

COMMENTS ON THE ART MARKET

VOLUME 154

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Two Upcoming Shows in New York City

by: Alyssa

One more for our list of shows and I am happy to say that it is not a plane ride or lengthy drive away. Earlier this summer we contacted the group at the Affordable Art Fair for information on their October show in New York City... one that is very different from the other 9 we currently participate in - many of which we travel around the US for. The Affordable Art Fair will be our first solely contemporary art show and its location, the Chelsea area of New York, where the contemporary market is booming, could not be more ideal. Finally, our growing contemporary gallery has a show all its own ... rather than having a few walls in an antique show setting. The Affordable Art Fair began in 1999 in Battersea Park, London, and has spread across the world to include cities like Amsterdam, Brussels, Milan, Hong Kong, Singapore and many more. The New York show will run from October 3 – 6 with a Private Preview Party on October 2 – we still have tickets for this event if you would like them. This show will house thousands of original paintings, prints, sculptures and photographs ranging from \$100 - \$10,000 (very affordable). As my brother and I work hard to maintain the Rehs name at the contemporary gallery we are very excited to dive into a show that will bring our artists front and center! We plan on exhibiting about 60 works priced between \$500 - \$10,000; included will be paintings and drawings by Erika Baez, Ben Bauer, Julie Bell, Brandon Drake, Warner Friedman, Timothy Jahn, Brian O'Neill, David Palumbo, Chris Pousette-Dart, Tony South, William Suys, Sally Swatland and many others ...hope to see you there!

Then, right after the Affordable Art Fair, we pack up and travel about 40 streets north and 9 avenues east to our next show – Avenue: Antiques, Art & Design at the Armory (the 67th street Armory --- another easy trip). Running from October 10 – 13 (the Private Opening Night Preview is October 9) this fair will flood the armory with beautiful antiques, art and design. We plan on exhibiting some really interesting works (a number of which are recent acquisitions) by Sidney Richard Percy, Francois Brunery, Marcel Brunery, William Logsdail, Jean Monchablon, Ilya Bolotowsky, Maurice de Vlaminck, Jean B.C. Corot and many others. This show is not one to miss! There is a link to Complimentary Tickets on our web site.

You can find additional information about both shows on our web site's Exhibitions page.

Welcome Brandon Drake

Rehs Contemporary Galleries welcomes Brandon Drake - the newest addition to its roster of amazingly talented representational artists. We met Brandon, a student of Timothy Jahn and the Ani Art Acadmies, more than a year ago when he blew us away with some of his earliest drawings. We followed his progress very carefully and when two of his earliest paintings were delivered to us for The BIG Gamble exhibition we were floored; interestingly, both paintings – *What Lays Before Us* and *Dangerous Speculation* – found new homes almost immediately. We are very excited to be representing this young gifted artist and you can see his most recent paintings at the Affordable Art Fair – we have included one of them at the bottom of this newsletter... if you are a baseball fan, I think you will enjoy it.

Stocks – Guess that Visine Worked

Like the commercial said: *Visine, with terahydrozoline, gets the red out in 60 seconds* ... and boy did my stocks hit the black in no time at all. I guess we are all pretty happy with the rally that took place this past month. The DOW started out at about 14,800 and is now over 15,258; I do hope the rally will hold strong through the rest of the year.

At the end of the day, on September 27, here are the numbers for some of my favorites: Altria (\$34.57 Up), JP Morgan (\$52.20 - Up), Emerson (\$64.86 - Up), Chevron (\$122.79 - Up), Exxon (\$86.90 - Down), GE (\$24.05 - Up), Berkshire B (\$114.85 - Up), AT&T (\$33.98 - Up), VOD (\$35 - Up), Verizon (\$47 - Down), Wal-Mart (\$74.36 - Up) and Coke (\$38.40 - Up), DuPont (\$59.01 - Up) and the newest one - Lowe's (\$46.95 - Up and in the black).

