

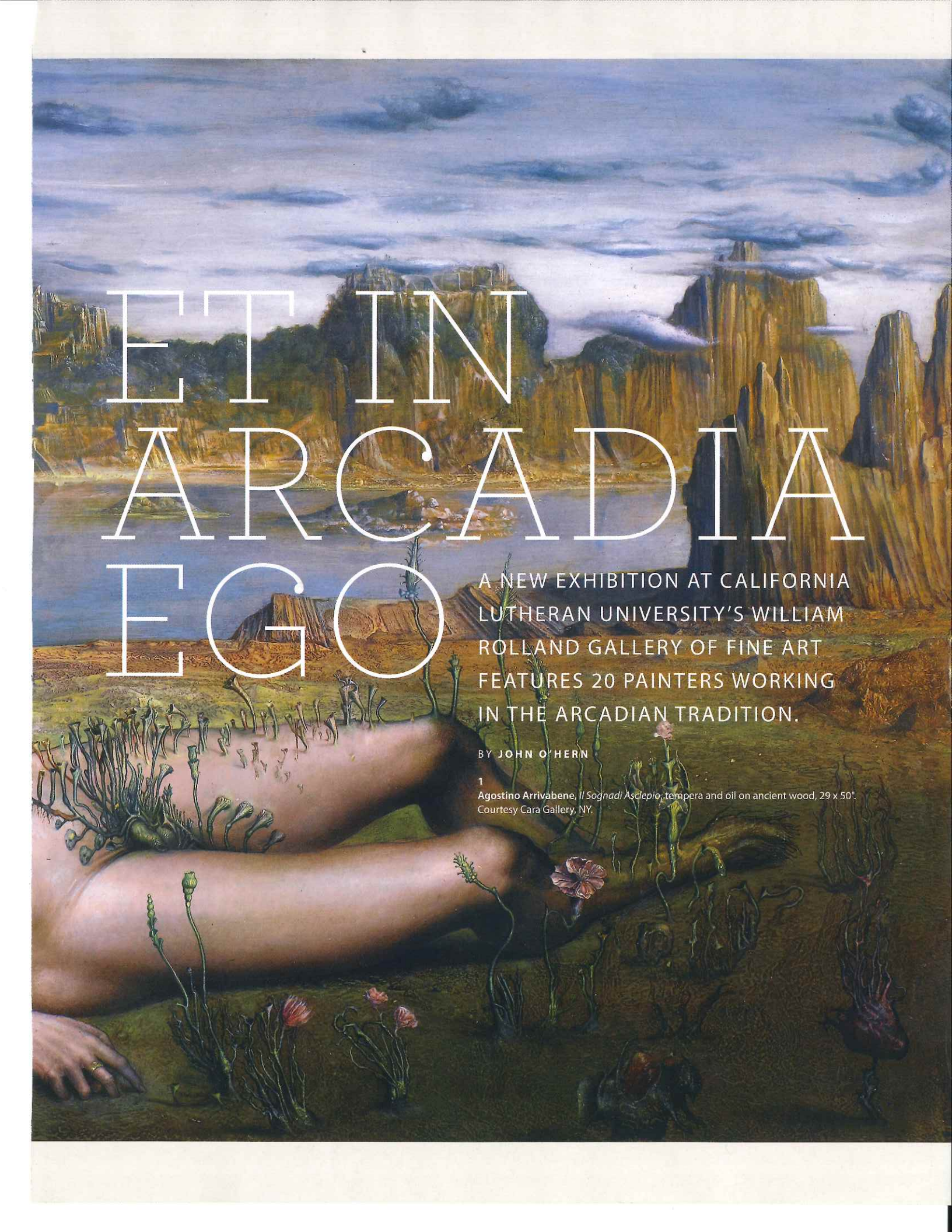
From June 2, 2016 - October 2, 2016 New Museum Los Gatos (NUMU), together with guest curator, artist and writer, David Molesky, presented *Et in Arcadia Ego*, an exhibition focused on the history and contemporary re-interpretation of the mythological theme of Arcadia.

