

COMMENTS ON THE ART MARKET

VOLUME 176

Rehs Galleries, Inc.
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Baltimore

Yes, it is almost time for the Baltimore show and we are going to have a very nice selection of paintings on display from most of our favorite artists. We will, of course, post images of our booth before and after setup – so keep an eye on our blog. For more information on the upcoming show and a complimentary ticket, please visit the Exhibitions section or our web site.

Reflecting the Real – Coming in October

This October, Rehs Contemporary Galleries will be hosting an exhibition featuring 19 talented artists who are associated with the Grand Central Atelier. Some were students, others teachers and a few were/are both. A number of our represented artists will be included: Todd Casey, Ken Salaz, Erik Koeppel, Tony Mastromatteo, Justin Wood and Carlos Madrid. Each artist was asked to create a new piece for the exhibition and we are looking forward to presenting them.

A catalog for the exhibit is currently in production with a wonderful essay by Professor Gabriel Weisberg. The show will open on Saturday, October 3rd, at 11 am and run through October 23rd.

Mark Daly

Well, sometimes you open a package and just say WOW! That is what happened this month when the Ohio based artist Mark Daly submitted his work for our consideration. It only took us about 30 minutes (we did need to look through all the material) to pick up the phone and call him. Within days, two of his New York City street scenes were in the gallery. The next day we posted the first one on our web site and it was sold the following morning (we actually had to run down to the truck that was leaving for the Newport show to get it). Luckily we had a second one to put in its place ... that one found a buyer before the end of the Newport show.

We gave Mark the good news and he kindly agreed to send us another piece --- it will be at the gallery sometime next week; but we do have photos and they are on our web site --- *Old Glory in New York City*.

Stocks

By: Howard

I left off last month with --- *wonder what July has in store for us* ... well, now we know, nothing very good! We started the month off in the 17,600 range, by the middle of the month we were back over 18,000 (18,120 to be exact) and then we proceeded to head back down to the 17,400 region and finally closed out at 17,690 – looks like we are going nowhere very fast. As you will see a little later, once again we

were rather busy in the gallery so I paid very little attention until I did an update on the 29th and I saw more red than I would like. I was hoping that by the 31st things would look better, but I was not so lucky ... there is still a lot of red creeping in. I am sure the market in China is not helping – according to reports July was the worst month for stocks since August of 2009 (falling 15%) ... and we are heading into August! Uh Oh! In addition, oil continues to remain below \$50 a barrel and gold seems to be having a bit of trouble as well ... currently trading under \$1,100 per ounce. It was not long ago that people were predicting a price of \$5,000 per ounce; now I read one report that states gold could go below \$350 – you can read that one [HERE](#). Luckily, the only gold I own is on my wrist.

Anyway, let's get back to 'my' reality --- my stocks and after I updated everything, here are the month end numbers for some of my favorites: JP Morgan (\$68.53 – up 1.5%), Exxon (\$79.21 – down 4.73%), GE (\$26.10 – down 1.94%), AT&T (\$34.74 – down 2.77%), Verizon (\$46.79 – down 0.87%), Wal-Mart (\$71.98 – up 0.17%), Coke (\$41.08 – up 4.03% ... hum, I drank a Coke this month; first time I years. Maybe it helped), DuPont (\$55.76 – down 7.05% - 2 months in a row - ouch), Merck (\$58.96 – up 2.24%), Disney (\$120 – up 4.38%), Citi (\$58.46 – up 5.58%), Intel (\$28.95 – down 5.20% - another ouch) and Bristol-Myers (\$65.64 – down 2.73%). Well, hopefully August will be a little nicer to all of us.

The Dark Side

By: Alyssa

Sydney Australia Transit – Banksy, don't try pulling a residency down under! Australia has implemented a new electronic sensor designed to catch graffiti artists in the act...actually, before the act. "Mousetrap" detects the paint vapors from graffiti pens and spray cans which triggers the CCTV footage in the area to be sent directly to Sydney Train staff members who then contact police. Tagging is one of the largest complaints by train-goers in Sydney and Australia has spent over \$25 million cleaning graffiti from trains. This small electronic device has been triggered more than 70 times and led to 50 individuals charged with offences.

Timothy Sammons, 59 – This once highly regarded London art dealer is now in the middle of multiple multi-million-pound claims when several clients never received payment for the works of art he sold or brokered. According to a recent article, the list of suits includes:

W.H. Smith family trust is seeking payment for a £1.6 million Canaletto that Sammons sold last year.

