

COMMENTS ON THE ART MARKET

VOLUME 218

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Email Update

Over the years we have seen many works of art sell before we have had the opportunity to place them on our website. In turn, we have received emails from clients and collectors who were upset they did not have an opportunity to consider those works... we are now going to try to rectify that.

This week, Alyssa began sending out our new FIRST LOOK emails which offer collectors an early look at new works by the artists they are most interested in – essentially, before they go live on the website or featured in our monthly newsletter... and, at times, not even ready to be put up for sale (in other words, their frames are still on order).

If you would like to receive FIRST LOOK emails for any of our artists, please use our Contact Us feature and let us know the artist's lists you would like to be added to.

The responses we have already received were very positive and these are lists you can be removed from at any time.

In The News

'WOW FACTOR' LURES IMMEDIATE BUYER OF 19TH CENTURY FRENCH PAINTING THAT'S BEEN UNSEEN FOR 118 YEARS Daniel Ridgway Knight's painting *On the Terrace, Rolleboise* recently surfaced, after about 118 years in hiding, and quickly found a new home. (Forbes.com)

Upcoming Exhibitions

PALM BEACH JEWELRY, ART & ANTIQUE SHOW

WHEN

Opening Night Preview

Wednesday, February 13: 7 pm - 10 pm

General Show Hours

Thursday, February 14: 11 am - 7 pm

Friday, February 15: 11 am - 7 pm

Saturday, February 16: 11 am - 7 pm

Sunday, February 17: 11 am - 7 pm

Monday, February 18: 11 am - 7 pm

Tuesday, February 19: 11 am - 6 pm

NAPLES ART, ANTIQUE & JEWELRY SHOW

WHEN

Opening Night Preview

Friday, February 22: 6 pm - 9 pm

General Show Hours

Saturday, February 23: 10 am – 6 pm

Sunday, February 24: 10 am – 6 pm

Monday, February 25: 10 am – 6 pm

Tuesday, February 26: 10 am – 4 pm

Stocks & Crypto

By: Howard

I will start by saying that not one of our readers gave me an answer to the questions I posed last month: Since the Dow dropped about 19% between October 3rd and December 24th, was that our correction? Will it be smooth sailing and bright skies for 2019? And while I am at it, what is the one stock I should buy for 2019? ...Where are all my stock gurus?

Also, we were so busy this month that I only updated my portfolio on the evening of the 31st ... so let's get down to business. When we last left off, the Dow was at 23,327.46 ... at the end of this month, it closed at 24,999.67 ... that was a nice increase. I do hope the rest of the year follows that upward trend. Bitcoin closed out 2018 at 3,740.81 and is now at 3,427.10 ... not very comforting, and please do not let Amy know. As far as the rest of those crypto-currencies, the numbers are better left unsaid. Oil moved up nicely and closed out the month at \$53.99. Gold moved up over \$40 to close at \$1,325.60. The British Pound strengthened to \$1.3104 and the Euro was basically flat, closing at \$1.1444.

Now comes the important part, my stocks: JP Morgan (\$103.5 – up \$5.78), Exxon (\$73.28 – up \$5.06), AT&T (\$30.06 – up \$1.52), Verizon (\$55.06 – down \$1.16), Wal-Mart (\$95.83 – up \$2.71), Coke (\$48.13 – up \$0.79), DowDuPont (\$53.81 – up \$0.35), Merck (\$74.43 – down \$2.04), Disney (\$111.52 – up \$1.87), Intel (\$47.12 – up \$0.19), Apple (\$166.44 – up \$8.70), Microsoft (\$104.43 – up \$2.86), United Technologies (\$118.07 – up \$12.91), and the newbies: Bristol-Myers (\$49.37 – down \$2.60), Cisco (\$47.29 – up \$3.96) and Emerson (\$65.47 – up \$5.72). Thirteen up and three down – not too shabby!

How to Safely Navigate The Art Market: Catalogue Raisonnés

By: Howard

Since I touched on expertise last month, I thought it would be appropriate to follow-up with an article about Catalogue Raisonnés (C.R.). I have used this term many times in my career, and occasionally someone stops me to ask — what exactly is a Catalogue Raisonné? To begin with, the words are French and Wikipedia describes it as “a comprehensive, annotated listing of all the known artworks by an artist either in a particular medium or all media. The works are described in such a way that they may be reliably identified by third parties.”

Now that you know the technical definition let's tell you what it is all about. A catalogue raisonné is a book that is written by the artist's leading expert/experts, with the aim of listing all of the works that the chosen artist has created. These projects usually contain photographs of the works, along with as much documentation as possible — size, medium, provenance, signature location, date, inscriptions, labels that may appear on the reverse, exhibition history, and some go as far as including the work's condition — something I personally think should only be noted if the painting has been drastically altered because of the restoration; otherwise this is far too subjective. I can tell you that while an expert might have a good handle on authenticity, some are far from experts on condition.

