



Gallery & Boutique
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For Immediate Release
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Art Star Presents:



***Menagerie*: Artwork by Merrilee Challiss
September 7th – October 14th
Opening Reception: Friday, September 7th, 5-9pm**

Art Star is pleased to present *Menagerie*, a solo exhibition of artwork by Merrilee Challiss. The exhibition will include mixed media paintings on wood, limited edition prints, & handmade/printed tote bags. The work will be on display from September 7th – October 14th, 2007. An opening reception w/ the artist will be held on First Friday, September 7th, from 5-9pm. The event is free & open to the public.

Merrilee's mixed media work is the result of multifarious sources: fairy tales, myths, natural history, and medical anomalies. Drawing has always been her abiding passion and is where she begins most of her work, layering patterns obsessively until a sense of order emerges. Many of her recent drawings and paintings have been informed by fascinations as disparate as sub-aquatic realms, tidal pools, and all creatures horned and hoofed. The animals and people in her work are almost always in a protean state. The work reflects Edward O. Wilson's view, that we're in an ecological "quickenings", where species are dying off en masse, and nature is being turned on its head. Ultimately, Merrilee's work reflects her interest in the themes of mutation and regeneration.

Challiss was born in 1971 in Cleveland, Oh, but raised in Birmingham, AL. She received her BA in Studio Arts from the University of Alabama in 1994 & her MFA from Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts in 2000. She has worked with adults with autism and schizophrenia for five years at a non-profit art studio in her hometown. 3-4 years of her life were spent traveling and living abroad in Eastern Europe, Tunisia, Turkey, and Cambodia, to name a few. She currently lives & works in Birmingham, where she owns & runs a café/bar/venue called BottleTree.

Art Star is a gallery & boutique located in Northern Liberties, Philadelphia. We exhibit and sell handmade work & limited edition products by emerging artists across the globe. Hailed by Philadelphia Magazine as the "the cities first cutting-edge craft shop", we strive to carry work that is innovative & superbly crafted. We have also created & continue to support a growing network of burgeoning artists. Our exhibitions rotate every 6 weeks and our boutique offers shoppers everything from handmade clothes, jewelry & accessories to dolls, ceramics & prints.