New Zealand collector, Stephanie Overton, is suing to recover £7.1 million for a number of works Sammons allegedly sold to several New York dealers.

Lady Corinne Green is suing Andrew Rose – a dealer who sold a series of Henry Moore pictures on behalf of Sammons which actually belonged to her and for which she never received payment.

Houston Cummings who, through Sammons, consigned Van Gogh's "Cows in the Meadow" to Sotheby's NY last June. The work sold for £458,000 and Sotheby's paid Sammons but Sammons seems to have forgotten to pay Cummings.

Since the lawsuits have been filed, Sammons, who lives in a £5.7 million mansion in Primrose Hill, North London, has had £7 million in assets frozen and his passport confiscated by the High Court. In addition, the court has given him an allowance of £750 a week to live on.

We always say you need to be careful with whom you do business ... but even some of the 'better' ones turn to the dark side!

The Roberts – Leslie Roberts, Jr., the owner of Max in the Grove (an art gallery specializing in works by Peter Max) landed himself behind bars for 22 months with an additional three year supervised release for pleading guilty to one count of mail fraud. According to reports, Roberts acquired 17 Peter Max paintings from a Virginia consignor in 2010. The 17 works (valued at \$635K) were to be sold and Roberts would receive a 10% commission for each sale. 14 of the works were professionally photographed before sending them to the gallery and Peter Max provided a COA for each piece (his COAs include a raised red seal). After a period of time the owner travelled to Florida to see the works and was also shown the COA

... which no longer had the raised red seal --- this raised a red flag. After a year had passed, Roberts stated that two of the works were reportedly sold for approximately \$5,500 each, while another two were due to sell to a New York attorney. The remaining 13 works were returned and when the crate was opened, the owner noticed that one seemed to be a fake. Upon reaching out to authorities, the consignor found out that all but one were in fact forgeries and even the COAs were not authentic. In 2011 Peter Max's studio sent private investigators to the gallery and discovered that all 77 Max works in the gallery were fakes. Later, authorities learned that Roberts' children (Leslie Roberts III and Brittney Lynn Roberts) were producing the fake Max paintings. Both Leslie & Brittney have pleaded guilty to conspiracy to commit mail and wire fraud. Leslie has since been sentenced to three years of probation and to make restitution of \$850,180 while Brittany will be sentenced in September.

French Porters - 41 porters from Cols Rouges, Drouot auctioneer's handling and transportation department, face trial. It was recently reported that between 2006 and 2009 thousands of artworks were stolen while being moved from vendor's homes to the saleroom. Six additional staff members, all senior auctioneers, are being accused of aiding and abetting the thefts, but deny the claims. Police investigations have valued the total of stolen objects around €2.2 million.

The scheme came to light after the French art crime unit received a tip that a porter was selling a Gustave Courbet, valued at €900k, which was on a list of missing paintings. Now I am sure you are wondering: how could this happen? Well, according to the article, most of the stolen artworks came from the estates of wealthy deceased individuals whose relatives had little idea of their possessions. The porters would hold the objects in their possession for a period of time and then sell them at auction as their own. So far almost 6,000 items have been returned to their rightful owners.

Really!

By: Amy

It is always amazing to me to see how the *Celebrity Factor* actually factors into the selling price of an item, that otherwise might just have minimal. A recent auction demonstrates this quite well. Let's start with a custom made pair of black pants with red piping, worn by Burt Reynolds for promotional photos for the movie *Smokey and the Bandit II*. Estimated at \$1 – 2K, the pants sold for \$12.8K Really? Not even sure if they were worn in the movie!

A beautiful Versace gown worn by Princess Diana for a Bazaar Magazine cover shoot in 1991, accompanied by a copy of the magazine shot past its estimate of \$60-80K when they sold for \$200K. Supposedly, this was the gown Gianni Versace designed for the princess.

