

Calgary artist's paintings show 40 years of odd inspiration



Jeremy Simes / For Metro

Ron Moppett says his “nocturne” paintings tell their own stories, depending on who you are.

Jeremy Simes
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Ron Moppett always thought he'd be a cartoonist for Walt Disney. But once he realized he could paint, he knew fine art was the way to go.

Moppett — a veteran painter in Calgary's arts community — recently had his work installed at TrépanierBaer Gallery, stretching from the '70s to 2015.

He said his work has progressed over the years, but still has no idea where his ideas come from.

“Next year, I might be doing paintings about marmalade — I don't know,” he said. “You sort of go with the flow.”

The flow, he said, generally comes from stacks comprised of magazine clippings, his other drawings and various snippets.

But it can be difficult to find inspiration, he said, adding the final product always turns out differently than the initial idea.

“When you’ve been doing it for so many years, it’s hard,” he said. “Sometimes I ask, where the hell did that come from?”

TrépanierBaer Gallery co-owner Kevin Baer said the gallery has represented Moppett for 22 years, and said he hopes Calgarians can truly appreciate his work.

“This is work that can be hanging anywhere in the world,” Baer said. “There is a lot of talent in this city.”

Moppett said his newest pieces are themed around “nocturnes” and constellations.

As it so happens, he said his new painting were inspired by a cartoon drawing of a woman he found on top of his stack.

“I don’t know why I kept the image in the first place,” he said, adding he flipped the drawing upside down and coupled it with moon- and star-like depictions.

“I’m making you make a story out of it,” he said. “I’m not making it easy for you, but I’m not trying to make you decode something that’s absolute.”

“This is probably the best work he’s made,” added Yves Trepanier, also co-owner of the gallery. “You get a sense of how he’s really evolved.”

The exhibition’s opening night will be on Sept. 10 from 6 - 9 p.m. at 999 8 Street SW