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James Prosek: Piscatorial Passion

Edward J. Sozanski

James Prosek is a young Connecticut artist dedicated to the pursuit of trout all over the world. *Pursuit* in his case means painting and drawing them as well as angling for them.

Trout aren't the centerpiece of Prosek's exhibition at the Fleisher/Ollman Gallery, however. His drawings and paintings, in various combinations of watercolor, pencil, colored pencil and ink, feature real species such as a life-size bluefin tuna mingled with fanciful ones, such as a sailfish, also life-size, with a rainbow-hued bird's wing in place of its huge dorsal fin.

In smaller works, Prosek imagines equally fantastic hybrids, such as a trout-kingfisher, a hummingbird-moth, and a woodpecker with a drill-bit bill.



Mechanical Woodpecker (Detail), 2005, Watercolor, graphite, and colored pencil, 19" x 22"

His keen eye for detail and his precise drawing make some of these creatures almost plausible. What comes through more forcefully is his deep attachment to nature and his special admiration for fish. The giant tuna in particular has such remarkable presence that one expects to see it gasping for breath.

Fleisher/Ollman Gallery, 1616 Walnut St. 10:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Mondays through Fridays
Noon to 5 p.m. Saturdays. Through June 4. 215-545-7562 or www.fleisher-ollmangallery.com.

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