

LewAllenGalleries

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – JUNE 27th, 2016

Tom Palmore: *My Menagerie*

Exhibition Dates: July 29 – August 21, 2016

Artist Reception: Fri. July 29th: 5 – 7

Gallery Hours: Mon. – Fri., 10 – 6; Sat., 10 – 5;
Sun., 11 – 5

LewAllen Galleries

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Royal Family, 2016, Acrylic and oil on canvas,
36 in x 48 in

Santa Fe, NM – For more than 35 years, Tom Palmore has painted animals as the subjects of portraits with characteristic wit, sophistication, refined attention to detail, and stunning technical prowess. His ultra-real renderings of animals in thousands of brushstrokes of oil and acrylic offer a unique, whimsical juxtaposition of technical literalism and magically real, imaginative context. In his new exhibition at LewAllen Galleries, *My Menagerie*, Palmore once again enlarges the traditions of portraiture and prods us to investigate our reactions to a painted world where the expected is upended.



China Doll, 2016, Acrylic and oil
on canvas, 48 x 48 in

In this Palmore world, animals and birds willingly pause from life in the jungle, woods, mountains, back yards or alleys to pose as models for the artist's portraits. Vastly beyond merely mimetic replicas of wildlife, the visual stories he tells are clever, intelligent, charming and provocative. They inspire the imagination, undermine the preconceived, and broaden the known into the realm of the possible, ultimately raising questions about the cultural space allotted to animals within the contemporary world. Defined by a sense of nobility, dignity, and eloquence, Palmore reminds his audience that these remarkable creatures should be regarded as partners alongside their human counterparts.

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The artist's considerable intelligence is illustrated not only by his carefully composed arrangements on canvas but also by his facility with puns and clever titles. In this exhibition, for example, "China Doll" is the title Palmore gives to a smiling zaftig panda bear set against the flag of the People's Republic of China. A Grizzly bear swimming placidly among two rubber ducks is entitled "Bath Time" and a mountain lion gazing languidly over its shoulder is called "When Elegance Meets Fear." Clever titles complement Palmore's brilliant visual puns.



Bath Time, 2016, Acrylic and oil on canvas, 42 in x 60 in

The message is made more convincing by the subtlety of Palmore's deft use of that clever visual wit and odd congruities to provoke regard. Juxtaposed elements are painted with the guise of complete plausibility, until closer examination reveals their improbable combination. In this moment of surprised recognition there is both a sophisticated wit and substantial conceptual content as the literal and the imaginative merge, producing images that are both immediately captivating and lastingly profound.



Sometimes You Really Like Yourself, 2016, Acrylic and oil on canvas, 36 x 60 in

Born in Oklahoma in 1945, Palmore's education in art occurred at several institutions, concluding at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts in Philadelphia in 1969. At the age of 25, his art was included in a Whitney Annual Exhibition and later chosen for inclusion in the Venice Biennale. His work appears in numerous corporate collections and in such prominent public collections as the Smithsonian Institution, the Whitney

Museum of American Art, the Brooklyn Museum, the Philadelphia Museum of Art, and the National Museum of Wildlife Art.

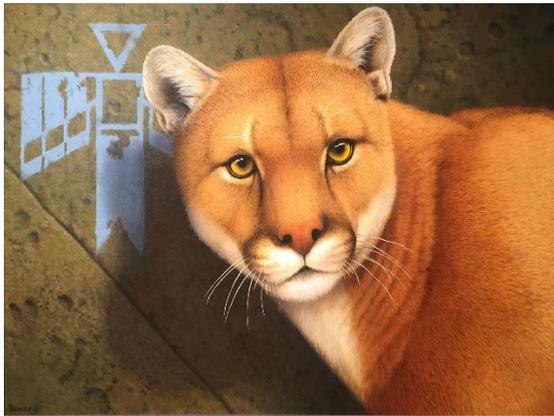
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Sultry Bear, 2016, Acrylic and oil on canvas,
36 x 48 in



Membe Prefers Blue, 2016, Acrylic and oil
on canvas, 30 x 40 in



Mountain Lion, 2015, Acrylic and oil on
canvas, 18 x 24 in



Being Pretty is Dangerous, Mott Mott,
2015, Acrylic and oil on canvas, 48 x 36 in