

AMERICAN
art
COLLECTOR



LETTER FROM THE PUBLISHERS



Our Art Book Library Grows!

Welcome to the April issue of *American Art Collector*! This issue will appeal to collectors of all tastes with so many genres and events to choose from. We begin with previews of two top national art shows. First, Oil Painters of America's *National Juried Exhibition of Traditional Oils* taking place in Wichita, Kansas, from April 5 through May 31 at Mark Arts. The richest of mediums, oil paint has an unparalleled ability to create the most vivid images while retaining softness. You can see works by a selection of the 200 artists in the show beginning on Page 36. The entire exhibition can also be viewed online on both the OPA and Mark Arts websites.

International Guild of Realism, another significant organization in the world of representational art, is presenting its 18th Annual *IGOR Exhibition* at T.H. Brennen Fine Art in Scottsdale, Arizona, from April 10 through May 1. If you love realism, this is a must-see show featuring nearly 100 artists from around the world. We have covered every IGOR show since the beginning and it has been amazing to watch this show grow into what is today. Enjoy a sampling of works by the juried artists starting on Page 30.

The artwork in both shows are available for sale through the galleries. Don't miss this opportunity to see so many award-winning artists together at these two locations.

The American Impressionist Society is also presenting its small works show in St. Simons, Georgia, while the Portrait Society of America will be hosting its annual *Art of the Portrait* conference in Atlanta. In her editor's letter, Sarah Gianelli will share more about the other exciting content in the magazine, including our special feature on modern art.

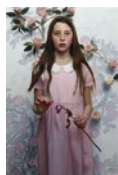
We have more news as well! In March we launched the expansion of our IAP bookstore with our art book affiliate program. As collectors, you may have seen the emails by now. The team at *American Art Collector* could not be more proud to connect collectors with the art books about the artists they love to learn more about them. Our IAP bookstore is a forum where you can peruse your favorite book, back issue or digital download. Our guarantee is that each book has been reviewed and approved by our editorial team before placement in our store, which you can find at www.internationalartmagazineshop.com. Let us help you continue your art education. Don't forget to check back weekly for new books and downloadable content.

Enjoy the spring season of art!

Wendie Martin Adolfo Castillo

Wendie Martin and Adolfo Castillo
Publishers

P.S. We are approaching our 250th episode of our podcast, the *American Art Collective*. We have conveniently categorized the episodes so you can find the contemporary artists you are looking for and listen to their stories. There is nowhere else to hear these in-depth interviews so be sure to tune into the *American Art Collective* each week!



ON THE COVER

Mark Pugh, *Sorrow and the Girl with the Flower*, oil and ink on linen, 36 x 24". Available at Arcadia Contemporary, New York, NY.

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Outside the Box



As riotous blossoms finally burst forth from the fallow soil of winter, the arts scene also sees a vibrant revival countrywide. It's not quite as romantic as witnessing it in nature but I see it in our Excel sheets as they expand to contain the content that grows exponentially as we near spring. There are more gallery shows. More art fairs. More national juried exhibitions. More plein air everything. You are holding the proof in your hands. The April issue of *American Art Collector* is a big magazine, packed with fresh content curated to get you as feverish about art as you are to get outside.

Once a year, we broaden our scope beyond contemporary realism to include a special feature on modern art. When we realized how many galleries represent both abstract and representational artists, we wanted to provide a platform for them to showcase work that otherwise might not find a way into this magazine. We wanted to give artists the same opportunity. Through our many collector home features, we observed that a current trend is to mix and match realism and abstraction to curate an eclectic, aesthetically complementary collection.

This trend is also a hot topic among those tracking the evolution of contemporary realism, as artists continue to introduce more elements of abstraction into their work.

Beginning on Page 50, this blending of genres is also evident in a feature about a corporate collection in a landmark building on Park Avenue in New York City. Much of the art can be seen from the street, but this piece will take you on a tour of the upper floors and private offices, as exquisitely curated with large-scale abstracts hanging next to tightly-rendered realism, as the public lobby.

