

# Barbara Meikle

Barbara Meikle Fine Art, May 25-June 24



Afternoon Daydreams, oil, 30 x 20.

MANY LONGTIME visitors to Santa Fe's Canyon Road art district are familiar with Barbara Meikle. Her vibrant and colorful depictions of animals seem to come alive with vital energy, as real as the actual animals she often brings to her gallery for visits. Meikle's eccentric outlook and unique artistic vision help raise money for several local and national animal-rescue organizations every year. And she has no intention of slowing down. Meikle presents her annual one-woman show this month featuring a new body of work. The show, titled *Color to the Rescue*, opens on Friday, May 25, with an artist's reception at 7 p.m.

While the artist had always loved animals when growing up, she found a new passion for rescue animals when she visited the Longhopes Donkey Shelter in Bennett, CO. "It just made sense to use my art to help them somehow, and once you start doing it, it's so rewarding that you can't stop," Meikle says. "I feel my heart is not strong enough to do the physical rescuing, but I can raise money."

However, last year Meikle became personally acquainted with the act of rescuing an animal. She saved her horse, Felina, from a kill pen in Louisiana. After months of health assessments and rehabilitation, the 3-year-old filly is now living with Meikle and offering a treasure trove of inspiration for the artist. Her piece *DOUBLE THE PAINT*, which is based on Felina, features two horses against a background of chaotic color. "One is very composed and sweet-looking, while the other one is more wild and crazy," Meikle says. "But they are both parts of Felina's personality." The show features around 20 new pieces, including several paintings of Felina, as well as renderings of donkeys, eagles, wolves, and some landscapes and still lifes.

The artist is influenced by the Fauves, a group of artists known for using vibrant colors and bold, painterly brush strokes. She says living in New Mexi-



Spring Vortex, oil, 18 x 36.



▲ Double the Paint, oil, 30 x 30.  
◀ Tug of War, oil, 24 x 20.

co has also pushed her to experiment with brighter and bolder colors in her palette. “I have always been a colorist and have worked with as many colors as I can,” Meikle says. “It’s all very emotional, which is what I like to paint.” Recently, the artist’s experiments have verged on abstraction, as the lines of the subject seem to melt into the background. “When I try to integrate the background with the subject matter, there’s this feeling of movement,” she

says. “It’s like the animals might not stay on the canvas very long; it feels like they might just run away.”

While philanthropy has always been a part of Meikle’s work, she wanted to focus this show on rescues to help bring even more awareness to the animals that are often forgotten. “You don’t think of a horse or a donkey or a pig needing rescue,” she says. “All we can do is educate people as much as we can and get them to make the

right decisions for their animals. The stories don’t always end like Felina’s, but when they do, it’s wonderful.”  
—Mackenzie McCreary

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**contact information**

505.992.0400

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