

For Immediate Release

David Sandlin - *Age of Enfrightenment*

September 5 - October 13, 2018

Opening Reception: Wednesday Sept. 5th, 6-8 PM

David Sandlin is a prolific, critical voice mining the badlands of American culture and history. His allegorical works combine dense and lush imagery with satirical texts and are presented in paintings, prints, installations, artist's books and comic books. In ***Age of Enfrightenment***, Sandlin wades through the underside of America and its many monsters with his signature theatrical ridicule and the struggle between hope and dread.



Born in Belfast, Northern Ireland, at 14 Sandlin's family moved and he grew up in Alabama. He has long been focused on the ambiguous nature of this country. Sandlin's America is not the fancy urban centers found on the coasts. It is the rural backwaters, the lost highways and sweaty dead-ends of the American Dream. Sandlin often addresses the culture's hypocritical morality and commercialism through dark humor scenarios and product pitches. In his worlds one is enticed to visit Sinland, shop for Puritanical Novelty Items, take in a show at the EverLust Sin-e-Plex and shake a leg in the Dance Hall of Shame.

Sometimes Sandlin follows certain protagonists through these hellscapes, such as the Swamp Preacher, Bill Grimm or Carl Bob de Ville. Other works present David himself, attempting to protect his wife, and to teach his son the lessons he will need to survive on his own. The recent paintings in ***Age of Enfrightenment*** are populated more by the politicians, monsters, insects, condemned trees and the ghosts of terrorists are reigning over the fall of the American Empire. This is represented literally in scenes where words are shattered over high-cliff waterfalls, and dissolve into the collecting pools of abandon.

Above many of these paintings hang smaller paintings, slightly haunting scenes of moonlit clouds amid the wafting words of incantations. These, like many of Sandlins' works, are inspired by Japanese artists such as **Taiso Yoshitoshi**, particularly his *One Hundred Aspects of the Moon* series. Yoshitoshi framed the tumult of his Meiji-era world with dramatic clashes of warriors, ghouls, villains and tragic lovers. In similar fashion Sandlin finds himself beset in times where up is down, every soul is for sale, and a once fertile land is full of disease and plague.

The exhibition coincides with the launch of a major publication on David Sandlin's artwork. ***Sleep of History*** (2018) is published in coordination with the Abrams-Engel Institute for the Visual Arts in Birmingham, Alabama. The book's 192 pages include essays by Dennis Harper and John Fields, and a catalog of images of Sandlin's many paintings, artist's books, and prints. It will also include an excerpt from ***Belfaust***, Sandlin's work-in-progress graphic novel set both in Belfast and Birmingham that follows a series of characters with quotidian struggles and a Faustian struggle for identity.

For additional information contact:

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