

Steven Tabbutt

Excerpt from article “Disenchanted Fairy Tales”

By Marion Kling

The works of Steven Tabbutt draw up a narrative framework, a timeline fiction of which the background and the characters are inspired by fairy tales and fables.

Steven adapts wisely the available media to the nature of his discourse and of his ideology struggles. He uses a sharp style with marked outlines, similar to etching, to respond to the underlying violence of his subjects. Nonetheless he longs for harmony in drawing with the simultaneous use of broad spaces and bold and translucent strokes. In parallel the use of mixed media (pastel, crayon, acrylic, photomontage or print) allows him to express the variety of an abounding artistic universe loaded with symbols. As for colors, Steven alternates the softness of lilac and the sharpness of rose and blue. To illustrate color conflicts, he is said to be using a warmer color range “*transmitting through its energy a sense of urgency and of decay*”. For example the stormy sky in “The Big Fab Wolf” suggests “*an imminent apocalypse....*” according to the artist.

Thanks to Steven Tabbutt’s works, drawing and illustration are entering a new age of fame. Their dynamism and novelty fits into the circle of influence of comics and goes beyond the traditional boundaries of the story books, the childish fairy tales coexisting with a disillusioned adult world.