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VISUAL ARTS & ARCHITECTURE: **The wondrous act of creation**

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Carlo Collodi's 1883 classic, "The Adventures of Pinocchio," has fascinated artist Jim Dine since childhood. With 16 works from the late 1990s through 2007, Trinity Gallery's "Pinocchio: The Lost Boy" highlights Dine's examination of both the Pinocchio character and the act of creation.



Photo courtesy Pace Editions

Jim Dine's 'Pinocchio in a Caul' cuts a sophisticated transitional figure.

REVIEW

Jim Dine: "Pinocchio: The Lost Boy" Through Dec. 8. 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Tuesdays-Fridays; 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Saturdays. Prices: \$5,300-\$294,000. Trinity Gallery, 315 E. Paces Ferry Road, Atlanta. 404-237-0370, www.trinitygallery.com.

Bottom line: An elegantly executed exploration of the Pinocchio story and the creative process.

One of the most striking pieces in the show is "Pink Wash." It dramatically illustrates the woodcarver's process, as the puppet's head literally rises out of a tree trunk. "Blind Boy" verges on disturbing, a 9-foot Pinocchio looming on spindly legs with outstretched arms. Eyes remain undefined in a spare and startling totem to naiveté and vulnerability.

"Pinocchio in a Caul" exemplifies Dine's love of printmaking. Texture, primary color and line blend in a sophisticated portrayal of Pinocchio's evolving maturity. Sunny, yolk-colored paint surrounds the figure, as though the artist gives birth not only to the boy, but to awareness itself.

Reminiscent of his portraits of the 1970s, Dine's "Red Pants II" captures Pinocchio's wonder as his transformation from wood to flesh continues. Deep blue and energized mark-making add a vaguely disquieting edge. "The Red One" elicits a more visceral reaction, as Dine exploits a single color with impressive results — a lifelike Pinocchio in a wash of fiery paint.

Most often associated with the Pop movement, Dine rose to acclaim in the mid-1960s along with Andy Warhol and Claes Oldenbourg. Like his counterparts at the time, he elevates the ordinary to iconic proportions, interpreting and reinterpreting his subject matter in varied mediums and techniques.

Exhibited in major collections worldwide, Dine is a dedicated, prolific and innovative printmaker. In these variations on Pinocchio, he treats us to etching, lithography, intaglio, woodcut and photogravure. While one or two works in the show approach cartoon style (to my mind, less evocative), the artist deftly mines a familiar allegorical tale with great tenderness. De facto he establishes another rich, thematic series, while poignantly illustrating the relationship between artist and creation.