Really!?

by Amy

To start out this month I thought it might be fun to see how well some toys from the 50s and 60s have done at recent auctions. According to reports, the excitement level was "through the roof" and prices demonstrated the enthusiasm. A Radicon Robot from Masudays's *Gang of Fire* series sold for \$37,200 (est. \$10-\$15k). Other remarkable prices were for a T.V. Space Patrol tin car which sold for \$16,800 (est. \$5-\$7.5K), a Space Rocket by Toymaster Japan, achieved \$11,400 (est. \$1.2-\$1.8K), and a wind-up Interplanetary Explorer Robot that brought \$22,800 (est. \$2-\$3K). It is important to note that all the toys had their original boxes and were in superior condition.

And here is a more recent toy, from the 70s,...an all-time favorite of mine, a Star Wars figure. Known by collectors as the Vinyl Cape Jawa, this was one of the original series of a dozen figures that accompanied the release of the film in 1978 (Jawas are the hooded creatures with glowing eyes who buy and sell droids). Most surviving Vinyl Cape Jawa figures, which retailed at the time for 99p (about \$1.60) each, were made in the US by Kenner and can command prices upwards of \$5000. But earlier this year a British-manufactured figure, made by Palitoy of Coalville, near Leicester, appeared on eBay. Authenticated by the US-based Action Figure Authority, it sold in its card and bubble plastic packaging for £11,300 (\$17,695). Now you can find these figures all over eBay!! Really !

Well apparently American Western Art is on fire and consignors are riding off into the sunset after recent sales. Maynard Dixon's (1875 -1946) *Remuda* sold near the top end of the estimate for \$438,750 (est. \$250-\$450K). Two works that blew past their estimates were Richard Schmid's (b.1934) *Carnations* selling for \$52,650 (est. \$10-\$15K) and Martin Grelle's (b.1954) *Scouts on the Buffalo Fork, 2013* realizing \$263,250 (est. \$75-\$125K). A really nice showing for the contemporary artists!!

Now for something with a little historical value... the first newspaper printing of the Declaration of Independence was in Benjamin Towner's *Pennsylvania Evening Post* on July 6, 1776 and a copy recently sold for a record price of \$632,500 (est. \$500-750k). The price is the highest amount achieved at auction for a single issue of a newspaper. The buyer, David Rubenstein, co-founder of the Carlyle Group based in Washington, D.C., does not consider himself a collector and tends to lend what he buys to public and private institutions. Really nice!

The Art Market

A Couple of Minor 19th Century Sales

by: Lance

Both Bonhams and Christie's held 19th Century European painting sales in the UK at the beginning of September. The most suitable word to describe these sales would have to be modest... well, maybe unimpressive or lackluster would be better. Anyway, Bonhams was up first so let's break down the results.

Bonhams sale on September 10th offered 156 lots of which 113 found a buyer, yielding a sell through rate of 72.4%. The total take was £323.5K (\$516K) on an estimate range of £273K-£408K (\$435.5K-651K). As I'm sure you can tell from the numbers, there were no masterpieces to be found here. The average price per lot sold was under £3,000 and the top lot, while it did beat its estimate, failed to break £10,000 – that honor belonged to Emile Eisman-Semenowsky's *An Eastern Beauty* at £9,375 (\$14,783) on an estimate of £4,000-6,000 (\$6,381-\$9,572). In second was a very late work by Antoine Blanchard selling for £8,750 (\$13,960) on an estimate of £6-8,000 (\$9,572-\$12,763). Coming in third was *To the Hills* by Briton Riviere which also carried an estimate of £6-8,000 (\$9,572-\$12,763) and sold for £7,500 (\$11,966).

Christie's held their auction on September 12th and had 198 works up for sale; they certainly had some "better" works, but overall it was still a rather modest offering. The top lot here was a work by Eugene Girardet, entitled *The Caravan at Dusk*, selling for £43,750 (\$69K) on an estimate of £10-20K (\$16K-\$31.5K) – a very nice painting and a reasonable price. In second was *The Centre of Attention* by Guglielmo Zocchi, selling for £27,500 (\$43.5K) on an estimate of £10-15K (\$16K-\$24K). Falling into the third spot was *Roses* by Georges Jeannin with an estimate of £7-10K (\$11K-16K) selling for £20,000 (\$31.5K). At the end, 111 of the 198 works sold (56%) and brought in £586.5K (\$927K), which landed them just below their presale estimate range of £589K-£887.5K (\$931K-\$1.4 million). On aside note (and possibly a completely meaningless statistic), a number of works (40) were presented on a black page in the catalog. I found it interesting that of those works, nearly 70% did not sell! Now this may just be a coincidence, but when works were presented on a light colored page, only 38% did not sell.

