

# LewAllenGalleries

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## Tom Palmore: *Animal Encounters*

**Exhibition Dates:** July 27 – August 19, 2018  
**Artist Reception:** Fri. July 27<sup>th</sup>: 5 – 7  
**Gallery Hours:** Mon – Fri, 10 – 6; Sat, 10 – 5;  
Sun, 11 – 5

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*Wolf Wolf,*  
Acrylic and oil on canvas, 24 x 24 in



*Southern Beauty,*  
Acrylic and oil on canvas. 16 x 20 in

**Santa Fe, NM** – For more than 45 years, Tom Palmore has painted enchanting portraits of animals with a refined attention to detail, stunning technical prowess, and characteristic wit. His ultra-real renderings of animals are instantly recognizable for their surprising blend of humor, surrealism, and hyperrealism. In his new exhibition at LewAllen Galleries, *Animal Encounters*, Palmore's art continues to playfully investigate the engaging traditions of portraiture, encouraging us to examine our reactions to a painted world where the expected is upended. The exhibit opens with an artist reception from 5-7 PM on Friday, July 27 and remains on view through August 19.

Palmore has been widely regarded for decades for his precisely detailed and carefully-composed arrangements on canvas, but also for his clever titles, technical acuity, and witty references to the history of art and culture. Vastly beyond literal replicas of wildlife, Palmore's art mixes the clever, the absurd, the charming and, the surreal, and the provocative. Painted with incredible, ultra-fine brushwork, Palmore's animals and birds pause from their lives in the wild to pose as models for Palmore, staged theatrically in front of backdrops ranging from curtains to petroglyphs, potted plants to *toile de jouy*.

These juxtaposed elements are painted with the guise of complete conceivability, until closer examination reveals their improbable combination. In these unlikely but plausible associations,

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Palmore's sitters and studio-portrait backdrops reference both historic and contemporary portraiture and serve to evoke a fantastical sense of magical realism. One is encouraged to wonder about the self-awareness of these creatures: though posed within unfamiliar, artificial settings, they remain surrounded by imagery or patterning that links them through memory, association, or perhaps even their own sense of the familiar.

The paintings on view in *Animal Encounters* challenge our preconceptions about wildlife and inspire us to view each of his subjects as individuals rather than as anonymous creatures. With intelligence, charm and a gentle wit, Palmore's art raises questions about the cultural space allotted to nature within the contemporary world. Rendering his wolves, bobcats, monkeys, and tropical birds with a sense of nobility, dignity, and eloquence, Palmore reminds his audience that these remarkable creatures can be regarded as partners alongside their human counterparts.

"Palmore's ability to replicate the supple texture of an animal's coat with thousands of tiny, individually painted hairs seems to defy all traditional painting practices, and has placed him on the national art map," writes Julie Sasse, Chief Curator at the Tucson Museum of Art. "While his paintings often contain portraits of wildlife, they are not simply deft illustrations. Palmore's seductive gorillas, stoic bulls, and regal dogs and cats seem to pose with all the sophistication and pride of human sitters. They are manifestations of the artist's sense of humor, his outlook on the world, and his contribution to the continuum of painting as a discipline."



*Navajo Cat,*  
Acrylic & oil on canvas, 25 x 30 in



*Don't Be Fooled by the Good Looks,*  
Acrylic & oil on canvas, 24 x 18 in

Born in Oklahoma in 1945, Palmore's education in art occurred at several institutions, concluding at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts in Philadelphia in 1969. At the age of 25, his art was included in a Whitney Annual Exhibition and later chosen for inclusion in the Venice Biennale. His work appears in numerous corporate collections and in such prominent public collections as the Smithsonian Institution, the Whitney Museum of American Art, the Brooklyn Museum, the Philadelphia Museum of Art, and the National Museum of Wildlife Art.