

Television

Two Arkansas women on next round of *America's Top Model*
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ARTBEAT

Mark Blaney exhibit is 'Sublime' experience

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Mark Blaney's "Short Stories of the Sublime" lives up to its billing.

The Russellville artist's works often inspire wonder and, even in smaller paintings, a sense of majesty.

Beech and Birds (\$650), which at 10-by-13 inches is one of the show's smaller works, is a stunning watercolor that evokes the color palette of Maxfield Parrish. Though compact and tightly focused on a portion of a tree, it manages to convey an unbounded spaciousness and, probably because of the color choices, a nostalgic glow.

Cottonwood Walker (\$600), another smallish watercolor, is striking for its near photorealistic approach that is a strong stylistic



Mark Blaney's *Beech and Birds* is a watercolor on paper. The 10-by-13-inch work is part of his exhibit at Greg Thompson Fine Art.

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contrast to the other canvases. At 9½ by 11 inches, it still feels cinematic, as though one could be walking behind the distant figure.

For sublime on a grand scale, *Crows Through Willow Oaks* (\$7,000) more than qualifies, with concept, execution and size. The 48-by-72-inch oil on canvas feels magical, as the crows seem to blend in, chameleon-like, with the trees. It plays like a scene from a novel by Canadian fantasy writer Charles de Lint.

Blaney's painted and hanging ceramics charm, particularly the romantic *Bedding* (\$2,900). A man embraces a woman as the sheets hang on the line, waving in the breeze.

In this show, Blaney proves he deserves a place among the best.

Mark Blaney, "Short Stories of the Sublime," Greg Thompson Fine Art, 429 Main St., North Little Rock, through March 12. Hours: 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Tuesday-Friday, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Saturday. gregthompsonfineart.com or (501) 664-2787.

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