



Charles Bronson

Independent Curator's Selection

November 16 - December 9, 2006

Commentary by Headbones

Artist Catalog, 'Charles Bronson - Headbones Gallery, The Drawers '  
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# Charles Bronson by Headbones

## Inde-Picks (Independent Curator's Selection)

Confined to a place that rests uneasily between the world of visual arts and some "8x10" cell in the United Kingdom, Charles Bronson's drawings are trying to get out. These drawings can be considered to be on a parallel discourse to the life of the man, himself. Bronson is sentenced to life in prison and is awaiting parole. Solitarily confined for twenty seven years and given minimal art supplies, the artist has created these powerful drawings that depict the life and world of a caged "Madman."

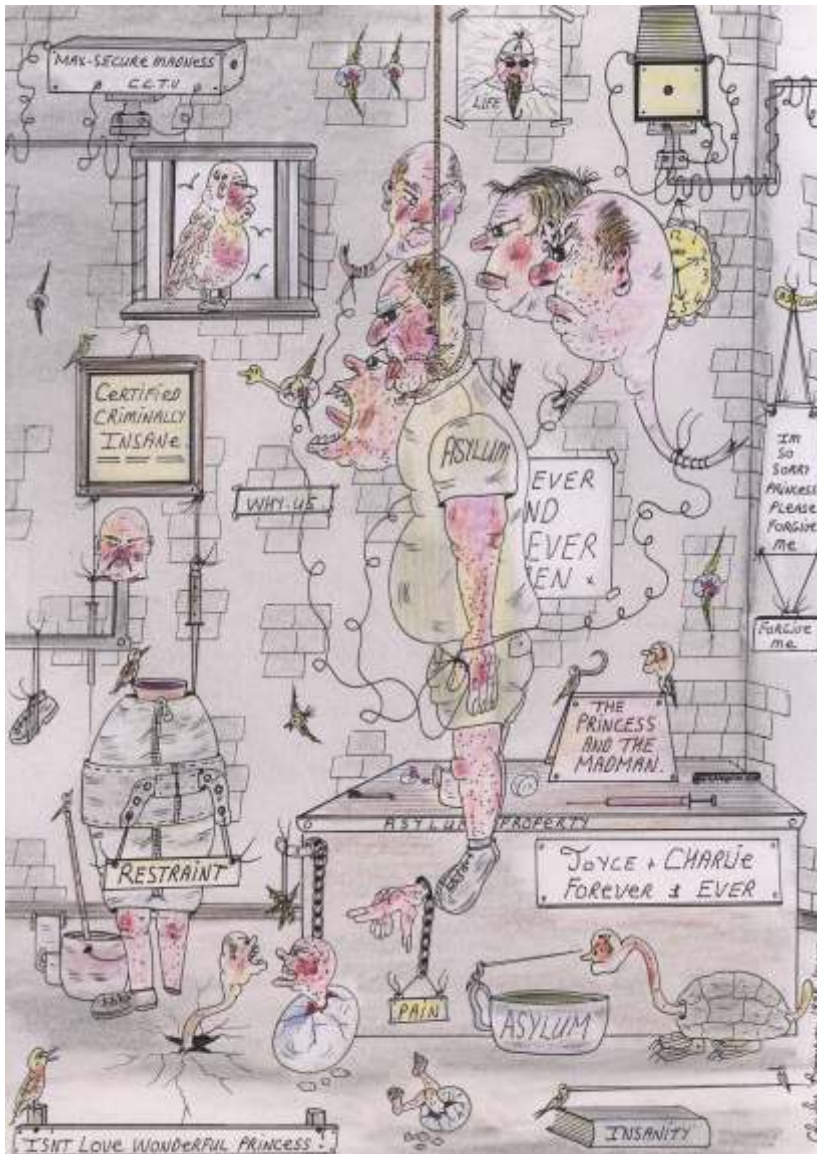
Bronson's drawings tell stories of what it is like 'inside', and for an Outsider, they are compelling. His depictions do not appear to be only about his interpretation from inside the cell or whatever prison he happens to be in, but, also from inside his mind. Charles has created his own vocabulary and identifiable style. Imagery such as closed circuit television cameras, brick or block walls, cracked or broken eggs, birds, turtles, insects, rodents, bald men, ropes, nooses and chains - repeated from drawing to drawing - form the artist's signature. And, like any good story teller, the metaphors abound.