The same is true of a museum exhibition at the Grohmann Museum in Milwaukee that pairs the work of three artists responding to the history of Pittsburgh's steel industry through nonrepresentational sculpture and paintings, and straightforward works of realism.

Stepping outside of the box also keeps it fresh for our team. It gives us a chance to explore another genre, to learn and make new connections. It rejuvenates our own enthusiasm for art in general, that we can then pour back into these pages to continue bringing you the best of contemporary realism throughout the rest of the year.

Sarah Gianelli

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CONTENTS/

APRIL 2024



Features

- 44 **Daniel Sprick:
Fleeting Presence**
By John O'Hern
- 50 **Street Art**
By David Masello
Photography by Francis Smith
- 56 **Scott Noel:
World Building**
By Sarah Gianelli

Special Sections

- 62 **A Sense of Wonder**
Collector's Focus: Seascapes, Rivers
& Lakes
- 68 **Drawing the Line**
Collector's Focus: Modern Art
- 74 **The Art Lover's Guide to
Collecting Fine Art in Texas**

Art Show Previews

- 30 **International Guild of Realism:
18th Annual IGOR Exhibition**
Scottsdale, AZ
- 36 **Oil Painters of America:
National Juried Exhibition and
Convention**
Wichita, KS



CONTENTS /

APRIL 2024

Upcoming Solo & Group Shows

86

New York, NY

MARK PUGH

The Girl and Other Stories



86

90

Romeo, MI

JHINA ALVARADO

Quiet Voices

94

New York, NY

CREAM OF THE CROP

Group Show

98

New York, NY

DANNY HELLER

Modern Environments

100

Santa Fe, NM

MATTHEW SIEVERS

Fleeting Moments

102

Alexandria, VA

LYNN BOGESS

A Natural Flow

104

Durango, CO

DENNIS ZIEMENSKI &

TONY DE LUZ

Shared Nostalgia

106

Madison, CT

PERSONAL PASSIONS

Group Show

110

Santa Fe, NM

SETH TANE

Visual Texture

112

New Orleans, LA

KRISTIN MOORE

New Ground



100

Museum Previews

122

Milwaukee, WI

PATTERNS OF MEANING

Group Show

Event Previews

128

Atlanta, GA

PORTRAIT SOCIETY

OF AMERICA: ART

OF THE PORTRAIT

CONFERENCE

130

St. Simons Island, GA

AMERICAN

IMPRESSIONIST

SOCIETY: SMALL

WORKS SHOWCASE

132

New York, NY

ART EXPO NEW YORK

134

San Francisco, CA

SAN FRANCISCO ART FAIR

135

El Prado, NM

PASTEL SOCIETY

OF NEW MEXICO:

ENCHANTED COLORS

136

Atlanta, GA

OLMSTED PLEIN AIR

FESTIVAL

138

Chicago, IL

EXPO CHICAGO

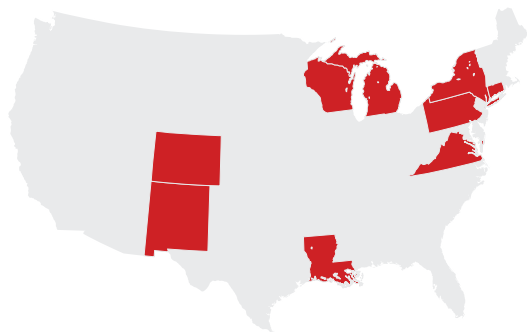
139

Scottsdale, AZ

SPRING LARSEN ART

AUCTION

Coast-to-Coast Coverage



COLORADO

Denver

Durango

CONNECTICUT

Madison

LOUISIANA

New Orleans

MICHIGAN

Romeo

NEW MEXICO

Santa Fe

NEW YORK

New York

PENNSYLVANIA

Philadelphia

VIRGINIA

Alexandria

WISCONSIN

Milwaukee

Artist Focus

140 RENSO TAMSE

141 SHAWN GOULD

Departments

CALENDAR 22, 24

UNVEILING 28

As Real as it Gets

IGOR hosts its 18th annual exhibition of top-notch contemporary realism in Scottsdale, Arizona.



