

JASKI GALLERY

AMSTERDAM



Olena

mixed media on panel

26 x 18 cm 2022

Olena is the Commander in Chief of New Dawn, the special unit of The Hug Squad.

She is known as the gentle warrior. Although she prefers things to be solved peacefully and with diplomacy she is known to chase away many Kikimora's and Baba Yaga's and to chop a couple of heads off a Zmei. Olena has fought many battles over swamps, forests and steppe. She is not afraid to get her clothes wet or her hair in disarray and just when there seems no hope left, she takes out the big guns and makes her creatures rise above themselves, inspiring them to do the greatest of things.

Olena is also known to protect the children. She sees the power in their innocence and she takes care of them, making sure they eat right, get enough sleep and get good education and have fun. She sings them songs and tells them tales about knights and dragons and when she is old she will sit down and write a tale of a particular unpleasant Leshy who was defeated by the fierce creatures she protected a long long time ago.

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OLENA is fierce but gentle. She is tough, but only when she needs to be, compassionate when she can. She is willing to sacrifice her own private freedom for that of the future generation.

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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.