



# The Drawers - Headbones Gallery

*Contemporary Drawing, Sculpture and Works on Paper*

Dakota McFadzean

Independent Curator's Selection

November 16 - December 9, 2006



Commentary by David Garneau

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Artist Catalog, 'Dakota McFadzean - Headbones Gallery, The Drawers '  
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Rich Fog Micro Publishing, printed in Toronto, 2006  
Layout and Design, Richard Fogarty

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# Dakota McFadzean by David Garneau

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

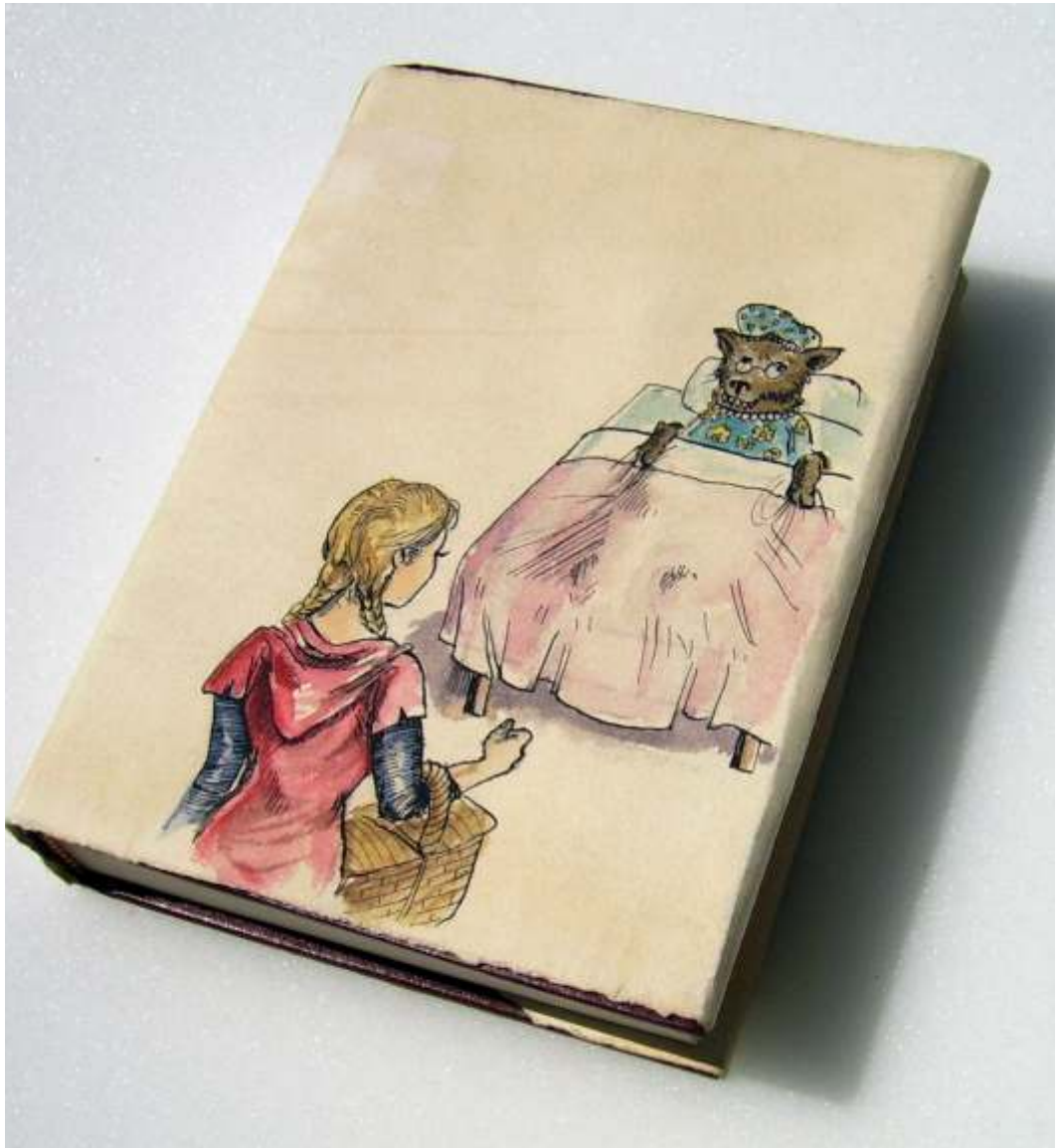
When he worked at the University of Regina Library, Dakota McFadzean often stumbled across porn magazines sandwiched between academic books. He was fascinated by the weird juxtaposition: private texts hidden among public ones; oozing libido contaminating the dry brain food. Were these fugitives jokes? The act of a sex maniac hoping to shock and pervert? An act of generosity? Whatever the reason, the surprising gesture became a source of inspiration.