Now if you really want to see the power of celebrity, these next results really show how lucrative Marilyn Monroe memorabilia is: A first issue of Playboy magazine, published in 1953, featured Marilyn Monroe on the cover and originally sold for 50 cents. This issue was also signed by Hugh Hefner, which may have contributed to the selling price; modestly estimated at \$3-5K it sold for \$70K (\$87.5K with the commission)!! A dress from her final film, *Something's Got to Give*, had a huge estimate of \$300-500k and ended up *only* realizing \$290K; but it beat the low estimate when the buyer's commission was added in -- \$358K. But the big Marilyn item that blew away its estimate was her grave marker from the Westwood Village Memorial Park Cemetery in LA. This original grave marker was made by Gasser-Olds bronze casting company and had been replaced by a new marker in 1970s because of damage from constantly being touched by visitors. The grave marker simply read "*Marilyn Monroe/1926-1962.*" This marker was given to an employee of the Gasser-Olds company and was estimated at \$2-3K...it buried the estimate when it sold for \$170K (\$212.5K with commission)! REALLY!!

If you're into cars, you might be interested in these three since none of them sold (so they are still available); I will assume that their estimates were too high and/or the celebrity factor wasn't enough. The first was a 1949 Mercury Series 9CM custom convertible that was featured in the movie *Grease*, the car was nicknamed *Hell's Chariot*, who knew?? Accompanying the car was a notarized letter from Eddie Paul who customized it for the movie. This 'chariot' had an aggressive estimate of \$400-600K and was returned to its owner. The second famous auto was a 1969 orange Dodge Charger which was built for John Schneider; you might remember he played Bo Duke in *The Dukes of Hazzard*. Actually, Schneider had four of these cars built (Really! Who needs 4?); this car came with a Letter of Authenticity from

Schneider stating that he built and owned the car, as well as a certificate of title from the state of Michigan that basketball player Jalen Rose had also owned the car. In addition, the trunk cover was signed by several cast members and Rose. Unfortunately, there were no takers on a \$200-300k estimate. Really! They even tried selling KITT from the *Knight Rider* TV series, the only Trans Am left from the show. (If you don't know KITT is an acronym for Knight Industries Two-Thousand.) It had a \$200 -300k estimate and sadly no one wanted to ride off into the sunset in KITT – really? Nobody wants a talking car?

The Art Market

I can still reminisce about the times when the art market took a break during the summer months; but since the days of the internet things have changed. Now, the art market seems to be running all year with very little down time. Oh well, gotta roll with the punches.

Over the past month, things have been very busy in the gallery and we had a number of important sales which included: Jean B.C. Corot's *A Seaport in Pays de la Loire*; del Campo's *Canale della Giudecca, San Giorgio Maggiore in the Distance*; Jasper F. Cropsey's *Greenwood Lake, 1871*; William A. Walker's *Cabin Scene*; Edouard Cortes' *Theatre du Gymnase, Boulevard Bonne-Nouvelle*; Louis Aston Knight's *Summer Morning*; along with numerous paintings by our contemporary artists: Elena Green, Mark Daly, Gregory F. Harris, two by Erik Koeppel and three by Todd Casey.

Hopefully we will get a little break during the month of August ... but with the Baltimore Show opening on the 20th, I doubt it.

The auction world was also extremely active during the month with many sales taking place in Europe. Now, while the results paled in comparison to the recent New York sales, there were still hundreds of millions of dollars' worth of Contemporary, Old Master and 19th century art bought and sold. I am still a big proponent of slimming and trimming down some of these sales to achieve even higher sell-through rates; but I guess the auction rooms want to "make hay while the sun is shining" ... and right now the sun is pretty bright for the right works!

Victorian, Pre-Raphaelite & British Impressionist

By: Howard

From the title of that sale you can guess that the works offered spanned a long period of time – from the 1850s through the 1980s and thankfully the sale was a rather slim one ... just 83 works. Taking the top two positions were works by Munnings: *Ned Osborne on Grey Tick* at £605K (\$947K – est. £300-500K) and *September Afternoon* at £581K (\$909K – est. £300-500K). In third was Grimshaw's *Prince's Dock, Hull* at £257K (\$402K – est. £100-150K). Rounding out the top 5 were Poynter's *A Corner of the Market Place* at £245K (\$384K – est. £200-300K) and Leighton's *Catarina* at £233K (\$365K – est. £100-150K).

There were a few other interesting results: a pencil and chalk head study, measuring 8 ¾ x 8 inches, for the figure in Leighton's *Flaming June* (currently on view at the Frick in NYC) was offered at £40-60K and sold for £167K (\$261K), Millais' pencil study for *A Huguenot* made £90K (\$141K - est. £20-30K) and Montague Dawson's *Stormy Days* made £167K (\$261K – est. £40-60K) – the gallery currently has *The Lightning* which is much more reasonably priced ... you can see it [HERE](#).