Every year since its inception, the International Guild of Realism has presented its *Annual IGOR Exhibition*, highlighting member artists creating in the realist genre, and presenting their impressive works for public view. This year's event will be hosted in Scottsdale, Arizona, one of the most prominent art destinations in the United States. The event will be hosted by T.H. Brennen Fine Art located on Main Street in the heart of the Old Town Scottsdale arts district.

"The International Guild of Realism (IGOR) was founded by a group of renowned realist artists in 2005," explains founding charter member Donald Clapper. "IGOR now represents the work of over 500 juried members from over 35 countries, and prides itself in selecting today's finest realist artists through a juried committee."

Clapper also notes that IGOR's definition of realism "ranges from the classical, based upon traditional, academic-style painting; to the contemporary, where cutting edge techniques and a wide variety of subject matter are used to comment on today's world." Artists represent a spectrum of styles in the genre including *trompe l'oeil*, photo-realism, surrealism and super-realism.

Visitors to the exhibition, opening for viewing on Wednesday, April 10, will witness 88 extraordinary works by 80 juried IGOR members.

This includes an impressive wide-angle ranch and landscape view by **Cathy P. Johnson** titled *The Walton Ranch*. She shares that her artistic inspiration is influenced by close observation of nature and the world around her. "My early background as a scientific illustrator and graphic designer sharpened my eye for detail and connections," says Johnson.

1
Attendees gather and enjoy realism works at the 2023 Annual IGOR Exhibition opening reception.

2
IGOR celebrates the 2023 Best of Show winner Duffy Sheridan with founding charter member Donald Clapper.

3
Cathy P. Johnson, *The Walton Ranch*, oil on linen, 24 x 48"

4
James P. Cawley, *Return to Hidden Lake*, oil on canvas, 30 x 30"



Patterns of Meaning

A collaborative exhibition funnels contemporary perspectives through historical scraps from Pittsburgh's steel industry. By James D. Balestrieri



Patterns of Meaning: *The Art of Industry* by Cory Bonnet, an exhibition at the Grohmann Museum at the Milwaukee School of Engineering is a bold, collaborative, contemporary take on the city of Pittsburgh's storied steel mills. In 2021, artist Cory Bonnet and scrap dealer Chip Barletto salvaged a collection of wooden casting patterns from the late 19th- and early 20th-centuries. These worn casting patterns, foundry molds for mill and furnace parts—slabs and crankshafts and gears—bear the patina of the 20th century. In a real way, these molds helped shape our modern world. Bonnet saw the potential of each pattern as “a work of art in its own right,” as support for paintings, media for sculpture, forms for glass and ceramics, and as inspiration for other works.

The patterns kept coming. Ten 26-foot box trucks' worth. Bonnet asked other artists to join him. At present, including Bonnet, there are seven: abstract painter



1 Installation view of *Patterns of Meaning* at the Grohmann Museum of Art.

2 **Cory Bonnet,** *Monument to Industry*, 48% x 36%¹

3 **Nate Lucas,** *Symbiote*, 39% x 20%¹

4 **Mia Tarducci,** *Smoke and Steam*, 84 x 43¹

2

Mia Tarducci, sculptor Nate Lucas, ceramic artist AJ Collins, glass artist Brian Engel, assemblage artist Angela Tumolo Neira and lighting artist Andrew Moschetta. All have studio space at the Energy Innovation Center in Pittsburgh's Hill District. Opportunities for cross-pollination abound.

