

OFF THE WALL

News & Views from JUST LOOKIN' GALLERY

Published for Ethnic Art Lovers Everywhere

Spring/Summer 2002



It's been great to see so many of our out of state friends at the gallery and at our spring shows in DC and New York. Based on the wonderful response, we have decided to make **Just Lookin's** New York show an annual May event! Thanks again for all your kind words regarding "Off the Wall." It's nice to know that you look forward to receiving and sharing it. ❖ "Retiring" is one of the best things **James Denmark** has ever done! Since his Exodus to South Carolina last year (moving out of the Brooklyn studio he had for 27 years) he has been commissioned by Absolut Vodka, completed the official commissioned poster for the 'Congo Square Jazz and Heritage Festival', was featured at 3 different venues in South Carolina for Black History Month, was selected to create the cover art for the 2003 "365 Days of Black History" desk calendar (they will be here in August!) and was just in New Orleans for public and private shows. The market fueled increase in the value of his paintings should make his legion of collectors happy. Don't forget to increase the insurance on your Denmark pieces. ❖ **Cal Massey** got a great seventy-sixth birthday present - two of his figuratives, "Angel Heart - the Ascension" and "The Messiah" were picked to be included in "Black Romantic" at the Studio Museum in Harlem. ❖ **Bob Jefferson's** "Risen" and "Seek the Light" were also selected. We are proud to have original studies for both pieces available for you. ❖ Just got an incredible assortment of paintings, watercolors and mixed media from **Charly 'Carlos'** (Continued Page 4, Column 1)



Keith Mallett

If any artist is the personification of versatility, it has to be Keith Mallett. After studying art at the Art Student League and Hunter College in New York and LA Valley College in Los Angeles, Keith went to work for a major art publishing company as a staff artist. During his tenure there; Keith was called upon to create abstracts, still life, florals, realism and everything in between. And he handled them all with panache. But it is the warmth of his realistic expressionism that has made him a star among art lovers. Deciding to self-publish his work allowed Keith to paint his own visions; most notably the love and strength of the African-American family. His paintings have graced the covers of several books and have been featured on several television shows (including 'Soul Food') and movies. Keith has had over twenty sold out limited edition prints without taking the path of abject commercialism. Most artists having this much success would have been satisfied to continue doing offset reproductions. But not Keith. Two years ago, continuing on his journey to push his originality to even (Continued Page 2, Column 2)

ARTY - FACTS

Canvas by any other name...

Gallery Hours

Tues - Fri 10 AM to 7 PM
Saturday 10 AM to 6 PM
Sunday Noon to 5 PM

Mondays and Holidays
by appointment

"Art is not for the cultivated taste.
It is to cultivate taste."

Nikki Giovanni

"A Brush of Culture" Home Art Parties

Get a few friends together and enjoy the latest art in the comfort of your home. We can produce a show around a theme such as jazz or history; show strictly original works or a general selection of gallery offerings.

All you have to do is invite at least 25 and no more than 100 friends, and provide light refreshments. Just Lookin' provides invitations, promotional materials and a great host/hostess incentive package. We are currently reserving dates for late Summer and Fall 2002. Don't miss the chance to have the luxury of a "gallery for a day" in your home.



"It doesn't make much difference how the paint is put on as long as something has been said. Technique is just a means of arriving at a statement."

Jackson Pollock

Those of us that collect art have come to appreciate paintings on canvas as an important genre. Works done on canvas usually exceed paper works in both price and museum acceptance. We have been taught that canvas is the creme de la creme of the art world. **But these days a lot of what we're finding on canvas isn't even a 'real' painting.**

Confused yet? Me too! Having just been to a huge art show and seeing all these "canvas" works, we feel a discussion is in order. I was standing in front of a painting that had intense color, apparent brushstrokes, texture - all the elements of a painting - but when I put a loupe onto it there was a dot pattern. When asked, the gentleman manning the booth said it was a canvas transfer to which brushstrokes and texture had been added so that it would look like an oil painting. And, from a distance, it did indeed look like a real painting.

Canvas transfers, giclees printed on canvas - half of the canvas "originals" featured at the New York Art Expo this Spring were not original paintings but reproductions either transferred to canvas or digitally printed onto canvas. Add to that the continued trend of mass producing popular decorative pieces onto canvas (think starving artist sales) and it is becoming easy to be confused by what is truly original. When I asked about the use of the term 'original' on a machine made giclee, I was told that it was an original because the artist had added a metallic outline to each one. I don't know about you, but in my opinion it is still not an original.

What do we do to assure getting an original on canvas? Deal with reputable galleries. Carry a magnifying loupe. Ask lots of questions. Demand either a certificate of authenticity or a sales receipt stating artist, medium, etc. Learn all you can about different mediums. And don't let price fool you. We have seen ridiculous prices on both canvas transfers and giclees.

Spotlight (Continued from Page 1, Column 2)

greater heights, he created his first series of hand-pulled etchings. And they are incredible! Fueled by his intense perfectionism, his aquatints (a very demanding etching process) have a quality that it takes many artists years to achieve. With Keith's continued experimentation in this realm, an increasing range of subjects, and ever smaller editions sizes; these etchings are beginning to be sought after by collectors. We believe that Keith is well on his way to becoming one of our greatest living printmakers. Seeing his excitement with each new piece, I know that he is getting as much pleasure creating them as much as we are collecting them!