Dakota's hollow books are one-of-a-kind artist books with comically racy drawings on the dust jackets. Little Red Riding Hood, for instance, enters her grandmother's house on the front cover and shares a post-coital smoke with the Big Bad Wolf on the back. The excavated interiors hold items related to the covers, for example, cigarette butts for the taboo couple. The books were properly catalogued and sent into circulation by the University of Regina Library! Patrons could enjoy them on site or check them out and take them home. Some added to or replaced the secreted items. Someone even provided a condom for Little and Big.

Dakota's naughty behaviour has recently extended to altering thrift store art. He takes these second hand images of third rate art and adds a perverse touch: a giant octopus sinks a ship; a rabbit-headed patrician plays chess with an perturbed (and unaltered guest) as a panda-headed observer smiles idiotically; bleeding men in top hats and frock coats haunt the streets of postcard villages; deformed changlings replace babies in otherwise sweet domestic scenes.

In both operations, Dakota makes small subversions into the routine world and our habitual imaginaries. He scratches the thin surface of the real to allow the dream and nightmare realms to leak into the daylight. Creeping fears and pleasures populate his pictures with forbidden and desired possibilities. His nonsense is delightful, but it is his sense keeps me coming back. While some pieces are absurdities, many are jokes, irruptions from the unconscious, symptoms seeking resolution.

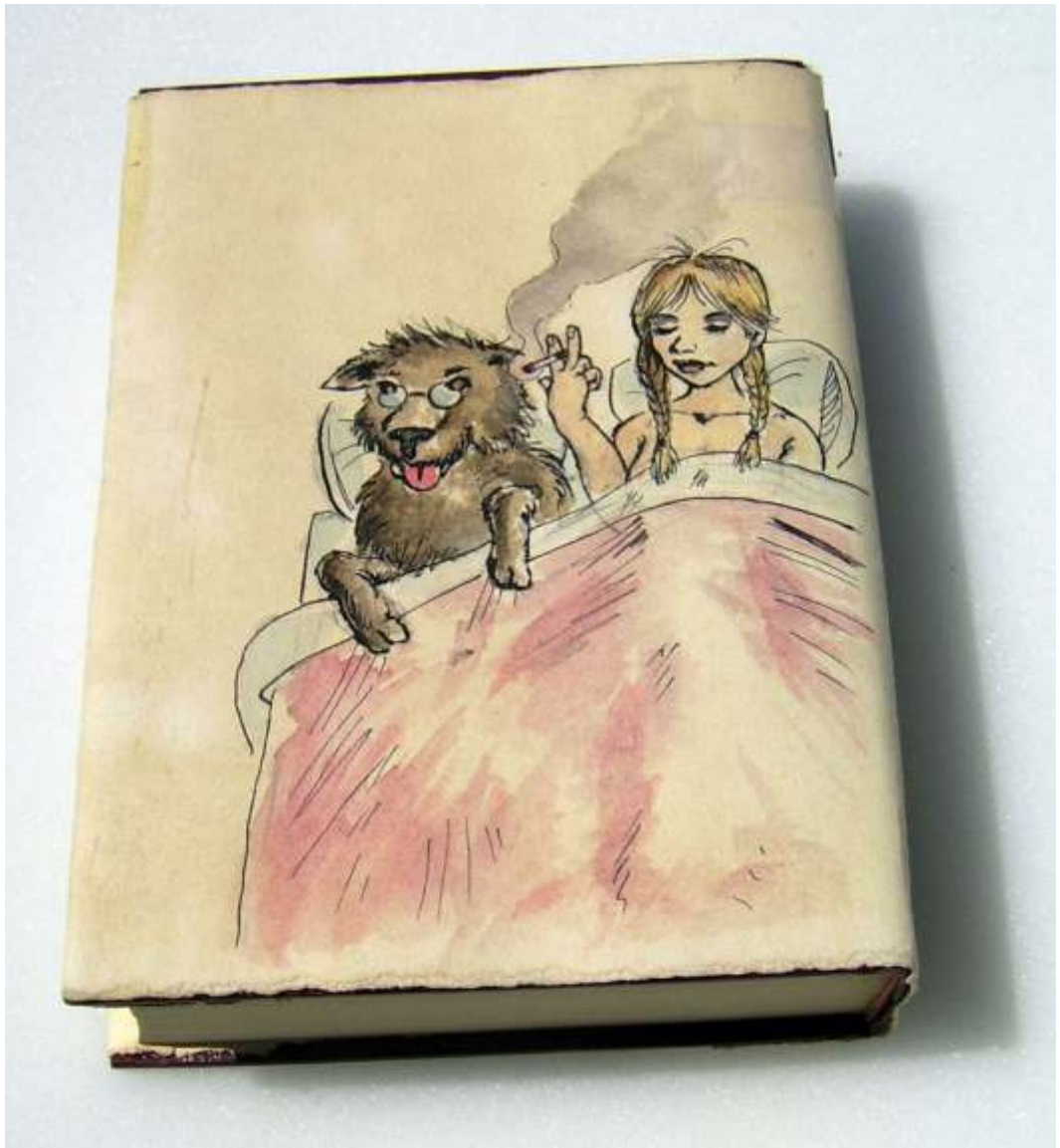
The porn in the library is funny because a library is supposed to be a place of the mind, not the bawdy. Deformed babies elicit anxious laughter because that possibility is every parent's anxiety. The fables we read to children are bowdlerized versions of much more frank and instructive folk tales. Still, despite the cleansing, Little Red Riding Hood endures because there is something vaguely sexy and taboo going on between Little Red and Big Bad. In his twisted drawings, Dakota returns some of the repressed for our elucidation, edification and general delight.



