

M. Mararian's  
**INKY DREADFULS**

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**For Immediate Release**

ARTIST **MICHAEL MARARIAN** ANNOUNCES HIS LARGEST EXHIBITION TO DATE AT COREY HELFORD GALLERY—  
**PHOBIAS, FOIBLES AND FIENDS**

**Exhibition Dates: July 19 – August 9, 2008**  
**Opening Reception: Saturday, July 19, 2008. 7 p.m. – 10 p.m.**

(New York, NY, February 28, 2008) – **Michael Mararian** of M. Mararian's *Inky Dreadfuls*, today announced an upcoming major exhibition of new works, *Phobias, Foibles and Fiends*, at **Corey Helford Gallery in Culver City, California**. The exhibition features an installation of over thirty macabre ink renderings; Mararian's most extensive collection of works since his two sold-out exhibitions at Corey Helford Gallery. Mararian's drawings reflect a humorous, yet intense personal examination of lost innocence in our modern society, dealing with psychological fears, character flaws, and complexes of the human *id*. Inspired by his previous exhibition, *Little Unfortunates*, Mararian magnifies the three different traits each of his subjects embody, "phobias, foibles, and fiends".

Each work is hand drawn in various ink forms, crudely brushed and scratched at times for a gritty, textured aesthetic. His are nostalgic scenarios of childhood naiveté with a charming, sinister twist. Beginning first with a drawing then initial strokes in black India ink, Mararian then uses rapidographs, archival brush pens, to smudge and blend, creating dramatic effects. The subjects are drawn as if they are paper cutouts, evoking Victorian paper dolls, and acting as a bridge for the viewer between traditional virtues and modern day corruption. This technique also serves to create a focal point for the works and narrative. Mararian expresses the dark side of human nature through his family portraits. On a visual level, by allotting each artwork a distinctly shaped frame to define its character, Mararian subtly intensifies the viewer's response. Squares represent fear, circles wrath, and rectangles symbolize faults and weakness.

Juxtaposing the virtuous image of a little child with boldly exposed inner cruelty, Mararian creates humorous vignettes, fictitious moments of life captured in time. "I am continually fascinated by the power of children," states Mararian, "the reactions they generate from viewers, and the simple way they permeate our core." Mararian uses multiple figurative images from both contemporary and vintage photography, combining parts of these various elements to create an amalgamation of his own devise. Inspired by new and old journalistic-style photography, as well as cabinet cards and children's picture books, Mararian scours eBay and flea markets to gather the studies for his subjects that then influence the physical traits of the children in his works, as well as their surrounding objects, clothing and furniture. A collector of photography for many years, Mararian is inspired by Shelby Lee Adams, Mary Ellen Mark, Roger Ballen, and E. J. Bellocq. "Seeing real people, real expressions - moments of a hard life captured on people's faces - become inspirational to me."

**ABOUT MICHAEL MARARIAN**

**Michael Mararian** possesses a poetic propensity for taking traditionally cheerful images and concepts and turning them into frightening, yet humorous, tableaux. Focusing on children as the last bastion of innocence, Mararian draws on a diverse range of influences to deliver the peculiar ink work he aptly calls, M. Mararian's *Inky Dreadfuls*. Though often shrouded in the macabre, Michael's ink paintings are also suffused with a sense of mischievous, almost self-deprecating humor. What can on one level be construed as melancholy and cruel, can alternately be viewed as amusing, even charming. He enjoys letting his viewers decide.

Raised as an only child in Massachusetts, Mararian delves into his fantasy of being a child among many. Primarily a self-taught artist and children's theater playwright, he is a graduate of the Art and Theater program at the University of Bridgeport, as well having studied briefly at the Art Students League in New York City. His work has previously been shown at Corey Helford Gallery and Thinkspace Gallery in Los Angeles, Galerie D'Art Yves Laroche in Montreal, and McCaig-Welles Gallery in New York City. Artistic influences include Edward Gorey, Lewis Carroll and Norman Rockwell. Michael currently resides and practices his art in Brooklyn, New York, with his wife Elizabeth and their two cats, 99 and Mavis. For more information on the fine art of Michael Mararian, please visit the artist's website at [www.inkydreadfuls.com](http://www.inkydreadfuls.com), or email [info@inkydreadfuls.com](mailto:info@inkydreadfuls.com).

**ABOUT COREY HELFORD GALLERY**

Located in the Culver City Art District, Corey Helford Gallery was established in April 2006 by Jan Corey Helford and her husband, television producer and creator, Bruce Helford (The Drew Carey Show, George Lopez, The Oblongs). Passionate art collectors, the Helfords are producers on the art documentary *The Treasures of Long Gone John* and have partnered to open their first gallery. Corey Helford Gallery presents a wide range of artists, from members of the new fine art movement, such as Andrew Brandou, Natalia Fabia, Korin Faight, Eric Joyner, Brandi Milne, David Stoupakis, and award-winning photographer Chris Anthony, to early Modernist William S. Schwartz. Notable shows include *Charity By Numbers*, which was co-curated by Gary Baseman and featured an unprecedented lineup of artists including Mark Ryden, Marion Peck, Shepard Fairey, Todd and Kathy Schorr, Camille Rose Garcia, and Michael Hussar. Corey Helford Gallery presents new exhibitions approximately every four weeks. For more information and an upcoming exhibition schedule, please visit [coreyhelfordgallery.com](http://coreyhelfordgallery.com).

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