A Catalogue Raisonné will include an essay on the life and work of the artist as well as examples of their signatures, listings of museums and public collections where works can be found, and additional publications where the artist is mentioned. Much of this information needs to be gathered from old books, reviews, letters, diaries, account books, legal documents, dealer records, etc. – just finding all of this material takes an enormous amount of time. Even after much of the documentation is found, translated (if need be), and compiled, there are often large gaps left in the life of many artists – some of which may never be filled in.

The end result is a publication (either printed or online) that will then be considered the 'bible' of that artist's work. Future buyers, sellers, and researchers will have the ability to search the catalogue and see if a specific work is listed ... if it is, then they are pretty confident it has been vetted and generally believed to be genuine – at least in the opinion of the individual, or committee, that conducted the research.

While the ultimate goal of these projects is to list every work the artist created, that is rarely possible as some works have been lost, destroyed, or will remain unaccounted for. Remember that not every current owner knows exactly what they have, and some may never know about the project ... it is only when they decide to sell that they may learn about the C.R.

One interesting result of a C.R. being published is that many more works begin to surface. This then sets the experts on a course to start a second volume (if it was done in book form). This new volume gives them the opportunity to update or correct any of the information in the original volume. The nice thing about an online version is that corrections and additions can be made immediately – this way, the C.R. is always up-to-date. Remember, no matter how careful an expert is, mistakes will be made.

So, I am sure you want to know: how is a work accepted into a C.R.? Usually, the expert/experts have forms that need to be filled out, image requirements, fees (these normally range from \$500-\$2,000, but there are exceptions), and some require that every work is physically examined (this can be an expensive undertaking). If, after all the research is completed, an expert feels the work (in their opinion) is authentic then they will usually supply the owner with a letter (or photo-certificate) stating that they will be including it in their research project. On the other hand, if they do not feel the piece is authentic, some will send you a letter stating that, and others will not. Today, there are many artists whose works cannot be sold without being authenticated by a specific individual or committee.

As I am sure you can surmise, these projects are challenging at best. Just trying to locate the works and then obtain reproduction quality photographs is a time consuming and, at times, an almost impossible task. Not everyone is willing to have their works properly photographed, and some just do not want to take the time to do it. This is only one of the many hurdles that need to be overcome.

I know your next question – this is all well and good, but how long does it take to research and produce a catalogue raisonné? The time frame usually given is about 15 years, but some projects, dealing with more obscure artists can go on for 20 years or more. However, in the end, these publications are one of the best ways for individual buyers, collectors, and dealers to be sure that the work they are looking at is genuine.

Our gallery is currently researching the lives of Julien Dupré, Daniel Ridgway Knight, Emile Munier, and Antoine Blanchard for their respective Catalogue Raisonnés. Both the Munier and Blanchard projects began online and will continue that way. Initially, the Dupre and Ridgway Knight projects were slated to be published in book form; however, we have now decided that these will also become online projects. This will allow everyone easy access to the information and give us the flexibility to continually update and change information as our research continues and new works appear.

Tales From the Dark Side

By: Alyssa

Bataclan Banksy Bagged - A mural, attributed to Banksy, was stolen in a swift overnight heist from the exterior of the Bataclan theater in Paris. According to reports, the work, which was painted on an outside door in 2018, depicts a veiled figure. The image is believed to be a homage to the lives that were lost in the

2015 terror attack in which Islamic State militants killed 90 concertgoers at the Bataclan. This is just one of the many cases in which thieves have destroyed property to obtain an original Banksy.

The Bataclan states that the stolen work, “only has meaning in this place,” and “We are today filled with a deep sense of indignation. The Banksy artwork, a symbol of contemplation belonging to all — residents, Parisians and citizens of the world — has been taken from us.”

Bargain-Baseament Bacon - One and J Gallery (South Korea) is alleging that Christie’s has done, what can best be described as, a “bargain-basement sale” of a Francis Bacon. According to the court documents, One and J consigned an unnamed Francis Bacon painting to the auction house to be sold privately, and as collateral for a loan of \$4.9 million. One and J are claiming that the painting, originally valued at \$10 million, was sold by the auction house for far less than its true market value to two high profile clients – Christophe van de Weghe and David Rogath. It has also been alleged that van de Weghe and Rogath were interested in buying works in an upcoming auction and the preferred price for the Bacon was used to entice them to bid. Reports also state that One and J offered to pay \$6.8 million for their Bacon (which was more than van de Weghe and Rogath were paying) and that the proceeds from an Andy Warhol they consigned for an upcoming sale would be used to repay their loan — Christie’s declined their offer.

