

TOTAH

ARCHIE RAND

Misfits

January 18 - February 17, 2019

TOTAH presents *Misfits*, an exhibition of works by Archie Rand, on view January 18 through February 17, 2019. This is the artist's first exhibition with the gallery.

The 36 works included in *Misfits* depict portraits and ambiguous scenarios in the midst of unfolding. Each painting reaches for something beyond what is visible to the naked eye—a world of empathic imagination, comprising wonderment and joy as much as confusion and melancholy.

Rand's vibrant paintings are visualizations of philosophical and spiritual questions. Inspired by Egyptian, Babylonian, and Talmudic interpretations of the number 36, every work on exhibit displays what's most characteristic about a certain "misfit"—understood as a numinous being whose righteousness is craftily concealed by the foibles of everyday life.

A playful mood is key to this awareness. These *Misfits* are marginalized figures; humbly righteous, they refuse to parade their virtues. One work in particular, *2*, showing an otherworldly, almost bird-like creature, captures the enigmatic energy that pervades the exhibition.

Misfits is also about identity. Colorful scenes are portrayed as laughably sweet yet poignantly surreal, with only an indirect relationship to reality. These images are both divine and earthly, sociological and ritualistic. Rand's characters have the visionary reality of a theophany, while also being literal symbols, mulled over in the subconscious depths of his mind.

Archie Rand has occupied noteworthy space in the abstract, color-field, representational, and symbolist landscapes over the course of his more than fifty-year career. He first exhibited in 1966 at the Tibor de Nagy Gallery in New York after having attended the Art Students League and later received a Bachelor of Fine Arts in cinegraphics from Pratt Institute. Exploring painting as a conceptual statement, he frequently engages text, religious subject matter and comic book imagery, and has provided a counterpoint to more easily definable genre practitioners. For over three decades he has continued to collaborate and publish with noted poets such as Robert Creeley and John Ashbery. Rand is currently Presidential Professor of Art at Brooklyn College, having previously been chair of the Department of Visual Arts at Columbia University, and awarded a Guggenheim Foundation Fellowship in 1999. Rand's work has been the subject of national and international retrospectives at venues ranging from the Cincinnati Contemporary Art Center to the Museo Palazzo Ducale of Genoa. His works are held in many public collections, including The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Museum of Modern Art, The Whitney Museum of American Art, The Art Institute of Chicago, The San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, The Smithsonian Institution, The Brooklyn Museum, The Carnegie Museum of Art, The Bibliotheque Nationale de France, The Victoria and Albert Museum in London, and numerous university archives.

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