

COMMENTS ON THE ART MARKET

VOLUME 6

Rehs Galleries, Inc. – 5 East 57th Street, New York, N.Y. 10022 – (212) 355-5710
www.rehs.com

We are often asked about the quality of the works we offer and how they compare to other works by a particular artist.

Here are some of our thoughts on the issue of:

Quality

Another key component to consider when buying art is quality – or, where on a scale of 1 – 10 does any specific work stand. During your journey there will be many available works at any given time. If you have focused in on the works of a single artist, make sure that any you are considering rank among the best available.

Always keep in mind that even great artists had/have bad days and produce mediocre or poor quality works. You should also note that some of the available works are nothing more than a sketch or study and were never created with the intention of being sold. These are usually works that the artist created/produced in the development stages of a more complex works. So I am sure you are wondering how then did these works become available? Good question:

During the 19th century it was common to have a studio sale after an artist's death. The purpose of these sales was twofold:

1. To let the art world know that the output from this artist was over.
2. To sell off everything that remained in the artist's estate to benefit the surviving relatives.

While these sale, at times, did include fully finished works, most often they were filled with unfinished pieces, sketches and preparatory studies. Now do not get me wrong, some of these preparatory works are considered important works on their own, but here again you need to know the best from the rest.

If you broaden your focus to a period or movement (Barbizon, Impressionist, Realist, Abstract, etc.), rather than a specific artist (Monet, Boudin, Corot, Dupré, etc.), you will have an easier time finding quality works to choose from strictly because you will be looking for works by a variety of artists. However, when broadening your scope it is even more important to do your research and look at as many examples from the different artists of that period as possible. See which works have been heralded as the best so you have something to compare the currently available works to.

You will find that almost every gallery you visit will tell you that their works are 'the best'. But as we all know, this cannot be the case – not every painting is 'the best'. If you have done a little homework, you will begin to see which dealers/galleries really do offer great quality works on a consistent basis.

It is also very important to remember that the best examples of an artist's work will be more expensive than the mediocre ones. **But, as we always say... the best will always be the best and a second rate work will always be just that.**

If you have any questions concerning this topic, please E-mail us and we will be happy to answer them.

Updates: The gallery will, once again, be participating in the Lake Forest Academy Art & Antiques Show, Lake Forest, IL. The show runs from June 8 – June 10, 2001 and we plan on exhibiting a number of interesting and important works by Daniel Ridgway Knight, Julien Dupré, Louis Aston Knight, Edouard Leon Cortes, and Antoine Blanchard. If you are in the area during this time, please stop by and visit us.

Virtual Exhibitions: We have added a Virtual Exhibition, along with a short biography, featuring the works of Sally Swatland – we have titled it **Memories of Summer**. The gallery has received many requests for additional information about the artist and her work, and we felt it would be easier just to post her biography on our site. We will also use this exhibit to feature the sold works. The direct link is listed below:

[Sally Swatland – Memories of Summer](#)

Over the past few months the gallery has sold 3 wonderful works by Julien Dupre – we have updated the format of that particular Virtual Exhibition and have added these recently sold works. Please have a look:

[Julien Dupre – A Survey](#)

We have also added a few new works by both Edouard Cortes and Antoine Blanchard to the Online Inventory and to their respective Virtual Exhibitions.

Art Market Update: Many of you wonder about buying works of art through the different Internet auction sites. I think you will find this story that appeared in the Maine Antique Digest's June issue of interest.

On April 17, a California lawyer and a Colorado businessman entered guilty pleas in U.S. District Court in Sacramento, California, to charges of defrauding bidders in Internet auctions. They admitted to participating in shilling, the illegal practice of making surreptitious bids on one's own consignments in order to drive up the selling price.

Kenneth Walton, a Sacramento lawyer, and Scott Beach of Lakewood, Colorado, admitted they had placed bids on more than half of the 1100 items they offered on eBay between 1998 and May 2000. Walton and Beach pled guilty to a combined ten counts of wire and mail fraud on April 17, 2001. Walton agreed to pay more than \$60,000 in restitution, while Beach agreed to pay more than \$39,000. Attorney Walton was disbarred by the state of California. They also face possible sentences of up to 5 years in prison and a \$250,000 fine for each count.

Shouldn't a lawyer know better? So much for fair play!

Sincerely,

Howard L. Rehs

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