Inspired by the 17th century Nicolas Poussin painting of the same name, *Et in Arcadia Ego* is translated to mean: "Even in Arcadia, there am I," alluding to the inevitable impermanence of the ideal. The exhibition will explore the timeless myth of Arcadia as it has been represented by artists and writers, employing concepts such as: the sublime, the paradox of living, beauty and longing, paradise lost, and the golden hour. *Et in Arcadia Ego* explores these themes as they are reinterpreted and reinvented through the eyes of contemporary artists.

Artists featured in the exhibition work consistently with Arcadian themes in figurative and landscape painting, exploring what it means to be human in the temporal world while standing on the precipice to the next. Artists in the original NUMU exhibit included: David Ligare, Odd Nerdrum, Astrid Preston, Julie Heffernan, Arthur Mathews, Theodore Wores, Holly Lane, Brad Kunkle, Agostino Arrivabene, Kim Keever, Jason Yarmosky, Maria Kreyn, Robin F. Williams, Seamus Conley, Aron Wiesenfeld, Gillian Pederson Krag, Sandow Birk, and Stephanie Peek.

After closing at NUMU, the exhibition went on to travel to the William Rolland Gallery at California Lutheran University in Thousand Oaks, CA. The attached article from the periodical *American Art Collector* refers to the exhibition as presented at the William Rolland Gallery.





ET IN ARCADIA EGO

A NEW EXHIBITION AT CALIFORNIA
LUTHERAN UNIVERSITY'S WILLIAM
ROLLAND GALLERY OF FINE ART
FEATURES 20 PAINTERS WORKING
IN THE ARCADIAN TRADITION.

BY JOHN O'HERN

1
Agostino Arrivabene, *Il Sognadi Asclepio*, tempera and oil on ancient wood, 29 x 50".
Courtesy Cara Gallery, NY.



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In Charles Ryder's rooms at Oxford there was an unusual object. He recounts in Evelyn Waugh's novel *Brideshead Revisited*, a "skull lately purchased from the School of Medicine, which, resting in a bowl of roses, formed, at the moment, the chief decoration of my table. It bore the motto *Et in Arcadia ego* inscribed on its forehead." Waugh titled the first book of the novel "*Et in Arcadia Ego*."

A skull in a university student's rooms could be a bit of macabre whimsy. But, in the setting of the novel, it takes on its classic role as a *memento mori*, a reminder of death and the ephemeral nature of beauty, as it does in lush 17th-century Dutch still lifes.

The phrase "*Et in Arcadia Ego*" is commonly translated from the Latin as "Even in Arcadia, there am I," referring to Death's presence even in the bucolic, Eden-like Arcadia of shepherds and shepherdesses. Sometimes it is translated as the utterance of a dead person, "I, too, lived in Arcadia".

Its significance for Ryder is his recollection of an idyllic time past, his being a middle class outsider in the rarified life of the country house, *Brideshead*, and the inevitable death of individuals as well as masses in time of war.

Both translations have plagued the interpretation of a painting in the Louvre, *Et in Arcadia Ego* by Nicolas Poussin (1594-1665). In an idyllic setting, classically

robed shepherds cluster around a tomb with a barely legible inscription, "*Et in Arcadia Ego*." One shepherd crouches down to trace the outline of the letters and touching his own shadow—foreshadowing, as it were, his own death. The inscription may be Death speaking, or it may be the dead in the tomb reminding the young shepherds that their idyll will end.

David Molesky is an artist and a curator. He has assembled an exhibition inspired by Poussin's painting. He writes, "From this iconic painting we can distill three essential qualities: the idealized landscape, the shepherd as outsider figure and the contemplation of mortality. For this exhibition, we have selected 20 painters from both American coasts and Europe who work within the Arcadian tradition. Although each work contains all the identified concepts, the exhibited works have been grouped into these three sections to deepen our understanding of how each aspect of Arcadian myth is reinterpreted by artists today."

Et in Arcadia Ego continues through April 6 at the William Rolland Gallery of Fine Art at California Lutheran University in Thousand Oaks.

