

# iARTistas



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## Front Cover

CANDICE BOHANNON

*Pleading Heart*

ARCADIA CONTEMPORARY GALLERY

charcoal, carbon on mylar 15x17





# HOWARD REHS

REHS GALLERIES & REHS CONTEMPORARY GALLERIES

## Please tell us about your gallery.

Our gallery had its beginnings in the late 1930s with my grandfather M. Edwin Schillay (Eddie). Eddie was an accountant with clients in the art and antique business. Some of his clients suggested that he go to Europe and buy antiques to be resold in the US. It seems that Eddie liked art more than antiques and decided to buy and sell works of art.

When he first started out, he would send back full containers of Victorian paintings and sell them in bulk. By the 1950s my grandmother decided to enter the business and they continued to bring in monthly shipments of paintings, but now they were selling them individually. Their clients included most of the art galleries in the US and many department stores (at that time department stores actually sold original works of art).

In the early 1960s my father, Joesph Rehs, came into the business and the firm was then known as Schillay & Rehs. As the value of the works of art they were handling increased, their client base changed from dealers to designers and then finally the individual collectors.

I came into the business in 1981 after graduating from NYU with an art history degree. My particular passion was 19th century French art and over the years we have become known as one of the leading galleries for 19th century European paintings with a focus on the Barbizon, Realist and Academic artists.

In the late 1980s we also started exhibiting works by contemporary artists ... among the first were Barry Oretsky and Warner Friedman. We then expanded by adding Gregory Harris, Allan Banks, Holly Banks, John Kuhn, Mark Lovett and Sally Swatland to our roster. By 2011 we decided that it was time to start championing the works of contemporary artists who continue in the tradition of the 19th century Academic artists we have always dealt in. That year we added Timothy Jahn to our roster and then everything took off. By the end of 2012 we were exhibiting the works of Tony South who is based in the

United Kingdom, Ben Bauer and James Hollingsworth.

In 2013 both Alyssa Rehs and Lance Rehs (our 4th generation) entered the business and they have taken the contemporary reigns. Since then we have had three exhibitions featuring the artists from the Ani Art Academies and this October we will be exhibiting a group of works by artists who trained at the Grand Central Atelier. Today, Rehs Contemporary Galleries has expanded its roster to include John Stobart, Julie Bell, Todd Casey, Justin Wood, Ken Salaz, David Palumbo, Erik Koeppel, Brandon Drake, Noah Layne, Stuart Dunkel, Erika Baez, Jay Davenport, Bart Walter and Karl Jensen.

**How do you determine the selling price of the contemporary artists at Rehs Gallery? Also, I am curious if any works of art which sell for millions at auction houses ever went through your grandfather's fingers.**

It is very difficult for us to know exactly what he sold in the early days since the records are now lost. Even if we did have the old records, they usually just gave the last name of an artist, title and size ... there were very few photos taken.

I can say that my father remembers buying works by some of the British Victorian artists like Arthur John Elsley and Frederick Morgan for \$200-\$300 and selling them for \$400-500. One major work that he sold in the early 60s for about \$450 came back on the market about 10 plus years ago and sold for close to \$1 million. When I entered the business (back in the early 80s) I remember selling works by Elsley for \$20-\$30,000 and recall asking my father if works by Elsley would ever sell for more than \$30,000? I thought that was a crazy price. Well, we resold two of those works from the 1980s about 5 plus years ago ... one went for over \$300,000 and the other for \$400,000.

Selling prices. This is a very interesting question and I would like to tell you that we place a bunch of numbers in a hat and the one we pull out is the

starting price ... but that would be too easy!! Determining the selling price of a 'new' artist whose works we will be marketing is a little more complicated. Initially we need to know if the artist is represented by other galleries. If so, we want to keep our prices in line with what others are offering the works for. If an artist is new to the market, then our starting price depends on a number of factors ... subject matter, complexity, size and most importantly, what we feel is fair for the particular artist's work when compared to others working in a similar style. Many artists start out by pricing works by size (square inch, square foot, etc.). This is not a bad way to begin; but, complexity is often overlooked and should be addressed ... especially as the artist begins to gain traction in the market. Artists also need to respect the opinion of the dealer/dealers they are working with since they know what is selling and at what price level.

What is of utmost importance is that a dealer/gallery/artist does not overprice a new artist's work. You want to build a broad base of collectors and once people start buying, then it is easy to raise the prices. Collectors, who are taking a risk early on, like to feel that they are potentially getting a great deal on a new artist and if the artist makes it, they will be rewarded for that risk.

