



Earthlings: The Paintings of Tom Palmore

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Such are the observations that filter through the galleries during Tom Palmore's exhibitions in which animals steal the show.

Born in Ada and living in Oklahoma, Palmore emerged from the 1970s Photorealist movement as a maverick. His career includes more than a decade on the East Coast, where he refined his skills at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts and exhibited in New York's prominent contemporary galleries. Palmore used his technical virtuosity to explore his passion for the animal kingdom. Then as today, his monumental paintings received critical acclaim, and his incongruous juxtapositions of realistic primates in silk-and-velvet interiors earned him the nickname Gorilla Man.

Palmore's fidelity to an animal's visage is intended to make it proud. However, the contexts in which he places them are pure Palmore, infused with his penchant for wit and the unexpected. His portrait of Oscar, the famed rodeo bull, is set against Palmore-designed wallpaper of cowboys catapulted into the air. A rooster surveys its Grant Wood countryside, and an imposing lion is oblivious to the diminutive monarch butterfly that shares its epithet. In all cases, Palmore's paintings loom large not only in scale but also in raised consciousness of the "earthlings with whom we share this planet," as he says.



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