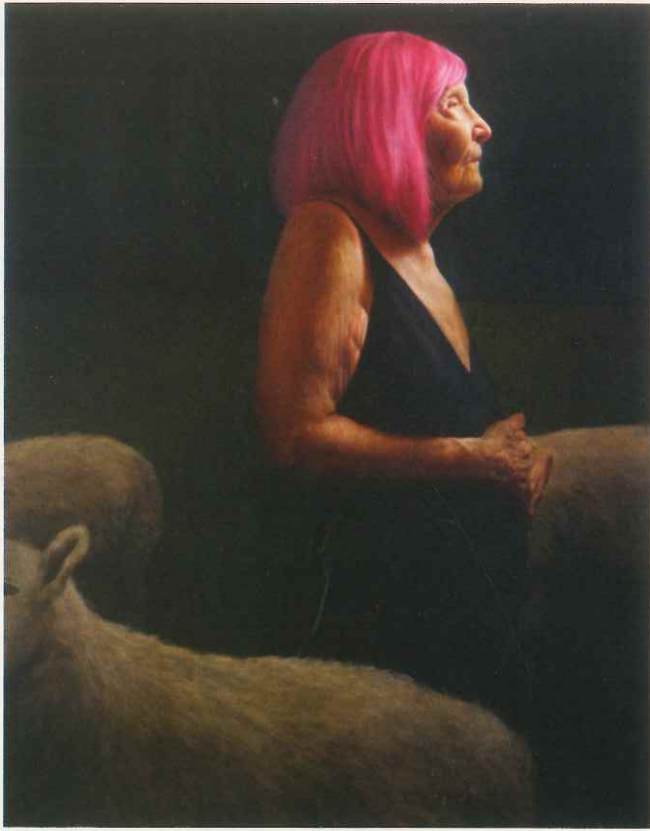
Molesky writes, "The Arcadian landscape exists on the outskirts of wilderness and human settlement. This fringe territory is not nature in its raw form, but a nature partially domesticated by transient human presence. A trodden path or comfy log to sit on helps

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Brad Kunkle,
Reclamation, oil, gold
and silver on wood,
19 x 30". Courtesy
private collection, Brian
Wannamaker.

3
Jason Bard Yarmosky,
Counting Sheep, oil
on canvas, 54 x 39".
Courtesy the artist.

4
Astrid Preston,
Mountain Path, 1989,
oil on canvas, 96 x 72".
Courtesy Craig Krull
Gallery.

5
David Ligare, *Et in
Arcadia Ego*, oil on
linen panel, 40 x 48".
Courtesy Winfield
Gallery, Carmel, CA.



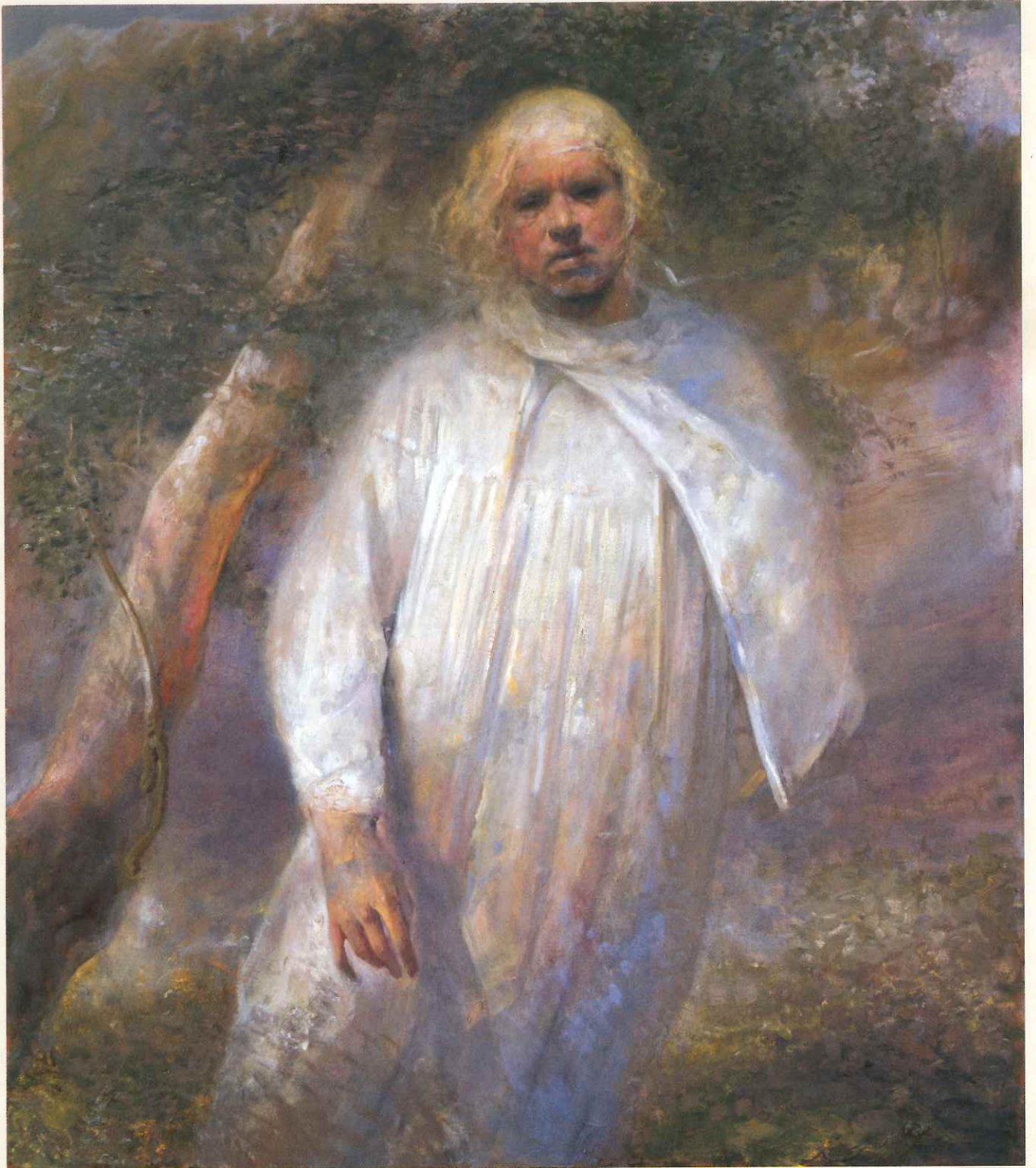
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the next passer through feel comfortable while they experience the bliss that comes from being close to nature.”