Overall the sale offered a nice assortment of works from the periods and estimates were kept at reasonable levels --- which made for a strong result. By the end of the day, of the 83 works offered, 63 sold (76%) and the total take was £4.67M (\$7.3M) ... the presale estimate range was £3.01 – £4.67M, so with the buyer's premium added in, they hit the upper end of the range – nice! It was also very interesting to note that all of the top ten works either met, or handsomely beat, their estimate range. In addition, the top ten garnered £2.9M (\$4.6M) or 62.5% of the sale's total.

Contemporary Art Rolls Through London

By: Lance

The culmination of the contemporary sale season took place in London earlier this month and while they were well off the stateside numbers, they still garnered some respectable figures. Sotheby's had its best

Contemporary European sale ever that week with a combined total of £148 million (\$230M) in addition to nearly surpassing Christie's record-setting 2012 London Evening sale.

Christie's, typically the top dog when it comes to Contemporary Art, was up first and there wasn't a whole lot to get excited about... The top lot of the evening was a work by none other than Francis Bacon who has become one of the hottest artists on the Contemporary scene. His work, *Study for Head of Isabel Rawsthorne and George Dyer*, just squeaked by the £8-12M estimate at £12.17M (\$19.1M). Another work by Bacon, *Two Men Working in a Field*, took the second spot at £10.7M (\$16.8M), again narrowly beating out the £7-10M estimate. Falling into third was Yves Klein's *Peinture de feu couleur sans titre (FC27)* which brought £5.9M (\$9.2M – undisclosed estimate); the work is one of the largest of his series of fire paintings which were completed in the final year of his life. One other notable lot... a work by Chris Ofili titled *The Holy Virgin Mary*, doubled its estimate and set a new record for the artist at £2.8M (\$4.5M). You may remember this work as it was surrounded by a bit of controversy when it was put on display in New York in 1999. The City of New York and the Mayor at the time, Rudy Giuliani, actually brought a court case against the Brooklyn Museum and attempted to withdraw the annual \$7 million dollar City Hall grant to the museum. Why, you ask? Well, the medium used was an *interesting* choice... the work was "mixed media" which happened to include oil paint, glitter, resin, pins... along with collaged pornographic images and good old elephant poop; from my understanding, only holy poop is to be used when portraying the Virgin Mary. In the end, the sale totaled £95M (\$150M) with 87% (66/76) of the works finding a buyer.

Christies Day sale realized just £14M (\$22M) with 77% of the work selling, though there were over 200 works up for grabs meaning nearly 50 lots failed to find a buyer. Leading the day sale was Robert Longo's *Untitled (Last Tiger)* which was practically just completed – it dates from 2013. The work, a photorealist charcoal drawing of a tiger's face, blew past the £300-400K estimate and sold for £650K (\$1M). Taking second was a piece by Sean Scully, *Mariana*, which featured four attached canvases and can really only be described as a sketchy checkerboard looking pattern... the work beat out its £380-450K estimate at £458K (\$706K). Rounding out the top three was Sigmar Polke's brightly colored *Kalla (Arum Lily/Calla)* which brought £434K (\$682K) on a £250-350K estimate. Other prominent artists in the day sale included Warhol, Takashi Murakami, Calder, and Gerhard Richter, though the prices were fairly tame.

Turning to the competition... Sotheby's evening sale, as I mentioned earlier, was the dominant force that week. The top lot of the evening was Warhol's *One Dollar Bill (Silver Certificate)* at £20.8M (\$32M). The work blew by its £13-18M estimate and it should be noted that this was not the typical silk screen but an early hand-painted piece completed in 1962. Following in second was the aforementioned Francis Bacon, whose *Self-Portrait* went to a private collector at £15.2M (\$23.9M – est. £10-15M). Another work by Bacon rounded out the top three, *Three Studies for Self-Portrait*, which was not far behind at £14.7M (\$23M – est. £10-15M)... I could just hear the auctioneer saying -- Get em while they're hot, three for the price of one!

Sadly, there was an epic Bacon failure that night (incidentally, it was the cover piece as well). Ten years ago his *Study for a Pope 1* sold for a record \$10 million; then last year it was sold privately through Christie's and now was consigned for sale with Sotheby's. With a lofty estimate of £25-35M, the work failed to attract even one single bid. Sotheby's must feel lucky they had not placed a guarantee on this lot as they have done so frequently in the recent past. In that same boat, two Warhol's failed to sell with £12-18M and £5-7M estimates. On the other hand, there were a few other major works that did find buyers including a Gerhard Richter at £14.1M, another Warhol at £6.9M and a bright orange Basquiat at £5.6M.