A creative freedom exists in a place where liberties are few. Anything goes when transcribed to paper. Freedom of expression resonates between the walls of Charles Bronson's drawings. With rules crying to be broken, the crimes can and do exist on the artist's page.

An interesting juxtaposition occurs in the drawings where content and style contrast each other. From the context of solitary prison confinement, the pencil work seems to have a therapeutic sense and to exude meditative and soothing qualities. The drawings are sensitive when relating to the palette, line and pencil work. A point of transition then takes place with obsessive controlled coloring. Then by contrast, the imagery is abrasive, forceful, provocative and even gruesome.

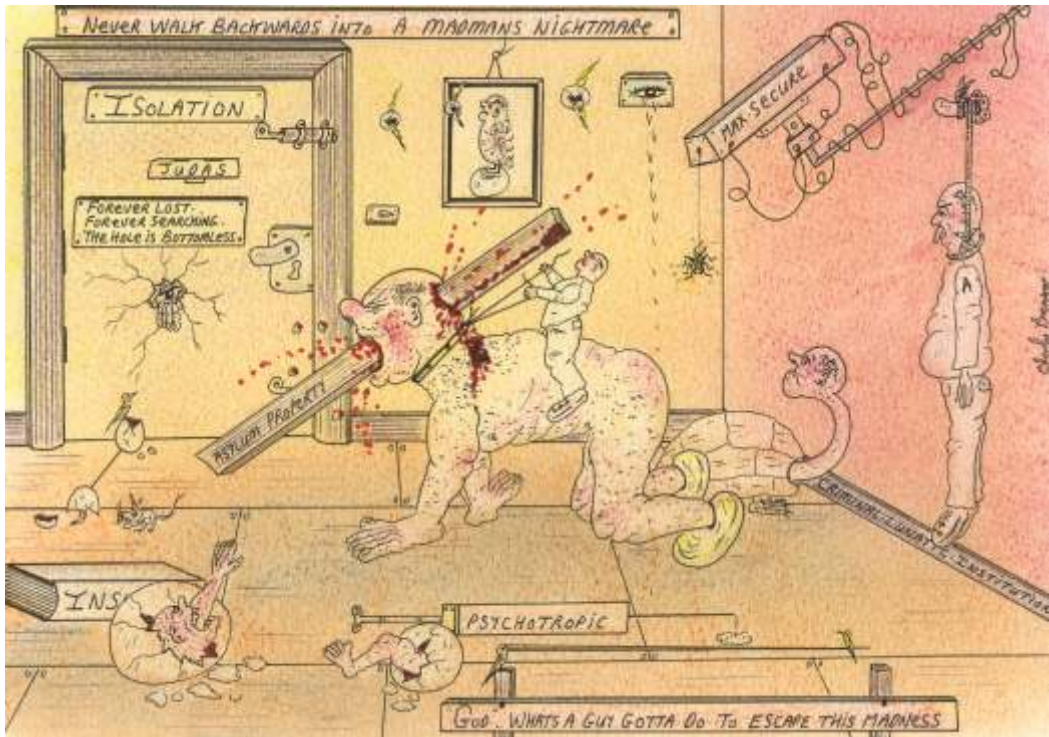
Are crimes still being perpetrated? The jury is deliberating on ten of Charles Bronson's prison drawings; on trial, at Headbones Gallery, Toronto.



