

# Beyond cute; vibrant shores

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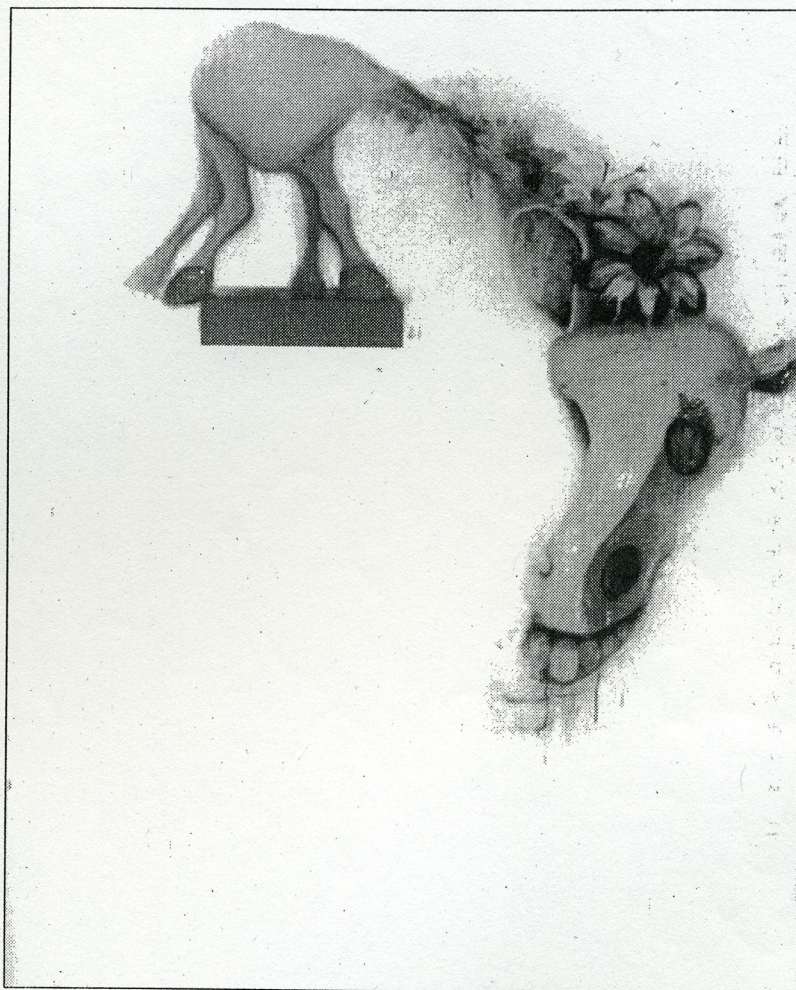
Bambi takes a Grimm turn in the paintings of Colleen Kiely at Judy Ann Goldman Fine Art. Kiely is a

## Galleries

painter's painter, tackling questions of form that could throw a discerning viewer into existential angst. But she's also fantastical, wrapping her struggles with her medium in pictures of plump-cheeked bunnies and saucer-eyed chicks. Put Jean-Paul Sartre and Hans Hofmann in a room together and throw in Hello Kitty and a Smurf for good measure, and you'll approach what's going on inside this artist's brain.

Take "Tangerine Twist." A big green horse stands on a pedestal, in this case a thick bar of orange paint. His giant head hangs low on a precariously long neck; his big eyes beckon us in. Kiely positions the horse at the top of the panel, over a field of creamy vanilla paint. He lurches toward the bottom of the panel, where the vanilla ground abruptly stops, replaced by a paler, less luscious white, scuffed and bruised with marks. It's as if the reality the horse exists in is a confection, and the bare, ugly wall beneath is closer to the existence we all share — if we would only look at what the horse is trying to show us.

"Buttercup Kiss" has a pink deer with glittery green hooves and a frilly blue collar playing havoc with the thick yellow ground over which she hovers. Her precariously long neck nearly vanishes into the yellow, as does her head, save for her compelling doe eyes, glitter lids, wide nostrils, and open mouth. Circular sections of yellow paint, like the litter from a hole puncher, eat into the deer's legs and body in a painterly leprosy, blurring the distinction between figure and ground.



Kiely's "Tangerine Twist" opposes confection with something darker.

We're tricked. Kiely draws us into the illusion with these cartoon animals, these icons of innocence. Then she defies the illusion with her deft management of paint. She challenges our perceptions of both form and content. As figure gives way to ground, so does innocence to something far darker. Walt Disney, beware.

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### COLLEEN KIELY: PEEPERS

At: Judy Ann Goldman Fine Art, 14  
Newbury St., through Nov. 7

### BERNARD CHAET:

#### RECENT PAINTINGS

At: Alpha Gallery, 14 Newbury St.,  
through Nov. 4

### HOWIE LEE WEISS: PLANTS, FORMS & CHARACTERS: THE CHARCOAL SERIES

At: Fletcher/Priest Gallery, 5 Pratt St.,  
Worcester, through Nov. 5