In September, Christie’s notified One and J that they were in default of their loan and auction house was entitled to sell the Bacon “under any terms, at any time, as we see fit.” What is interesting is that it took them about two weeks to find a buyer at the reduced price.

On January 4, 2019, One and J filed suit against van de Weghe and Rogath. Christie’s spokeswoman Lara Messerlian stated that “Christie’s sale of the collateralized painting (Bacon) at fair market value was an appropriate remedy after years of non-payment, defaults, and months-late payments on interest-bearing advance agreements.” A judge signed off on a standstill order — so it seems that a settlement might be in the works.

Gotta love these backroom deals!

Really!

By: Amy



Valentine’s Day is just two weeks away and I found a stunning bracelet at a recent auction that would have made the perfect gift...hint, hint Howard. According to the auction house, identifying the designer of the bracelet with certainty was difficult as the piece was unsigned; the unique tube-link design, as well as the mixing of larger and smaller diamonds in a non-uniform pavé setting were the key to determining the piece was designed by Suzanne Belperron. Apparently, she never signed her pieces and was known for saying, “*my style is my signature.*” Belperron became one of the most influential 20th-century jewelry designers; her career spanned over 5 decades, initially working as a model-maker and designer for the French jewelers Maison René Boivin. While working at Maison Boivin, Belperron became unhappy that she was not given any recognition for her designs so she left in 1932 and began working for Bernard Herz, a stone dealer, who gave her the freedom to create whatever she wanted, and the credit too. A decade later, with WWII raging in Europe and the Nazis invasion of Paris, Herz had the foresight of his potential arrest and signed the company over to Belperron for safe keeping. Regrettably, in 1942, both Herz and Belperron were arrested and though Belperron was released quickly, Herz was not (he was Jewish and for that reason sent to Drancy internment camp). Belperron fought for months to have Herz released to no avail, he was sent to Auschwitz where he died. Jean Herz (Bernie’s son) who had been a POW, returned to Paris and without hesitation, Belperron signed over the company to its rightful heir, they became business partners until Belperron retired in 1974. So now that I have sidetracked with a little history, how did the bracelet do? Well it did really well! It was estimated to make \$200-300K and finally hammered down at \$700K (\$852.5K with premium –w/p) – I definitely know that it will not be my gift, maybe one of you will have a wonderful surprise!

The month of January has become known for the car auctions that take over Scottsdale, Arizona, -- there were seven auctions in all, but four of them raked in most of the bucks. Overall, the market did well, an astonishing 3,294 cars were offered, 2,660 sold (that's an 81% sell-through, not bad), and taking in a total of \$250.9M (slightly up from last year's \$248M.) So what were some of the hits and misses this time around? Gooding & Company sold the three most expensive cars - all Ferraris. Taking the pole position was a 1963 Ferrari 250 GT SWB Berlinetta estimated at \$6 – 7M that sold for \$7.595M w/p. Coming in second was a 1958 Ferrari 250 GT Tour de France Berlinetta that crossed the finish line at \$5.89M w/p (est. \$5.75 – 6.5M) and just behind was a 1953 Ferrari 250 MM Spider that narrowly missed the low end of the \$5.5 - 6.5M estimate, selling for \$5.395M w/p. On the flip side, there were some big money cars that failed to start their engines and again, they were all Ferraris. Sotheby's offered a 1957 Ferrari 250 GT Coupe Speciale with an estimate of \$11-13M; bidding hit a roadblock at \$7.5, but then again no one actually bid. Another unsold car at the Sotheby's auction was a 2017 Ferrari LaFerrari Aperta where the bidding stalled at \$5.5M (est. \$6.5 - 8.5M). And a 1964 Ferrari 275 GTB Prototype offered by Gooding & Co., never made it to the starting line as the auctioneer couldn't get any action at \$4.75M (est. \$6 – 8M). I will add that there was strong interest in the "cheaper" classic cars estimated below \$250K, it was the expensive cars that struggled as buyers are far more selective, as they should be.



I was so excited when I first found out that there was going to be a sale of 248 Supreme skateboard decks and I thought I might buy one for Lance. I was really disappointed and surprised to find out that the sale consisted of just one lot – all 248 decks –and no, that was not an option for me to buy. Besides, his walls are already filled with art; his only option would have been to use them as flooring in his apartment. A collector was able to put together the entire collection of Supreme skateboard decks produced since 1998. Many of them were art-inspired, and feature collaborations by artists such as Jeff Koons, George Condo, Cindy Sherman,

Richard Prince, Damien Hirst, and KAWS. The collection, featured in an online sale, was estimated to make \$800K-1.2M, which I did think was a bit much as none of the decks were 'a one-of-a-kind,' nor were they all, if any, in perfect condition. When the sale closed, the collection sold for the low estimate of \$800K. Want to try and make your own collection of Supreme skateboard decks? Then head over to eBay where they range from \$25 - \$10,000 (for a set of 5 by Damien Hirst.)