The sale totaled just over £130.3M (\$204M – est. £142-202M) with 49 of the 58 works selling (85%) ... keep in mind that 4 of the 9 unsold lots were essentially "top lot worthy" pieces so that greatly impacts the sales total when compared to the estimate. Overall, not bad, but they were one sold lot away from setting a new London record as the sale fell £2.5M short of Christie's 2012 record of £132.8M.

The day sale was led by Peter Doig's *Bird House (Small)* which just topped the £1M (\$1.65M) mark on a £600-800K estimate. Taking second was a work by Eduardo Chillida at £617K (\$962K – est. £350-450K) followed by Lucio Fontana's *Concetto Spaziale, Attesa* which brought £479K (\$747K – est. 450-650K). As a whole, the sale brought £17.6M (\$27.4M – est. £12-17.9M) and sold 82% of the works, which brings the week's total to over £250M (\$401M) between the two houses!

And with no end in sight... it seems like the contemporary market is doing just fine these days.

The Rehs Family
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Gallery Updates: Our next show will be in Baltimore and opens on the 20th. In addition, the gallery's hours for August are Tuesday – Thursday from 10 am – 5:30 pm and all other times by appointment ... and feel free to make an appointment if you are going to be in NYC.

Web Site Updates: I mentioned earlier that a number of works passed through our hands this month, included were paintings by Corot, Cropsey, Walker, del Campo, Knight, Cortes, Casey, Harris, Koeppel, Green and Daly. We have also added new works to our web site; below is a small selection of the recent additions:

TRADITIONAL



Jean Dufy
Quai de la Planchette a Honfleur



Edouard Leon Cortes
L'Arc de Triomphe, Hiver



Louis Aston Knight
Summer Garden, Normandy

CONTEMPORARY



Rehs Contemporary Galleries, Inc., NYC

Julie Bell
Scarlet and Fuchsia



Rehs Contemporary Galleries, Inc., NYC

Mark Daly
Old Glory in New York City



Ken Salaz
Sunset over Palisades, Dobbs Ferry, NY



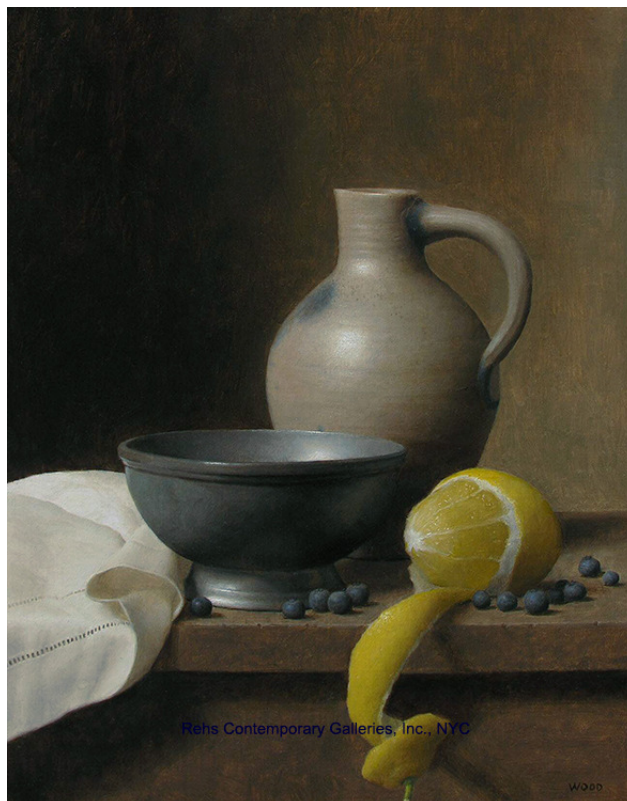
Rehs Contemporary Galleries, Inc., NYC

David Palumbo
Sheer



Rehs Contemporary Galleries, Inc., NYC

Erik Koeppel
Summer Morning in Jackson



Rehs Contemporary Galleries, Inc., NYC

Justin Wood
Jug and Blueberries



Todd Casey
Globe with Pipe



Erik Koeppel
Evening Light in the Tropics



Ben Bauer
May Township Pond

Next Month: We will be thinking.