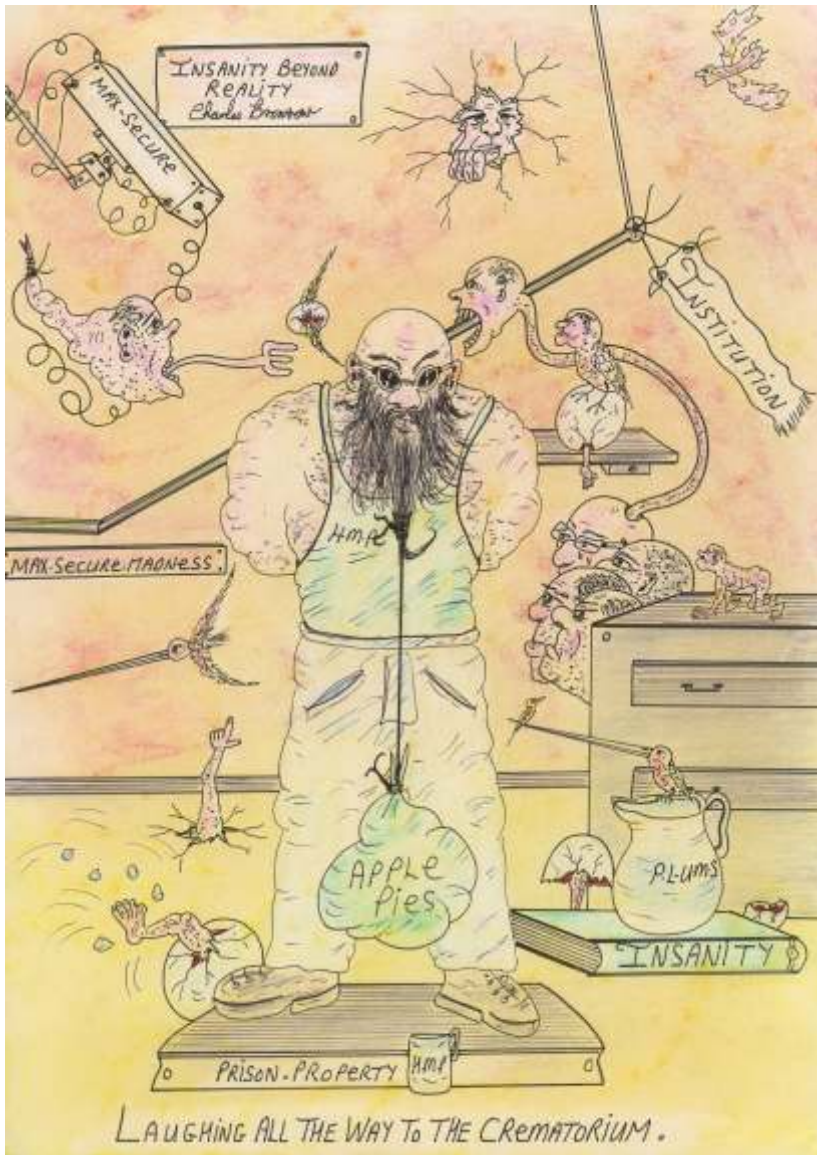


Isn't Love Wonderful  
pencil and ink on paper  
11.75 x 8.25 in  
1998



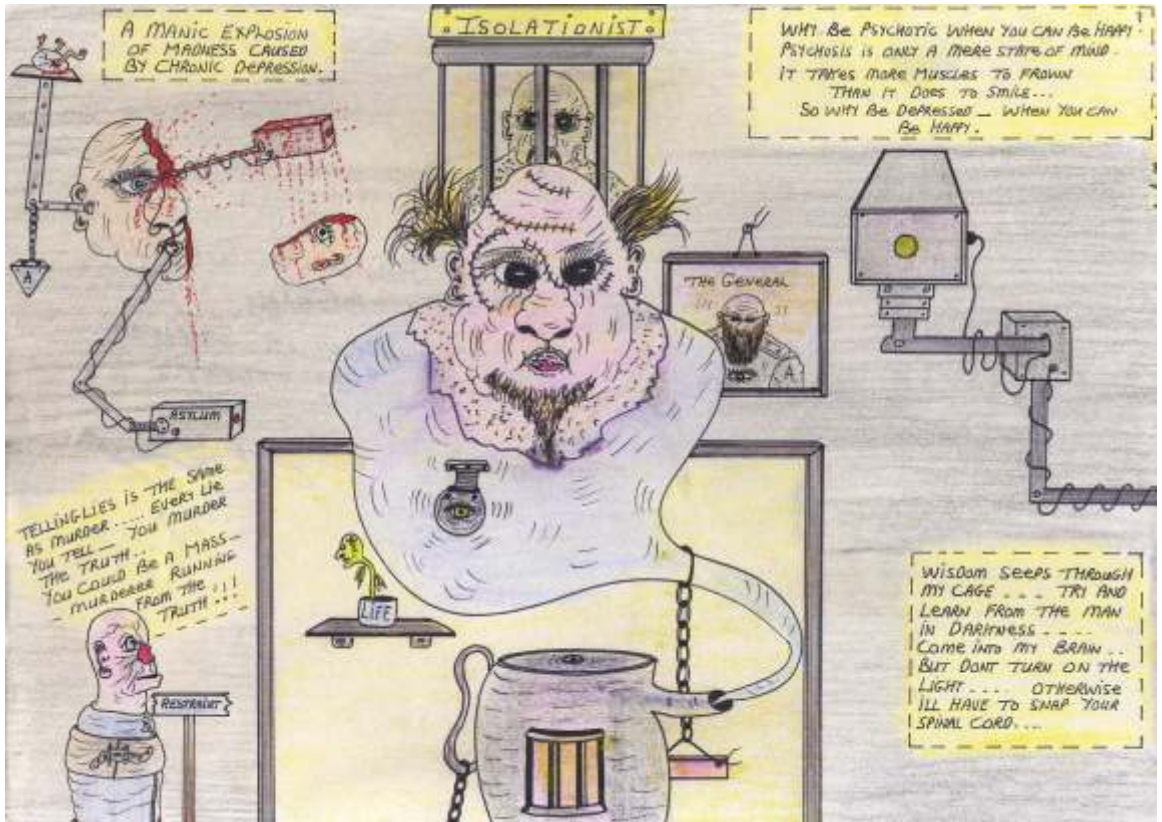


Madman's Nightmare  
pencil and ink on paper  
7 x 10 in  
1999

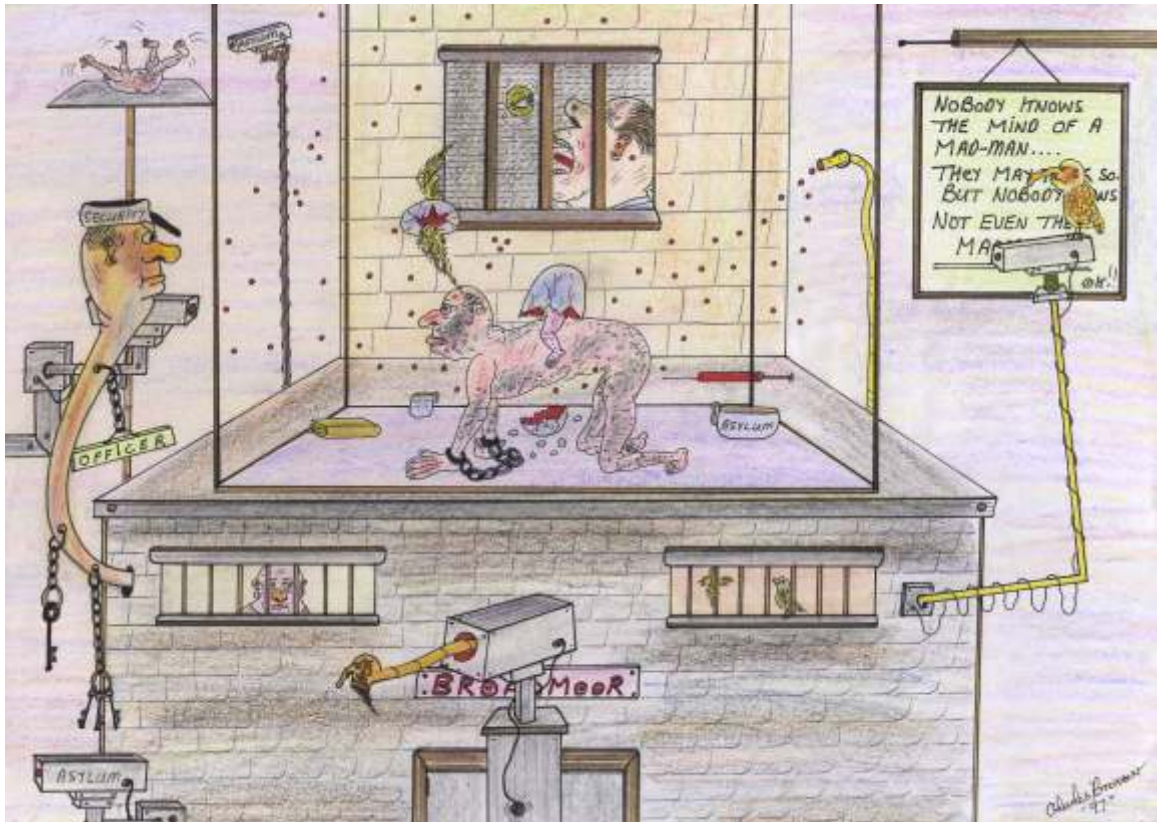


Apple Pies  
pencil and ink on paper  
11.75 x 8.25 in  
1999

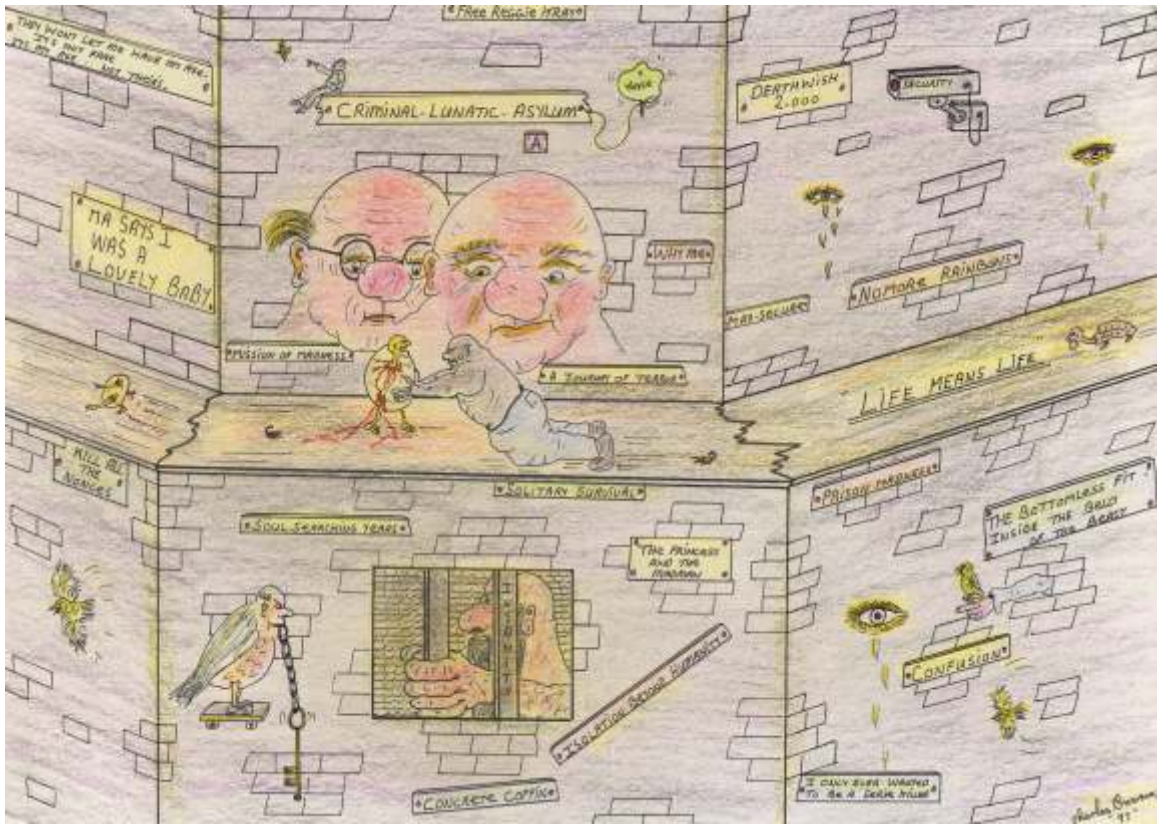




Chronic Depression  
pencil and ink on paper  
8.25 x 11.75 in  
1997



BROADMOOR  
pencil and ink on paper  
8.25 x 11.75 in  
1997



Life Means Life  
