. The man's hat provides a single red accent. This is in fact an autobiographical portrait and an homage to the artist's rescue dog who died last year. Here, opposites meet: peace and turmoil, solitude and

companionship, simplicity and complexity.

A few of the paintings fit in none of the above categories. A self-portrait as Don Quixote reprises a famous poster created by the Beggarstaffs brothers in 1895, a vivid composition in black and white with subtle touches of color. With *Sleeping*, which so far exists in two versions, Grosowsky makes a fascinating foray into the elusive, shifting territory of dreamscape. In both works, a sleeping figure rests against a night-colored backdrop while large Brugmansia blooms seem to watch over her, or maybe simply accompany her dreams. In one of the paintings, there is a suggestion of wings and perhaps fireflies. In the other, a second figure partially emerges from the darkness and seems to embrace the dreamer. Both pieces present us with a vision that encompasses all at once the dreamer and the dream, both too intertwined to be told apart. With more than one perspective at play, the various elements in these oneiric scenes appear to be floating in several dimensions at once. For the artist, these are “haunting paintings.”

Grosowsky, one of Oregon’s most sought-after painters, has been exhibiting at Karin Clarke Gallery since 2005. His work has been extensively collected in the Northwest and across the US, both privately and publicly. He received his BA in Fine Arts from Evergreen College in 1981, and an MA (1984) and an MFA (1986) in Printmaking from the University of Iowa, where he studied under Mauricio Lasansky, one of the fathers of modern American printmaking. After moving to Eugene, Grosowsky switched to oil painting as his primary medium. He taught printmaking, drawing, and painting as a full-time faculty at Lane Community College from 1990 until his retirement in 2019.

Sylvie Pederson