

TOM EVERHART

Curls Gone Wild



Paintings from Tom Everhart's *Curls Gone Wild* Series, Acrylic and Varnish on Paper

No one knows Snoopy like Tom Everhart. A longtime friend of Charles M. Schulz, Everhart studies the world-famous beagle with a lasting devotion rarely seen in the trend-hopping world of contemporary art. “Part of my ongoing theme is a new way of seeing, a new way of feeling,” says Everhart. “So Snoopy isn’t a character in this work; he’s what I make of him.”

For Everhart, each image has special meaning—the titles are numbered with times and dates associated with the person who inspired the painting. The series as a whole also has particular significance for Everhart. “In 1989,” he says, “I went through chemotherapy and all of my hair fell out. All my life I had curly hair, but when it grew back, it grew in thin and straight. I asked them, will my hair ever go back to the way it was? It’s been eighteen years now since then, and exactly fifteen years after chemotherapy, my hair started to grow in curly again. That was one of the things that kept me thinking about hair, about curls.”

There is joy in the way Tom Everhart explores curls, blowing up Schulz’s strips and mapping lines with the methodical rigor of a cartographer. In the artist’s skilled hand, Schulz’s signature line becomes something else – a bold black stroke that recalls the decisive brushstroke of Japanese ink drawings.

A master colorist, Everhart transforms simple dots and lines into new ways of seeing. “The dots come from the way my sight changed when I moved to Southern California” he says. “I was walking on the beach in California, along the boardwalk, and I looked at the beams of light under the boardwalk. Those rectangles of light were made up of dots—that’s exactly how they appeared. It’s an optical illusion, but if you looked at the light in between the shadows of the boardwalk, you would see it the same way.”

At first glance, Everhart’s images may seem like simple, lighthearted versions of the classic Peanuts™ characters. But like Snoopy himself they are subtly profound, with layer upon layer of color and line. “My work is continuing to evolve. I had this collaboration with Charles Schulz, and since his death that collaboration has ended. I want to keep the work growing, because keeping the work growing means that it’s alive... It’s always changing.”