At the end of the week, the two salerooms offered 354 works, sold 224 (63.3%) and brought in £901K (\$1.44 million) – about the same as one nice (not great) Bouguereau would make in a good 19th century sale.

More Thoughts on the Market by: Howard

As we have just seen, the art market is beginning to wake up ... a few small, minor, sales took place this past month and the results were just as expected – nice works are selling and the poorer ones are not – even at the low end of the market. What I find really troubling is the number of works appearing in the public forum without the proper authentication. Many of the smaller auction rooms and dealers, throughout the country/world, believe they know the right works from the wrong ones ... and this is just not the case. In September alone we saw, just in our small area of the market, many works being sold at auction that were not by the artist in question.

Now you might ask: if an expert, like yourself, sees a fake being offered why not say something? Good question and here is the down and dirty (and you might say selfish) answer. To begin with, it really is not an expert's place to police the market or comment on any specific work of art unless they are asked to by the owner of the work. People come to our gallery because we are experts in the field and know that what they are buying has been vetted and is guaranteed by us (it really isn't our responsibility to vet the works being sold by others). We do as much due diligence as possible on the paintings we offer and so should they. Even when we may have no question about a work's authenticity, if there is an outside expert for a particular artist we consult them and, if need be, pay their fees to get an opinion in writing (and in certain cases those fees are pretty steep). If the generally accepted expert for an artist has any doubts or questions about a painting, we stay away ... why take a chance? Look, if you are going to buy a work from someone then you need to rely on their 'expertise' and expect them to do the proper research. After all, they are making a profit on the sale, so you should expect them to do something for their money --- other than just offering the work for sale.

Here is an interesting story that has been unfolding for the past few years and came back around this past month. In early September I received an email from an auctioneer in Europe regarding a painting by an artist we are considered 'the expert' on. This work has been on the market for a number of years and we have a few questions about the painting that are yet to be answered – one of which is: why is the signature so different from all the others we have seen? We were going back and forth with this auctioneer for months and he finally decided to have the painting scientifically analyzed. This analysis determined that the signature was from the same period as the painting and here is part of my reply to his email in which he reports that finding: *You seem to be missing the point here, so I will try to explain this one more time. Your research concluded that the signature is from the time the painting was created ... and I am not arguing that point. I would assume that if a painting was produced around 1900 and signed at that time, the signature would be as old as the painting.*

My issue is that there are some unanswered questions that need to be addressed before I can give a final opinion on the painting in question.

...Please remember, that I am not saying this painting is wrong, just that we need some of the questions answered. Among them: why is, what would be considered, a major painting by the artist, signed differently than all the other paintings we have seen? We have no indication that this was an exhibited painting, but at one point people stated it was ... why? What is the ownership of the work prior to 1940?...

It will be interesting to see what happens. Will they hold off selling it? Time will tell. I have said this before, just because a painting is signed with an artist's name does not mean that artist painted the work in question!!

This leads to the next question and answer: why should a reputable dealer / expert stick their neck out for the other guy? Stating one's opinion on the authenticity of a work can lead to legal issues which, in turn, can lead to hefty legal fees; a risk that most of us are not willing to take since there is little to no financial upside. Today, medical professionals and even private individuals are offered certain levels of protection under the Good Samaritan Law ... there is no such protection for the art dealer / expert who would like to help 'fix' a problem in the art world.