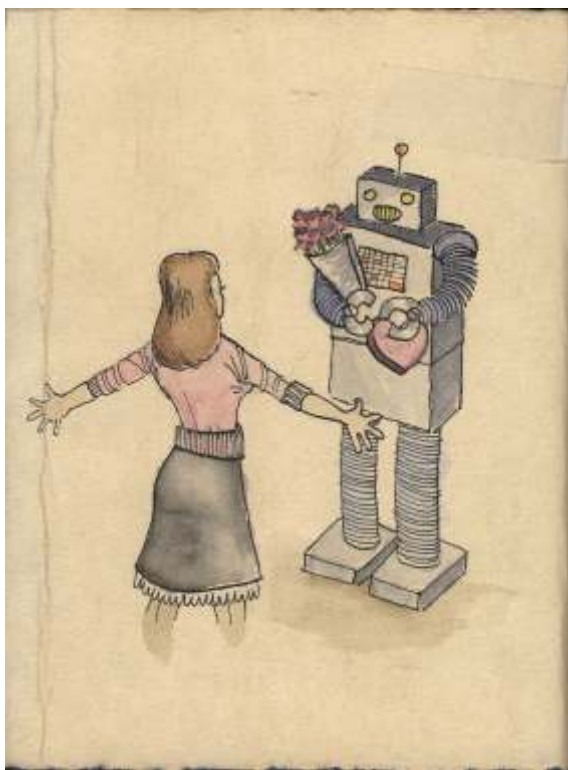
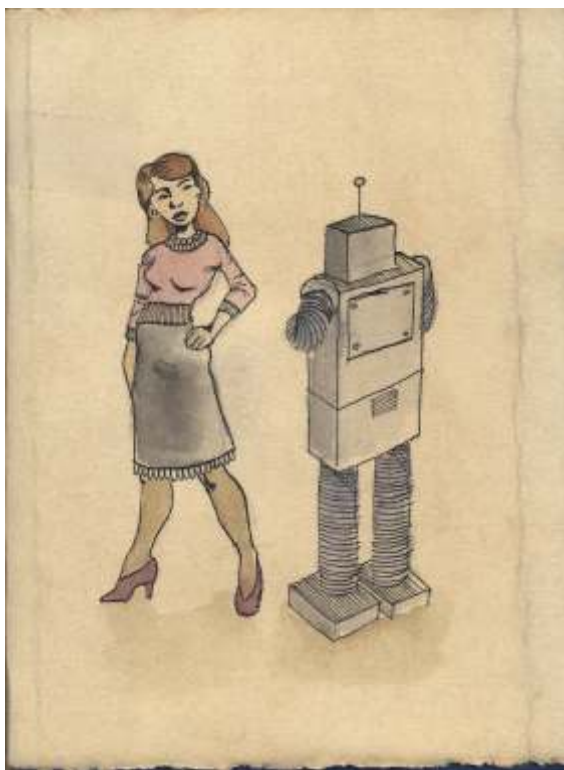
Hollow Book - front (Red Riding)  
book, paper, ink, watercolor  
7.5 x 5.5 x 1.5 in  
2005



Hollow Book - inside (Red Riding)  
book, paper, ink, watercolor, mixed media  
7.5 x 5.5 x 1.5 in  
2005



Hollow Book - back (Red Riding)  
book, paper, ink, watercolor  
7.5 x 5.5 x 1.5 in  
2005



