

The Stranger

Currently Hanging: The Grandly Odd Paintings of an Eightysomething Artist About to Have His First-Ever Commercial Gallery Show

by [Jen Graves](#) • Feb 22, 2013 at 2:27 pm



Courtesy the artist and Greg Kucera Gallery

David Byrd, *Soaping Up*, 2005, oil on canvas, 17 by 13 inches, now up at Greg Kucera Gallery, and set to be part of a big show at the gallery in April.

What is that? That's what I asked when I passed the above little painting at Greg Kucera Gallery recently. It was next to this other one below, by the same artist.



Courtesy of the artist and Greg Kucera Gallery
Confab, 1986, oil on canvas, 13 by 16 inches.

Come to find out, these paintings are by someone named **David Byrd**. He's in his 80s. He's been making art his whole life and has shown it at least once in a community center. But he has never before had a show in a commercial gallery, say the organizers of his upcoming big show at Greg Kucera.

Byrd lives in a little town called Sidney Center, New York, upstate, sort of near Binghamton (go SUNY Binghamton).

Another artist who has shown at Kucera, [Jody Isaacson](#), moved to the town and was getting to know her neighbors. "You're an artist?" they said. "There's another artist who lives here, too, but he kind of keeps to himself."

She got to know him and saw how much work he had, and she's been helping him to catalog it all. The upshot will be a large show of about 100 works—paintings, drawings, and sculptures—that will take up the whole bottom floor at Greg Kucera from April 4 to May 18. It will cover various periods of the artist's life. (And Isaacson is scheduled to have a show of her own at the gallery in 2014.)

I'm looking forward to the Byrd show. May all of his works be as modestly, undramatically, folkishly weird.