

*Bride of Monster*

A small-group exhibition featuring  
wild and woolly new interpretations of female monsters

October 5 - November 18, 2017

Opening Reception

Thursday, October 5, 2017

7:00 to 9:00 pm

Guests are strongly encouraged to attend the opening reception  
in their most extravagant (or subtle) "monsterwear."

Related Event: How to Make a Monster

October 28, 2017

1:00 to 4:00 pm

Using the Exquisite Corpse method of creation, participants  
will design, draw, and build a life-size monster (or two - or three!)

Creativity Explored Gallery

3245 Sixteenth Street, San Francisco

Gallery hours:

Monday - Friday 10:00 am to 5:00 pm

Thursday 10:00 am to 7:00 pm

Saturday 12:00 pm to 5:00 pm

San Francisco, Thursday, September 5, 2017 - Creativity Explored, San Francisco's nonprofit visual arts center for artists with developmental disabilities, presents [Bride of Monster](#), a small-group exhibition featuring wild and woolly new interpretations of female monsters from film, folklore, and mythology.

Creativity Explored 2 Studio Manager [E. Francis Kohler](#) curated this exhibition, which he hopes will provoke thought about the historical relationship between representations of monsters and people with disabilities. *Bride of Monster* is a long-coming third installment of the 2003 exhibition, [Monster](#), and two years later, [Revenge of Monster](#). "It's been 12 years, and I thought it might be kind of fun to revisit monsters and disability - this time, complicating the theme by adding the layer of women, another group that has been historically oppressed."

“All the shows that I’ve done for CE could be characterized as explorations of pop culture, characters within the pop cultural zone, and the historical relationships between whatever [the pop cultural subject] is and representations of people with disabilities,” Kohler explains.

Kohler is careful to point out, though, that his curatorial vision for the exhibition should not be confused with the intentions of the artists with work in the show. “I’ve talked with the artists about representations of monsters, women, and disability, but many of them are more interested in just making art rather than talking about that.”

Artist [Richard Wright](#), for example, says, “I just watch them on TV a lot,” and [Thomas Pringle](#) adds, “I can tell you what channel to look at, 71, and you’ll find all the monsters. Say 8 o’clock until midnight. That’s a long time looking at different monsters. I watch them every day, you know why? I like the girls in them. That’s why.”

For *Bride of Monster*, Wright created a series of she-monster portraits in colored pencil on black paper. “I love the way [Wright] translates imagery,” Kohler muses, “It’s almost like stained glass, or like mosaic, but with colored pencil.”

Pringle transformed two large recycled windows, each with eight panels. Each of his monsters appears in gray scale, popping out from bright colored backdrops.

To be sure, Kohler is also enthralled with monsters and “making cool art”: “Part of it is just a totally selfish thing. I’ve liked classic horror since I was young, *and* I really love the art that the artists at CE make. On some level, I just wanted to see how incredible their interpretations of something I’ve loved forever would look. I had a general notion of who I knew would be attracted to the theme of this show just from having witnessed the artists’ interests over the years.”

Artist [Gerald Wiggins](#) shares Kohler’s zeal for monsters, “It’s fun to see what makes them tick,” he says. “Some of them look bad, but they not really bad. It’s hard to tell because they gross looking.” Wiggins has a series of fine line drawings of filmic female monsters included in the exhibition.

“I think it’s the people that makes a monster a monster,” Wiggins continues, “because sometimes they be mean to them and it just builds up. They just get mad and get rid of [their tormenters]. Like *Bride of Chucky*, she wasn’t that bad until Chucky tricked her. He turned her like that. Then he tried to control

her, but he couldn't."

Wiggins' compassionate approach comes through in his artwork. His portrait of the Bride of Frankenstein is rendered with a light touch that lets the viewer see the beauty in her character.

Another artist with work in *Bride of Monster*, [Yukari Sakura](#), created a series of portraits of yōkai, a class of creature from Japanese folklore. "There's really no accurate word in English for 'yōkai.' They're not ghosts, and they're not monsters," Kohler explains, "In some respects, there's something kind of elemental about them. There are so many different categories of yōkai, and they span such a long period of time; the oldest yōkai accounts are hundreds of years old, and then there are newer ones that have more of an urban legend vibe."

Sakura, though, brings her own bold and graphic style to her representation of yōkai. "I imagine myself putting pixie dust on the yōkai to make them cuter than the ones in the Japanese folklore because the ones in Japanese folklore are too creepy. So I make them cute, like my other characters. And vegetarians!"

Sakura's yōkai indeed border on whimsical. In one painting, *The Fiery Demon Lady of the Winds*, the subject, encompassed by cartoonish red, orange, and yellow flames, nonetheless grins widely, and even shows a hint of laugh lines around her eyes.

Kohler says that when he first imagined the exhibition, the artist he initially thought to invite was [Christina Marie Fong](#) because "she draws these creatures – part animal, part person. She'll just experiment. She did the Brady Bunch once, and then turned them all into monsters." In anticipation of this show, Kohler set aside a collection of baroque frames for Fong. "I thought they would be really great for Christina because a lot of her work has this filigree and ornamentation on it."

In addition to her elaborately framed portraits, Fong repurposed several mannequin heads, creating strikingly glamorous "she-monsters" that invite audiences to consider the beauty in monstrosity – or the monstrosity in beauty.

For her part, Fong was thrilled to create work for this show. "When I make she-monsters," she says, "I just do it for fun. It brings out the monster in me! When you look at monsters, they give you the creeps,

but they're just creatures. They bring out the creature in me, the creature in all of us."

"With *Bride of Monster*, I gently invite the viewing public to look at issues around disability just a little bit deeper," Kohler concludes, "And as always, I want people come in to look at some great art!"

### **About Creativity Explored**

Creativity Explored is a dynamic nonprofit art center and gallery where artists with developmental disabilities have been creating, exhibiting and selling their art for more than 33 years. Located in the vibrant cultural and dining corridor that crosses San Francisco's Mission District, Creativity Explored provides a supportive studio environment, including individualized instruction from mentoring artists, quality supplies, and professional opportunities to exhibit and sell art. The organization establishes the work of artists with developmental disabilities as an emerging and increasingly important contribution to the contemporary art world.

Founded by Florence and Elias Katz in 1983, Creativity Explored has expanded to two locations: the main gallery and studio on Sixteenth Street in San Francisco's Mission District, and a second studio in nearby Potrero Hill. Gallery programming now includes six exhibitions per year, with more than 10,000 people visiting the gallery and studio annually. This year's remaining calendar of exhibitions includes *Bride of Monster*, a small group exhibition that reinterprets female monsters from film, folklore, and mythology in wild and woolly new ways; and the Annual Holiday Art Shop, a well-loved shopping tradition in which Creativity Explored's studio and gallery are filled with original art prints, paintings, drawings, ceramics, sculptures, and textiles by more than 135 artists.

Over the years, the organization's innovative and respected programs have been recognized as a model in the field of art and disability worldwide. In addition to the studios, exhibitions, and gallery sales, Creativity Explored has developed a licensing division, working with the likes of Google, affordable modern furnishing company CB2, and fashion house COMMES de GARÇONS; and provides art services for several properties, including affordable developments by BRIDGE Housing and Avalon Mission Bay, an upscale apartment community.

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Images for *Bride of Monster* may be downloaded from the Press Room at the Creativity Explored website: <https://www.creativityexplored.org/press-room/3577/bride-of-monster>

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