Hollow Book - front & back (Robot Love)  
book, paper, ink, watercolor  
7.5 x 5.5 x 1.5 in  
2005





Hollow Book - front & back (I Dream of Djini)  
book, paper, ink, watercolor  
7.5 x 5.5 x 1.5 in  
2005



Hollow Book - front & back (Playing Doctor)  
book, paper, ink, watercolor  
7.5 x 5.5 x 1.5 in  
2005



Hollow Book - front & back (Faerie Circle)  
book, paper, ink, watercolor  
7.5 x 5.5 x 1.5 in  
2005



Kraken Sighting  
mixed media  
2.5 x 3.5 in  
2006



Two Friends In A Boat  
mixed media  
7 x 5 in  
2006



The Man At Bass Harbor  
mixed media  
7 x 5 in  
2006



Toppers With Faces  
mixed media  
6 x 8 in  
2006



The Favorite  
mixed media  
8 x 10 in  
2006



# Dakota McFadzean

## Education

BFA 2005 Drawing, Great Distinction, University of Regina, Regina SK

## Professional Experience

2006 Artist in Residence, Urban Outreach Program, MacKenzie Art Gallery  
2005-present Gallery Facilitator, Mackenzie Art Gallery, Regina SK (giving tours, aiding in the interpretation and enjoyment of artworks, and leading studio sessions for people of all ages)  
Assistant Regional Director, Canadian Improv Games, Regina SK (administrative duties, as well as leading workshops with high school students, hosting annual shows, and acting as counselor at The Improv Camp)

## Selected Awards and Honours

2005 Saskatchewan Centennial Medal, awarded for work in comics  
2004 Faculty of Fine Arts Scholarship, University of Regina, \$1000  
Theresa Ricci Memorial Scholarship, \$500  
2003 Gene B. Ciuca Memorial Scholarship, \$1400  
2001 Fine Arts Entrance Scholarship, University of Regina, \$1300  
UR Scholars Program, University of Regina, \$16 967  
Capital Cosmopolitan Scholarship, \$6000  
Golden Key International Honors Society, lifetime member

## Exhibition Record (solo shows marked by asterisk)

2006 *Seven Chelsea Mornings*, Fifth Parallel Gallery, University of Regina SK  
*Comic Jam!*, workshop and show, Art Projects Gallery, Regina SK  
*The Game Show*, Saw Gallery, terminus1525.ca, Ottawa, ON  
*Art Auction*, Fifth Parallel Gallery, University of Regina SK  
2005 *Studio-a-thon*, Fifth Parallel Gallery, University of Regina SK  
*Seeing Unseen*, BFA graduating exhibition, Mackenzie Art Gallery, Regina SK  
2004 *\*Untitled Installation*, art book installation, John Archer Library, University of Regina, Regina SK  
*1000 Monkeys*, Fifth Parallel Gallery, University of Regina, Regina SK

## Publications

### Ongoing

*A Comic*, weekly semi-autobiographical strip appearing since 2001, *Leader Post*, Regina SK.

- 2006 *Valuable Comics* no. 1, 2, 3, various stories, independent, Regina SK  
*Tiny Tales: Sun Valley Superheroes* no. 1, 2, Novel Ideas Inc., Regina SK  
*Tiny Tales: Race Tracks* no. 1, 2, Novel Ideas Inc., Regina SK  
2004 *Centennial Comic*, *Leader-Post*, Regina SK  
*Caravan Commix* no. 1, Independent self-published, Regina SK

### Visiting Artist Lectures, Workshops

- 2006 *Manga and Anime*, Regina Public Library, Regina SK  
*Author Reading: Dakota and Jonah McFadzean*, Regina Public Library, Regina SK  
*Introduction to Comics*, workshops in Elementary Schools, Regina Public School Board, Regina SK  
2005 *Sundays at the Gallery*, comic workshop, Mackenzie Art Gallery, Regina SK

### Bodies of Work

- 2006 *The Tijuana Bible Fellowship*, exploration of sexuality and maleness through pornographic comic books.  
*Thrift Store Art*, drawn and painted interventions on art works purchased in thrift stores  
*Block Heads*, drawings on wood objects including, tea boxes, MDF board, spools etc.  
*Art Cards*, drawn responses to art envelopes made by Laura Pfeifer, biologist  
2005 *Hollow Books*, series of books with illustrated dust sleeves, containing objects  
*Cityville*, a dystopian world of urban magic and delightful misadventures  
2004 *Golden*, gold point drawings of feces

RICH FOG



Micro Publishing  
Toronto Canada