He describes shepherds as “civilization’s ambassadors in limbo between human and animal worlds,” and declares, “the great paradox of human consciousness is that we are living while fully aware of our own mortality.”

David Ligare is a painter of historical narrative paintings, having found an Arcadian analogy in the light and landscape of California. He writes of his most recent interpretation of the theme, *Et in Arcadia Ego*, 2016, “In my painting I have moved the figures from their position as actors in the painting and depicted instead a tomb with a bas-relief showing a scene of

the death of Patroclus from Homer’s *Iliad*, set in a landscape that represents the ideal Arcadia transferred over time from Greece, to Sicily, to California.” Ligare’s low light of the golden hour, suggests the passage of time and the coming of the dark of night.

Astrid Preston’s *Mountain Path*, 1989, meanders through an invented landscape. There is neither visual nor atmospheric



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perspective—the size of trees doesn't diminish with distance nor do colors fade in the mist. Walking along the path, there is no progression of time—every spot on the path is a place and a moment to itself. The experience is eternal.

Something has gone awry with the young shepherd in Seamus Conley's monochromatic *Po' Boy*, 2015. The Arcadian hills are shown at night dotted with homes providing security for people who have never seen a shepherd while below a young shepherd mourns the drowning of one of his charges. The tide has gone out on its life.

Jason Bard Yarosky paints his grandparents playfully acting out the youth that continues to live within their aged, octogenarian bodies. His reference to Arcadia occurs in *Counting Sheep*, 2016, as his grandmother stands among them not counting them to get to sleep but gazing defiantly into the dying light adorned in her bright pink wig. She has miles to go before she sleeps. ●



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ET IN ARCADIA EGO

When: Through April 6, 2017

Where: William Rolland Gallery of Fine Art at California Lutheran University, 160 Overton Court, Thousand Oaks, CA 91360

Information: (805) 493-3697, rollandgallery.callutheran.edu



6
Odd Nerdrum, *In Arcadia (Self Portrait)*, oil on linen, 50 x 44".
Courtesy the artist.

7
Sandow Birk, *The Death of Mark Foo at Mavericks*, oil on canvas, 43 x 54".
Courtesy Catharine Clark Gallery.

8
Nicolas Poussin (1594-1665), *Les Bergers d'Arcadie (Et in Arcadia Ego)*, 1637-1638, oil on canvas, 34³/₁₀ x 47¹/₅".
Musée du Louvre, Paris, France.