

ARTnews

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The Boom in the Emirates

Candice Breitz: Talking with Movie Stars

What Cézanne Taught Artists

Art Spiegelman on Comics, Pop, and Picasso



visually and figuratively “lights a candle” to those who have inspired and influenced him.

Intimately scaled and executed in the Old Master technique of oil on panel, each work functions as a kind of shrine, with objects suggesting a particular artist or school illuminated by candlelight. Thus a painting of a single lemon beside a burning candle in a wine-glass evokes 17th-century Dutch painting. Another work, *J.S.C.* (2008), featuring a censer suspended above two flickering candles, pays tribute to the 17th-century Spanish still-

life-painter-turned-monk Juan Sánchez Cotán, whose compositions of fruits and vegetables against darkened backgrounds are clearly models for much of Holland’s work. And in *Peto* (2007) a brass candleholder atop a leather-bound book conjures the poetic still lifes of John Frederick Peto.

Not all of Holland’s heroes are masters from the distant past. A magical still life of four tea candles aglow in a compartmentalized wooden box is dedicated to Joseph Cornell. Nor are all the honorees visual artists. One painting features the unmistakable image of Jimi Hendrix, lit by a single votive candle.

For all their personal associations, these paintings, with their invisible brushwork, severely geometric compositions, and Zen-like fixation on the image at hand, were oddly impersonal. Whether this heightens or diminishes their impact is hard to say.

—Elizabeth Wilson

Harry Benson

Staley Wise

This Scottish-born, New York-based photojournalist has covered events ranging from the civil rights movement to war in the Middle East, but most of the 30 photographs in this show, taken over

the past 40 years, treated lighter and more casual subjects. These included his famous shot of the Beatles gleefully frozen mid-pillow fight in a Paris hotel room in 1964 and a 1979 photo of James Brown, dressed in white, performing splits on a lawn beside a parked Camaro.



Harry Benson, *Grieving Man with Flag, Washington, D.C., 1971*, archival pigment print, 17" x 22". Staley Wise.

Many of the photos, most of which were black and white, were set in places where a publicity shoot could be squeezed into a crowded schedule—backstage, for instance, or, frequently, in a car. In one photograph on an enlarged contact sheet from 1975, Benson catches Jack Nicholson baring his teeth and mugging for the camera to chilling effect. Less menacing was a 1978 photo of a dreamy and withdrawn-looking Carrie Fisher smoking in the back of a car with her Birkenstock-clad feet on the seat. For other photographs Benson assumes the position of the paparazzo, peering into windows: Jackie Kennedy smiles de-

murely in a 1962 shot, her white-gloved hand held to her mouth. Curiously, even these Benson portraits felt intimate.

The most moving work in the show was *Grieving Man with Flag, Washington, D.C.* (1971), portraying a black man in a suit sitting in a row of chairs against a wall, a suitcase at his feet. In one hand he holds his hat; in the other he tenderly cradles a carefully folded American flag, the kind family receive in a military funeral. Unlike Benson’s images of actors and musicians, each linked to its era, this powerful picture seemed timeless.

—Rebecca Robertson

Sam Glankoff

Knoedler

Largely self-taught, Sam Glankoff (1894–1982) had made his living variously as a book illustrator, comic-strip artist, and designer of stuffed animals, pursuing his work as a “serious” artist in almost total isolation and obscurity. But in the early ‘70s Glankoff began devoting himself full time to his art, using an innovative technique—part printing and part painting—of his own invention to produce haunting abstractions. His first solo exhibition, in 1981, six months before his death, at age 87, was greeted



Sam Glankoff, *Untitled, 1975*, water-soluble printer’s ink and casein on handmade Japanese paper, 38 1/4" x 48 1/4". Knoedler.

with much acclaim. This show of eleven of these so-called “print-paintings” provided an excellent overview of this last and astonishingly productive decade of his life.

Like many of the Abstract Expressionists, with whom he is often and justifiably compared, Glankoff was drawn to the expressive power of ancient writing and primitive symbols. A number of his works consist of circles—haloed, elongated, or intersected by curves and lines—that hover mysteriously against a colored ground. Others suggest a human presence. In an untitled work from 1975, abstracted arms, legs, and heads appear locked in a joyous Matisse-like dance, floating on a sea of green.

Inevitably, the visual impact of these works owes much to Glankoff's process: a unique (and still imperfectly understood) method of transfer printing in which forms build up through successive printings, composed of different-colored inks applied sequentially to the same plate. The resulting image, emerging from layers of encrusted, semiopaque pigment, appears as something that has accreted over time—ancient but still miraculously luminous.

—Elizabeth Wilson

John Marin

Meredith Ward Fine Art and Adelson

John Marin (1870–1953) has long been considered one of America's finest watercolorists, and the 19 works on paper at Meredith Ward showed why. From his early, color-saturated celebrations of sun and light to his later, broody meditations on Maine's windswept seas and rocky shores, Marin reveled in his medium. Sometimes he let water pool on the paper and spread like clouds across the painted sky. Other times he'd whisk a half-dry brush across the sheet, leaving a swath of color flecked with white, as in an exuberant landscape he painted in the Tyrol in 1910, that has the airy texture of a monotype. Another work, *New York Fantasy* (ca. 1912), luxuriates in cobalt blues and ultramarines, while dabs of orange capture the sun on high-rise windows.



John Marin, *New York Fantasy*, ca. 1912, watercolor on paper, 17 $\frac{1}{8}$ " x 14 $\frac{1}{2}$ ".
Meredith Ward Fine Art.

Recruited by Alfred Stieglitz to show at his 291 Gallery, Marin became familiar with European art and made a name for himself as an early modernist. By the 1920s he'd started using blacks and grays and, showing the influence of Cubism, his compositions turned stark and angular, like the land- and sea-scapes of Maine that became his signature subjects.

Throughout his career, Marin also worked in oils. Adelson presented 14 of his late oil paintings, showing how the artist anticipated and sometimes paralleled the Action Painting of his younger peers Willem de Kooning and Jackson Pollock. In the '30s, Marin was slapping color onto his canvas, scrubbing at sections, and

fiercely zigging and zagging with black. During the '40s and early '50s, he started to let the canvas show through, and his paintings became increasingly abstract. Marin's late works in oil help to place him in the American tradition of expressive painting. But his smaller works on paper suggest he was always most at home with the humble watercolor.

—Mona Molarsky

Meghan Boody

Rick Wester Fine Art

Anthologized under the title "The Lighthouse and How She Got There," these artfully manipulated digital photographs are large in size and lofty in ambition. Boody's panoramic images, pieced together from a vast array of other pictures, are seamless and unashamedly literary.

Each work—chapter, if you will—derives its name from the opening lines of a 19th-century novel. *Night is generally my time for walking* (2006) borrows its title as well as its fiery backdrop from Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre*. Clutching a shawl about her shoulders, a solitary barefoot girl stands in front of a burning mansion. As she gazes out from the picture, apparently oblivious to the conflagration behind



Meghan Boody, *Night is generally my time for walking*, 2006, Fujiflex print mounted to aluminum, 58" x 78" (framed). Rick Wester Fine Art.

her, she seems acutely aware of the viewer's presence.

Boody's work invites comparison with Max Ernst's set of surreal collages, "Une Semaine de Bonté." Both Boody and Ernst cut and paste Victoriana, and both