

by Jennifer-Jon Choate
photos by Matthew Angell

Little **Big** Shots

Most people's dreams are just dreams. For many, taking chances doesn't come easily. People are either too afraid of failure or just scared. But, these kids have embraced their talents and are making their dreams come true before they even graduate high school. Each of them aspires to be more than they are now, and none of them take life too seriously.

Charlotte Armitage

Most artists dream of having their own exhibit and a commission. For some, these aspirations are only realized posthumously. Remember Van Gogh? But, for eight-year-old Charlotte Armitage, these dreams have come true and she is busily establishing new goals and setting off to conquer new dreams.

Her first showing at Deborah Cavanaugh Artist's Studio Gallery, features numerous paintings with a vast subject matter. Her collection includes bright mermaids, Viking ships, fish, pelicans and elephants. Throughout all of her paintings is the color peacock blue, which Charlotte tells me is her favorite.

With sparkling blue eyes that playfully dance and deep dimples, Charlotte giggles during our interview as she confesses her favorite artist is Deborah Cavanaugh. "Deborah helps me hone my skills as an artist," she tells me as she cuts her eyes at Deborah.



Charlotte Armitage

Photos courtesy of
Gwen Lolocono

Charlotte composes poetry, plays musical instruments and has a lovely soprano voice. Her mother Debbie explains, "Charlotte has always been creative." Wanting to develop Charlotte's artistic skills, Charlotte's parents arranged for her to work with Deborah in her studio. Realizing that she had been brought undiscovered and natural talent, Deborah worked with Charlotte fine tuning certain skills and developing new ones. "She retains every mini-lesson given to her and incorporates the lessons into new pieces," Deborah shares.

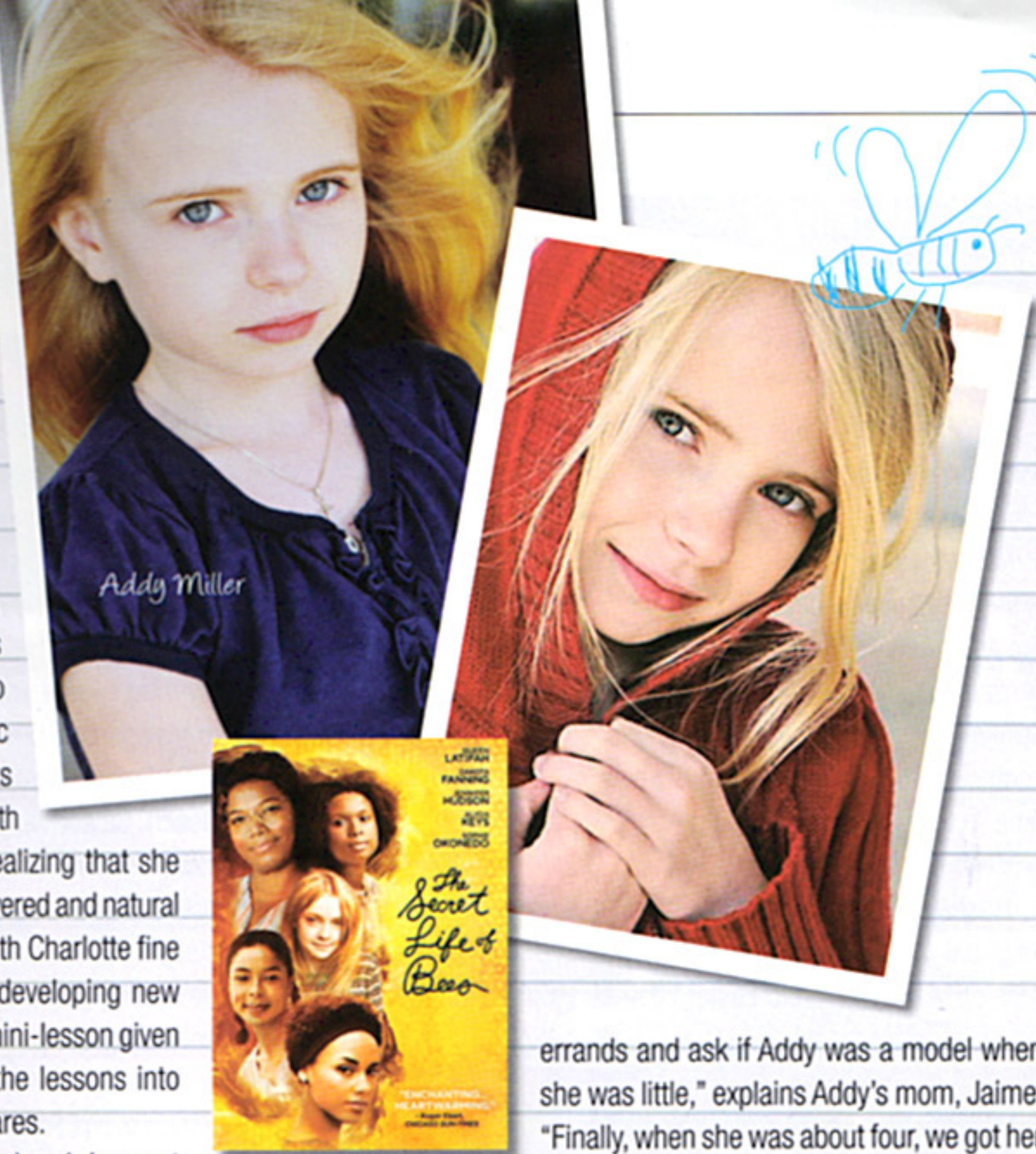
Charlotte's time with Deborah is spent choosing subject matter and sketching. "Deborah helps me with my strokes, layering paint the right way, blending the paint and learning cutting out techniques. Like most artists, Charlotte has a favorite time and place to paint, but her mom shares with a smile, "Charlotte would paint night and day if I let her."

Charlotte's exhibit will run through July 16 and will include her break-through piece, which earned Charlotte her first commission. "I want people to feel happy when they see my paintings and I want other kids to know that becoming an artist can make you feel good and confident about yourself."

Addy Miller

What little girl doesn't dream of Hollywood? The glitz and the glamour is enough to make any little girl yearn for a role in a movie or on television and a chance to rub elbows with her favorite actor. For some, the dream is never realized despite every attempt to be discovered. However, for ten-year-old Addy Miller, the "discovery" took everyone by surprise.

"People would stop us while we were out on



Addy Miller

errands and ask if Addy was a model when she was little," explains Addy's mom, Jaime. "Finally, when she was about four, we got her an agent and started with print work." After some time, Addy's agent began offering Addy scripts; however, her parents were reluctant to agree.

"I had to prove to my parents that I was ready for the audition. I had to show them that I would take it seriously," Addy shared. With only four days before the "big" audition, Addy used her mirror and rehearsed for hours. When the big day arrived, Addy was ready and scored the role of Lily Owens younger self in *The Secret Life of Bees* starring Dakota Fanning in the starring role along with Queen Latifah, Alicia Keys and Jennifer Hudson.

Addy's favorite part of filming is when she is behind the camera learning the different functions and responsibilities of each crew member. "I like seeing how all the pieces come together in a scene to create the movie," Addy shared. She uses various tools to help her with each new character she is to portray, and her favorite roles to play are the darker roles. "I don't know why I like the darker roles. I just seem drawn to these characters," Addy said nonchalantly. She explains she would like to work one day with Anne Hathaway. Addy is excited that she has some new upcoming roles.

"Most of my friends don't know me as Addy 'the actress'. They just know me as Addy 'my friend,'" she explains exuding professionalism well beyond her years.