Some describe Bonnet as an industrial painter, aligning his work with the WPA artists of the 1930s, and there are reasons to make this comparison. Pieces in the exhibition, however, transcend the expressionistic realism—to coin a phrase—characteristic of WPA murals and canvases. In *Monument to Industry*, painted on a trapezoidal piece of plywood with screws shot through from the back, Bonnet uses the shape of the support to funnel the scene into the crucible, where iron becomes steel, and where a worker in silhouette tests the metal—and tests his mettle in the heat. Yet it is equally possible to see the scene exploding out of the crucible, as if the scene is made and shaped by the reason for the mill's existence. The mills make steel; steel makes the mills.

Mia Tarducci's *Smoke and Steam*, a tall, chimney-shaped abstraction, springs from







6

the calligraphic curling of millfire clouds and the splashing fronds of molten iron and molded steel plunged into cooling baths. The palette of the work, apart from rosettes of red and an area of pale yellow, is almost a color wheel opposite of the oranges and yellows we expect from the mills and furnaces. Vulcan has become Poseidon. The element of fire creates the element of water and the recipe is written in, well, smoke and steam.

Clay, fashioned of fired earth—as opposed to fired iron—is artist AJ Collins’s chosen medium. One of a series of rectangles of clay, *Pigmented Porcelain Casting* has a smooth, rounded, industrial shape, and seems to draw its art out of design with a nod to Italian Futurism. Order and disruption in colors and shapes move the eye around, over, and through the work, until it settles, time and again, on the speckled, dappled area left of center. The optical illusion Collins creates makes this area alternately recede and jut out, curving towards us and away. There is a sense of play here, as if this or any of the shapes might be a door to a shadow millscape.

Glass from fire is Brian Engel’s medium. Works like *Bold Press 1—From the Yellow Press Mold Series* call attention to the form as object while transforming

5
AJ Collins,
*Pigmented
Porcelain, Casting*,
19% x 14% x 1¼"

6
Works by Mia
Tarducci (left), Cory
Bonnet (right) and
Brian Engel (center).

7
Brian Engel,
Bold Press 1,
37½ x 16¼ x 9¾"





8

it into a new art-form. The hollow, fluted tubes make it seem as though the forms, meant to shape iron and steel, are now extruding glass, glass in motion, glass pulled down by gravity into “glassicles” whose hollowness suggests the sound of breath blown over a beer bottle or the horn of a night train carrying ore in the distance.

The art of *Patterns of Meaning* isn't found art; it's art imagined, art wrested, art made out of the cast-off casts of a found industry, one that inspired me when I was casting about (I'll stop casting now) for an idea for a thesis play that would complete my MFA in play-writing and theatre at Carnegie-Mellon University,

just across the Monongahela from Homestead and the other mill towns. I settled on the story of a multi-racial, multicultural neighborhood—the Ward in Homestead—and its tragic destruction in early 1942 to make way for a new mill that would churn out steel for battleships, tanks, and bombers. Homestead paid a heavy price for its key role in the victory in World War II. My research? Sneaking around derelict mills, eluding security—who were always on the lookout for scavengers. Wooden patterns in piles. Drinking ice cold Iron Cities in Hungarian bars. Irritating the Homestead Library historians. At the opening of

8
Cory Bonnet, *Core Box Mill Town*, 14 x 14½ x 5"

9
Installation view of *Patterns of Meaning* at the Grohmann Museum of Art.

10
Works by Mia Tarducci (left), Brian Engel (right) and AJ Collins (center).

Images by James Kieselburg, Grohmann Museum



Patterns of Meaning, the red ochre scratch-board of Bonnet's *Core Box Mill Town*, a small work, opened up my past and made a deep impression. As if hastily etched with a back of a tool on a pattern found in the corner of a mill, the skeletal sketch of row houses beneath a line of hills cried out, "Remember us. This place. Our home. We were here." *Core Box Mill Town* would make a superb projection for the play I eventually wrote—*The Sons of Vulcan*, or *The Forge of the Fire God*.

Iron to steel. Salvage to art. Past to present to future. *Patterns of Meaning* continues to evolve. ●

PATTERNS OF MEANING: THE ART OF INDUSTRY BY CORY BONNET

Through April 28, 2024

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