pencil and ink on paper  
8.25 x 11.75 in  
1997



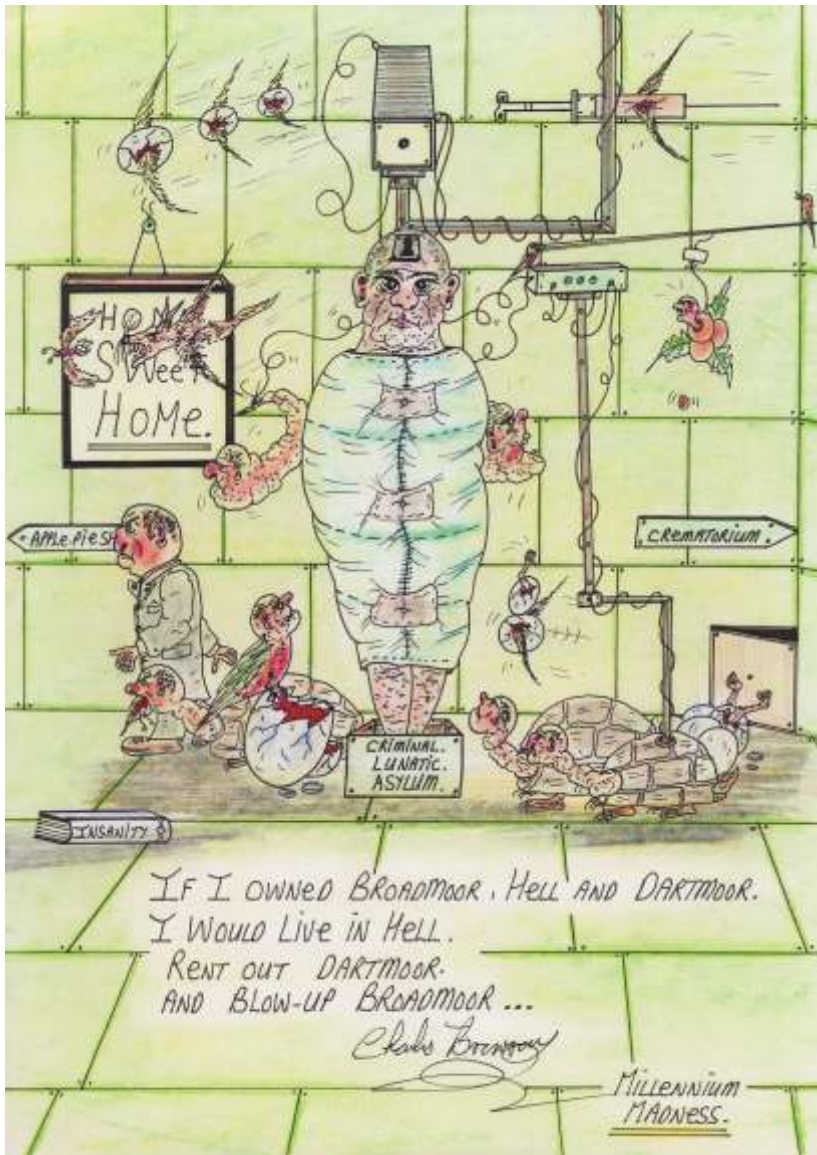


Drop Me Out  
pencil and ink on paper  
8.25 x 11.75 in  
1997



Broncos  
pencil and ink on paper  
8.25 x 11.75 in  
1998





Millennium Madness  
pencil and ink on paper  
11.75 x 8.25 in  
2000

# Charles Bronson

Let's start with some of the facts about Charles Bronson:

- Born Michael Peterson, his name was changed by his fight promoter in 1987. It had nothing to do with the actor Charles Bronson's film "Death Wish" as is usually reported in the newspapers.
- He is now 54 years of age.
- He has NEVER killed anyone!
- He has now spent 32 years in prison, 28 of those years have been spent in solitary confinement.
- He has been subject to both physical and psychological brutality throughout his incarceration.
- He was originally sentenced to 7 years in 1974 for armed robbery - a robbery in which no one was hurt.
- He was released on 30 October 1988 and spent 68 days as a free man.
- Released again on 9 November 1992 and spent 53 days as a free man.
- In 2000 he was sentenced to LIFE with a three year tariff for holding a teacher hostage for 44 hours - a teacher who was not physically harmed by Charlie.
- He has shown no sign of violence for the past five years.
- He has been certified as clinically SANE.
- His art has occupied him for the past ten years and is now his life.
- His artwork is unique and is sent to all corners of the world.
- He has published TEN books.
- He has received numerous prizes for his poetry.

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