We all know that Americans love to sue when they do not get what they want and a negative opinion is not something people want. Over the past few years we have read many cases where collectors have sued authentication committees when they would not issue a letter for a particular work ... and some of those suits ran into the millions. So you need to understand that not sticking one's neck out has very little to do with greed or not wanting to help, and everything to do with smart business sense. As you all know, we are considered the experts on the works of Julien Dupré, Daniel Ridgway Knight, Emile Munier and Antoine Blanchard; however, before we render an opinion, paperwork needs to be filled out and signed, certain images need to be sent and a fee needs to be paid (yes, we do charge for the time it takes to review, research and authenticate a work). We have spent a long time studying the works of these artists and are very comfortable (after all our questions are answered) rendering an opinion (but it is always important to remember that this is only 'our' opinion).

Now, having said all of that I must be honest and tell you that in certain instances we will contact an auction room and alert them to the possibility that a work in their sale 'may not' be by the artist in question ... in most of those instances, our help is limited to individuals/firms we already have a relationship/friendship with. I need to stress that we normally tell the seller that they should really reconsider offering the work as they have it catalogued. Yes, some of us do try to help police the art market. Just last week I called an auction room in the Midwest and suggested that they reconsider offering 4 works in their sale since we doubted their authenticity ... and none of the works were by the artists we do official authentications for. So, now you want to know: why do that and run the legal risk? Well, the main reason is that some of us have to try and help remove the 'fakes' in an effort to clean up that artist's market. This, in turn, will hopefully save colleague from any potential future legal issues and, more importantly, protect buyers from acquiring a bad painting.

Most knowledgeable dealers know the real works from the questionable works ... and even if they are not 100% sure, they often get a feeling that there is something odd about a particular work and will stay away from it. However, this does not mean that a questionable work is not going to sell ... we have seen many 'fakes' sell at auction. When these 'fakes' do sell (typically for far less than the real thing), their results poison the database records for that artist --- remember, the compilers of those databases are relying on the cataloging from the saleroom and have no idea (nor do they care) if a work is right or wrong. So when consulting those results, one needs to be real careful since the information contained may not always be accurate.

Before we began our research project for Antoine Blanchard you had less than a 50-50 shot of buying a real Antoine Blanchard (Marcel Masson) in the public forum ... today chances are as high as 75%. As more auction rooms / dealers seek out the advice of the artist's expert, the cleaner that artist's market will become. Look, most experts will tell you that they are only as good as the information they have been able to gather on a particular artist's working methods, style, history, etc. and that they can make mistakes, but at least there are people who are trying to make things right.

Oh, in case you are wondering, the Midwest auction room pulled two of the works we questioned before the sale; however, they decided to offer the other two – one failed to sell and the other sold for far less than what a real one would have (poor buyer).

The Rehs Family
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Gallery Updates: For the month of October we are back to the regular gallery hours (bummer) Monday – Friday from 10 am – 5:30 pm.

Web Site Updates: We have added a number of new pieces to the site, a few of which are illustrated below (please visit our web site to see more information on each of the paintings):

TRADITIONAL



Jean F. Monchablon
La Saône au pré des Hans (près Chatillon, Vosges)



William Logsdail
A Venetian Courtyard, Summer



Cesare Detti
The Departure



Edouard Cortes

Rue de Petit Pont

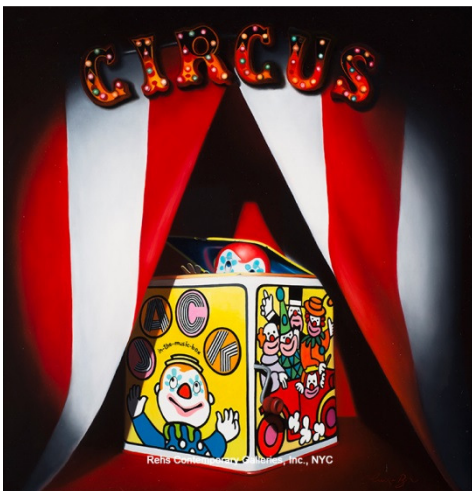
CONTEMPORARY



Timothy Jahn
Silver Lining



Brandon Drake
Baseball



Erika Baez
Performance Anxiety



John Stobart
St. Georges, Grenada...



Tony South
Papa Was A...

Next Month: Maybe more sale updates!