



LAURA BALL

Chimera



Within the mind of Laura Ball lies a primordial land of endangered plants and animals—what she calls “my ark for the dwindling biodiversity of the planet.” Her large works combine vastly different animals, and are the subject of an upcoming solo exhibition at the Denver-based David B. Smith Gallery titled *Chimera*.

A chimera, the artist explains, is an

individual creature composed of two or more genetic tissues. It’s a theme that Ball has explored in the past, although she notes, “For this show, I’m using a lot more botanical imagery. I’m also thinking about carnivorous plants and animals, and combining the two.” The largest piece in the show will be 75 by 51 inches and features three tigers surrounding and twisting among each other.

She found inspiration for this series in the collection of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, particularly their Indian miniature paintings, which feature animals like deer, elephants and rabbits in motion and decorated with gilt gold.

Her *Tree of Knowledge* is based on the Persian myth of the Vaq tree, which has animals and humans growing out of its branches and disperses knowledge and



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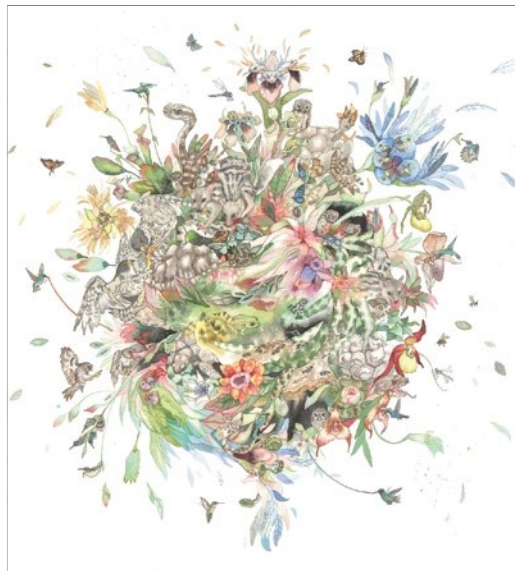
information. Her version features vines and branches that scroll across the entire page and end in giraffes, leopards and numerous other creatures. Ball says, "This piece is really the culmination of everything I'm working on."

Though Ball has a rough outline of what she wants a work to look like when she begins, she says, "Usually the only thing that is preplanned is the palette." Instead, she lets whatever research she's doing in the moment guide her, letting the piece expand and grow naturally.

"I am consistently amazed by Laura Ball's intricate and energetic works," says Marsha Mack, associate director at David B. Smith Gallery. "She has a material sensibility and an adeptness for composition that consistently puts her at the top of her genre."

Chimera opens December 14 with a reception from 6 to 8 p.m. and continues through January 26. ●

David B. Smith Gallery 1543 A Wazee Street • Denver, CO 80202 • (303) 893-4234 • www.davidbsmithgallery.com



4

1
Red Wolf,
watercolor,
graphite, gold
foil and acrylic
polymer, 32 x 44"

2
Floral Fantasy,
watercolor,
graphite, gold
foil and acrylic
polymer, 30 x 22"

3
*Assembly of
the Animals
1*, watercolor,
graphite, gold foil
and acrylic polymer,
51½ x 32"

4
Botanary Mandala,
watercolor,
graphite, gold
foil and acrylic
polymer, 22 x 20"