**How many artists total are represented and how many of those are women? Please introduce three artists' current works to our readers.**

The gallery currently represents 30 artists and of those 4 are women: Eric Baez, Holly Banks, Julie Bell and Sally Swatland. In addition, we have works by Tanya Clark, Elena Green, Emma Hirst, and Victoria Steel on display.

Our last exhibition with the Ani Art Academies (which ended on May 15) featured 31 artists, 11 of which were women. Our next big event will be in September with the Water Street Atelier ... we have 18 artists committed, 6 of whom are women. Now that I looked at those numbers, both show are split 2/3 to 1/3.





**KEN SALAZ**  
*The Dancing Phoenix*  
 oil on canvas  
 6x9

The gallery started working with Ken Salaz (b. 1970) just over a year ago and when we introduced his works to our clients, we instantly knew his market would take off! That first year we exhibited his works at a show in Rhode Island and a couple walked by a grouping of Ken’s works on the wall (all about 6 x 8 inches), the wife gestured a big circle with her hand and said to her husband “we cannot have one, we need them all” ... and like that, the set was sold.

Salaz has had an exceptionally fine education in traditional painting and travels the world visiting museums and learning from the masters. To create his vivid sunsets, Ken works quickly to catch the fleeting colors of the sunset and the reflections in the water before having to work from memory. Recently, he has taken on more ambitious projects, moving from his roughly 6 x 8 inch paintings to much larger scale pieces: 24 x 30, 24 x 36 and 36 x 36.

One of my favorite works now on display is *The Dancing Phoenix, Sunset* (Nyack NY). This small, 6 x 9 inch oil on canvas-board, gives you a great understanding of his body of work. The painting places you on the shore overlooking the water and mountains at twilight...the sky is engulfed in a fiery array of colorful clouds above the small town lit up at the base of the mountain - a pretty mesmerizing scene.

**JULIE BELL**  
*Vermillion*  
 oil on canvas  
 30x30



Almost two years ago, our roster was “full” (or so we thought) and we were running out of physical space to store and show new works. We made a point not to take on any more artists at the time and that is when Julie entered our lives. Not only was the term “no” absent in her vocabulary, but she let us know it! After several e-mails filled with wildlife imagery, one day in walks Julie and her husband, Boris, carrying several paintings each. They unwrapped the works placed them around the gallery and all we could do was laugh. Not at the works but at ourselves! Laughing at the sheer thought of what we could have missed out on if this ambitious woman did not walk into the gallery. Since then, Julie has been one of our strongest artists.

She began her career in the fantasy world creating works for comic books like Marvel, album covers for artists like Meatloaf and ad campaigns for Nike, Coca-Cola and Ford Motor Company. Then, in the early 2000s she began a series of works featuring animals; horses, wolves, lions etc... The most amazing part about these paintings is that you actually feel as though you can reach into the painting and touch the animal....that’s how realistic they are!

Now, Julie has in a way meshed her two bodies of work into one. A fanciful blend of wildlife and figurative imagery. A beautiful example of this is *Vermillion*; a young female draped in bright pink satin sitting within a flock of flamingos. The masterfully executed work plays with light and shadow amongst the folds of the fabric; there is a certain softness to her brushstroke yet the final image is fine and sharp... truly an intermingling of all that Julie has to offer.



Lance Rehs next to a painting by  
TIMOTHY JAHN

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Alyssa Rehs next to a painting by  
DAVID PALUMBO





**TONY SOUTH**

*Ace*  
oil on canvas  
36x46

The gallery has been exhibiting the works of Tony South (b. 1964) for about three years now and he has become one of our more popular artists. Hailing from Rotherham in South Yorkshire, England, South's original inspiration came at an early age from none other than the infamous Stanley Martin Lieber, better known as Stan Lee in the comic world. Lee's imagery and composition provided the foundation; a starting point for South to not only learn how to draw, but how to convey a narrative through an image.

Today, Tony predominantly works with thin glazes of oil paint on top of an acrylic under painting which makes for quite a dramatic and vibrant image. While the pops of color are certainly eye-catching, what makes his most recent series of work so unique is the wild imagery that he cultivates. These paintings feature fanciful images of primates with hot rods and motorcycles. I know... it sounds absolutely ridiculous but I assure you everyone who gets a glimpse of one walks away with a smile on their face; they are the epitome of fun in art.

Most recently, Tony completed a work titled "Ace," which shows a bad-ass gorilla sporting a leather jacket and lighting up a cigarette. Behind him, a classic BSA (Birmingham Small Arms Company) motorcycle is expertly detailed. From the meticulously rendered engine to the reflection of an Ace Café of London event in the chrome, no stone is left unturned by South.