The Art Market

The month of January was rather hectic for many art galleries with shows taking place across the country. We exhibited for our 24th time at the LA Art Show, and this year saw record attendance, good sales, and a great deal of interest ... if we can just get a little follow-up, that would be very nice.

Some of the art we had on display in LA went straight to Florida for the Palm Beach and Naples shows; while other works will be back in the gallery today. Some of those, along with others, will be repacked and sent down to Florida next Friday No rest for the weary! If you are going to be in NYC during the month of February, please note that the gallery will be closed from the 13th – 20th ... not something I am happy about, but it seems we have no options.

Sales we cover in the public forum were rather sparse this month. There were just two we thought our readers might find of interest, and both took place on the last day of January. I am not sure if there will be many more in February, but we shall keep you updated.

The Old Masters Take Center Stage At Sotheby's

By: Lance

On Wednesday the 30th, Sotheby's held a day and evening sale offering a selection of Old Master paintings, drawings, and sculptures. In an interesting PR twist, Sotheby's brought in former pop-star and contemporary art collector Victoria Beckham, who is said to have taken an interest in Old Master works following a visit to the Frick in New York in 2018 – she was present at the pre-sale exhibition last week and surely bolstered young collector's interest in the period.



The day began with 162 lots up for grabs as part of the Old Master Drawings (works on paper) sale. Most surprising was that the top lot in the sale beat out the top lot from the evening sale... here, Sir Peter Paul Rubens' *Nude Study of a Young Man with Raised Arms* (illustrated here) found a buyer at \$8.2M with premiums (w/p) on a \$2.5-3.5M estimate. The study, executed in black chalk on paper, set a record for a drawing by the artist at auction. Nothing else came close to that figure, though a handful of lots dramatically outperformed their estimate... in second was *Portrait of a youth* attributed to Agostino Carracci which fetched \$1.45M (w/p) on a baffling \$35-45K estimate (wow, talk about missing the mark). That was followed by *The Fight for the Standard, after Leonardo*, whose listing merely stated "Italian School, 16th Century," which brought in \$795K (w/p) on an equally inexplicable \$25-35K estimate... can someone please explain why Sotheby's even bothers hiring "specialists" to come up with estimates? I think a dartboard and a blindfold would give us roughly the same accuracy. Only one of the top 10 lots actually fell inside the projected range! There were a couple of other lots in the top 10 that were way off... two works by Giovanni Francesco

Barbieri, estimated to sell between \$70-90K and \$25-35K, found buyers at \$237K and \$150K, respectively. At the end of the session, 110 (67.9%) of the works had sold, yielding just over \$15M collectively... they were only expecting between \$6-8.4M, so they crushed that figure. I'm not sure what that says as they were just plain wrong across the board with estimating so many lots... and I should also note that the top lot accounted for more than 50% of the entire sale's take. All that said, it seems like they got some nice interest in a good chunk of the work offered.

With regards to the Evening sale, things went far more according to plan... the top lot of the night was Elisabeth-Louise Vigée Le Brun's *Portrait of Muhammad Dervish Khan*, (illustrated here) which topped its \$4-6M estimate as it sold for \$7.1M (w/p). That price not only set a record for the artist at auction but was good for an auction record by any female artist of the pre-modern era. Taking second on the evening was *The Banquet of the Gods* by Joachim Anthonisz. Wtewael at \$5.9M (w/p) on a *finally* accurate \$5-7M estimate. Rounding out the top three was a work by Jan van de Cappelle at \$4.8M (w/p) on a \$4-6M estimate... looks like they finally got a grip on those projections.



Sotheby's threw itself full force behind a push of under-recognized groundbreaking female artists of the 16th-19th Centuries. The auction house assembled a group of 21 works by 14 female artists and billed the selection as *The Female Triumphant*. A number of the works from that group were offered as part of this evening sale, and they went on to set new auction records for several female artists, so their marketing seems to have helped... Fede Galizia at \$2.4M (est. \$2-3M), Angelika Kaufmann at \$915K (\$600-800K), and Giulia Lama at \$495K (est. \$400-600K). There was only one sizable lot that failed on the evening – A Luis Melendez still life brandishing a \$1.5-2M estimate. Aside from that, there were no other surprises... 60 of the 79 lots were sold, or 76%, and the total take was \$52.7M (w/p), landing them smack in the middle of their \$42.6-62.6M pre-sale estimate.

The Rehs Family

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