Hang Ups

From the phone calls we have received recently, it seems that many of you are having a problem designing the soaring 2 and 3 story walls in your homes. We agree these can pose a challenge but with a little creative thinking these walls provide a wonderful backdrop for many things. Here are a few things to consider:

- Unless you want to make a large investment or your spouse is an artist, forget finding one large piece to fill the space. Instead break the wall into quadrants and deal with each section.
 - If the entire wall can be seen from one area pick a strongly colored or textured piece as a "center point" and build outward from it.
 - This is not the place for finely detailed small work.
 - Batiks, tapestries and wallhangings are perfect for these spaces. Bold three-dimensional pieces also work well. Dimensional framing can add depth to any fabric piece.
 - This can be the perfect place for nonrepresentational works and abstracts.
 - While it can be tempting to use large horizontal pieces to help fill in the width, vertical pieces will help to bring the ceiling height down and can be much easier to 'group' on these large walls.
 - These spaces are great to carry out a theme. Love music? Try 1 or 2 bright textured paintings mixed with actual instruments (great place for that high school horn!), a montage of sheet music, a wood carving of musicians, etc. An African theme can include masks, chiwara, a few paintings, a walking stick and more.
 - Pieces on this type of wall can stick out without fear of someone bumping into them. With a few Plexiglas shelves (these appear to float) and creative lighting, large ceramic pieces can look wonderful. Use the lighting to create shadows which help to fill the space.
 - Have 3 paintings looking for a home? Hang the boldest in the middle, one far right and the other far left. Step back and see what will harmonize to tie them together.
 - There are some wonderful decorative area rugs available. With creative framing and hanging, these can be the centerpiece for your wall without breaking the budget.
 - For those lucky enough to have inherited quilts, this is the perfect space. Be sure to have a pocket sewn on for the rod and keep the weight even so the corners don't sag over time.
 - What do you collect? A large glass-less shadowbox with these items may be the answer.
 - This can be a great place for backlighting stained glass panels. They can be hung on the wall or suspended from ceiling beams away from the wall.
 - Decorative fans, parasols, flat metal sculpture, etc can help to fill in and soften the space.
 - If you have a peaked wall hanging in a triangle shape (1 strong piece at the top, 2 spaced wider under it etc.) can help to fill in your space.
 - If the wall gets a lot of sunlight be sure to use ultraviolet filtering glass
- How have you solved wall dilemmas? E-mail eileen@justlookin.com with your ideas. The five most creative ideas will win a \$25 gift certificate.

"The work of art must seize upon you, wrap you up in itself and carry you away. It is the means by which the artist conveys his passion. It is the current he puts forth which sweeps you along in his passion."

Auguste Renoir

BE THE FIRST

SEE ART FIRST!!!

If you haven't been receiving e-mail notification when works by your favorite artists arrive - you're missing out on some great art. Make sure we have your e-mail address and artist & subject wish list. If you wish to update your information, e-mail me at eileen@justlookin.com. If you would like notification via regular mail, call me at 800 717-4278 for quarterly updates.

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SHOWS & SPECIAL EVENTS

National Black Arts Festival
Greenbriar Mall
Atlanta, Georgia
July 19 - July 28

"Perspective and Innovation"
The art of **Preston Sampson**
September
Reception Dates TBA

"Transcending The Familiar"
New Works by **Eli Kince**
Opening Reception
Friday November 9th &
Saturday November 10th
Harlem NY

(By invitation only - please call to be placed on guest list)

The National Black Fine Art Show
January 30 - February 2
Puck Bldg. - SoHo

News (Continued from Page 1, Column 1)

Palmer. His use of color and texture is amazing. Glad he has found time to paint between teaching and working on several mural projects. ❖ We can't wait to show you **Eli Kince's** ceramics. Eli has masterfully utilized the shapes of the vases, trays, teapots and plates to add another dimension (literally) to his painting. ❖ We don't want to lavish too much praise on **Mario Robinson** but he really is getting to be one of the finest realists ever. Now that he has been exploring a variety of mediums, his innate drawing skill is beginning to translate into a style that transcends any medium. ❖ We're thrilled that the Western Maryland Blues Fest selected **Kevin Holder** as this year's official artist. We will have several new paintings from him at the end of June. ❖ **Selma Glass** was selected to create a commemorative limited edition for the 50th Anniversary of Jack and Jill of America Atlanta Chapter. ❖ **Curtis James** has done a series of small charcoals. If you love his large pieces but don't have the (Continued Next Column)

"The great mission of
the Negro in America
and the modern world
is the development of art and
the appreciation of the beautiful"

W.E.B. DuBois

News (Continued from Previous Column)

space, these have the same emotions and intensity that imbue his larger works.

❖ We had a great time when **Grace Kisa** visited in May. Her latest series pays tribute to her skill as a colorist. If you missed her show, we still have a wonderful selection of her abstracts and landscapes.

❖ **Preston Sampson's** latest works on handmade paper have been a big hit. He is busy supervising "Artworks" (a series of etched glass panels for bus shelters) for the Arlington County (VA) Cultural Affairs Department and the Department of Public Works. ❖ **Frank Morrison** has been working on a series of small originals. Frank's been experimenting and going in some different directions than his recent print work. ❖ **Margaret Warfield's** "Mood Music" is among the paintings included in the Paul Jones Collection recently donated to the University of Delaware. ❖ **Pita Ohewerei** had a sell out show during his recent eight month visit back home to Nigeria. His new works reflect the wonderful inspiration of his homeland. ❖ Hope art is part of your plans this Summer and you are planning to visit **Just Lookin'** or an arts festival soon. Until next time - HAPPY COLLECTING!!!

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