

TIBOR DE NAGY

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Trevor Winkfield, "Voyage I," 1995, acrylic on linen. Credit...Trevor Winkfield,

via Tibor de Nagy Gallery; Photo by Adam Reich

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The octogenarian artist Trevor Winkfield has earned a following by making sui generis paintings that look like they could be Pop Art but have nothing to do with mass culture. In fact, many of Winkfield's inspirations come from the heraldry and architecture of his native England, as well as ancient and medieval imagery, but he paints in a flat, blocky, polychromatic style.

The resulting works feature objects like fish, fruit and playing cards balanced on or floating alongside mechanistic constructions. They have a totemic air that dips into absurdity, not least because of their candy-colored palette.

Winkfield has worked mostly on a small scale, but the paintings in this exhibition, "[The Mermaid's Revenge](#)," were made when he had access to a larger studio, in the 1990s. They are big and dizzyingly complex. "Voyage I," which stretches six feet wide, stars a creature with a mask-like human head, camel legs and rows of flowers for a body. It moves through a space that resembles a riotous nursery. "The Student" also appears to be on a journey, using a pot to catch ideas that fall like snowflakes from lightbulbs.

What does it all mean? There are hints of narrative threads, but ultimately Winkfield's images are symbolic, sort of like tarot cards. That's part of what makes them so compelling: They're rigorously ordered by a logic we can't understand. *JILLIAN STEINHAUER*