Barney

mixed media on panel

26 x 18 cm 2022

Folklore surrounding Barney the barn owl is better recorded than for most other owls. Barney has a sinister reputation probably because he is a bird of the night, and darkness was always associated with death. On the bright side, a group of poets used Barney as their favourite "bird of doom."

Word spread rapidly, resulting in rumours, the one even more ludicrous than the next. As a result, Barney was chased and sought after for years, forcing him to go in hiding. People wanted to catch him, dress him up and call him Susan in order to ward off evil and lightning, villagers would walk around Barney's tree, in the hope he would turn and turn his head to watch them until he would get dizzy and fall. Barney-broth was said to cure kids suffering the heebie-jeebies.

Even though Barney's a dude, rumours were spread concerning the healing powers of his eggs, when baked 'sunny side up'.

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Obviously, none of this is true. Barney is, however, known to predict the weather. He's become to be so good at it, seeing Barney is considered good luck in parts of Europe.

BARNEY focusses on the good in people. He is tolerant and not at all spiteful. He knows his worth he knows when he is appreciated and when it's better to move along.

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Chris Berens

Chris Berens studied illustration at the Academy of Art & Design in 's-Hertogenbosch, graduating in 1999. He has developed a complex and time-consuming painting technique, mostly shown as mixed media on panel.

"I'm most comfortable using fine brushes and drawing inks and graphites, but I also regularly use water color paints, markers and acrylics", Berens says. "For some time now I've added digital image making to my line of techniques, meaning 3D sculpting, digital painting and image processing. I combine and mix them with my more traditional media."

After his first major solo show at Jaski Gallery in 2005, Chris Berens' fame spread quickly. The young artist has already exhibited all over the world, from Amsterdam to New York, from Tokyo to Los Angeles, Seattle and Singapore. He also designed the cover for Panic of Girls, an album which was released in 2011 by Blondie. Deborah Harry and Chris Stein, founders of the band, are admirers of his work.

Back home Chris has been the subject of a television documentary. Chris Berens, Master of his Magical Universe was made for Dutch broadcaster Avro's Close Up series in 2013 and has since been broadcast several times at home and abroad.

Chris Berens also featured prominently in the television documentary Krabbé searches for Van Gogh, in which actor/painter Jeroen Krabbé traced the path of Vincent van Gogh in co-operation with Dutch artists.

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