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SPECIAL ISSUE



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JUNE 2013



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preparatory study in black chalk for the artist's *Transfiguration*—came from the Duke of Devonshire's collection and achieved the highest price for a Raphael artwork sold at auction, \$47.8 million.

Both blockbuster sales support the theory that putting the most rare and desirable art in a room with the most discriminating and qualified bidders is a formula for success. Sotheby's has mastered this strategy. —ROBERT ROSS

Sotheby's, 212.606.7000, www.sothebys.com

MODERN AND CONTEMPORARY

David Zwirner

AT A RECENT preview of Thomas Ruff's large-scale photographs of the planet Mars, the gallery owner David Zwirner distributed 3-D glasses to enhance the attendees' viewing experience. But one needs no glasses to see that Zwirner, who is celebrating his 20th year in the business, operates in his own unique dimension, running a large, well-oiled art-sales

machine that maintains respect for its artists' vision and sense of playfulness. Zwirner's stable includes such major contemporary figures as Neo Rauch, Gordon Matta-Clark, and Yayoi Kusama, as well as members of the haute fringe, such as Raymond Pettibon and even R. Crumb. Zwirner also represents the estates of Dan Flavin, Alice Neel, and Jason Rhoades, among others.

This past year brought two expansions for the German-born, New York-based dealer: A second gallery, in a Georgian townhouse in London, and—more significantly—a huge new five-story space in Chelsea, just a block uptown from his West 19th Street offices. With private viewing rooms, two public exhibition areas, and an outdoor roof space for sculpture, the new Chelsea gallery is “like a mini-museum,” says marketing director Julia Joern. If the past is any indication, the gallery will certainly exude Zwirner's signature informality and welcoming warmth—traits that fetch a premium in the rarefied contemporary art world.

—MARSDEN FORD

David Zwirner, 212.727.2070, www.davidzwirner.com

PHOTOGRAPHY

Howard Greenberg Gallery

IN THE LATE 1970s, when vintage photographic prints could hardly be given away, a photographer named Howard Greenberg began selling them from a gallery in Woodstock, N.Y. Today, Greenberg resides in the tony environs of Manhattan's Fuller Building on East 57th Street, and the prices for photographs (not to mention their esteem in the art world) have risen exponentially. Greenberg deserves much of the credit. Over three decades, he has championed the refined work of the photo secessionists Alfred Stieglitz and Edward Steichen, the gritty FSA documentary work of Russell Lee, and the unconventional vision of William Klein and Sarah Moon.



In 2012, the gallery continued to break ground, making headlines with an exhibition of the newly discovered work of Vivian Maier, who, beginning in the 1950s, assiduously created a stunning body of street photography. In partnership with Lumiere Press of Toronto, the gallery also published a collection of Steichen's early modernist photographs and, in the fall, marked the centennial of *Life* magazine photographer Gordon Parks with a two-show celebration. Moreover, the gallery picked up several major artists, including contemporary color specialist Joel Meyerowitz. —M.F.

Howard Greenberg Gallery, 212.334.0010, www.howardgreenberg.com

ANTIQUES

1stdibs

FOUNDED BY THE former San Francisco real estate broker Michael Bruno in Paris in 2001, the art-and-antiques e-commerce site known as 1stdibs uploads some 9,000 new items every month. This high volume, however, does not result from a lack of curatorial vision. Culling its inventory from top galleries and dealers in the United States and eight other countries, 1stdibs has positioned itself as the source for noteworthy antiques, modern design, lighting, and jewelry. The site's experts vet every dealer who applies to join, and Bruno visits every dealer and gallery represented. The wait for admission to the site is roughly two



From far left: Raphael's auxiliary cartoon for the *Head of a Young Apostle*; David Zwirner's Chelsea gallery; untitled Vivian Maier print.



years. Collectors can use 1stdibs to contact dealers or buy directly online. Perhaps because of the service's high standards and ease of use, more customers, including museum curators, are choosing the direct route. —M.F.

1stdibs, www.1stdibs.com

NEW GALLERY Matthew Marks

MATTHEW MARKS IS KNOWN as an artist's dealer, but the longtime New York gallerist outdid himself in January 2012, when he convinced one of his most eminent artists, Ellsworth Kelly, to transform the building that houses his new Los Angeles outpost into a piece of art. When Kelly looked at architect Peter Zellner's design—a white, cube-like structure with no windows that stands on North Orange Grove Avenue in West Hollywood—the 89-year-old, hard-edge abstractionist got the idea to add a black bar that extends across the top of the facade. The result echoes two classic Kelly black-and-white works—a collage from 1954 and a painting from 1966—and serves as a way to let visitors know that, when they cross the threshold, they will enter a space completely devoted to the experience of art.

The opening exhibition of works by Kelly was followed by shows devoted to the talents of Los Angeles artists Charles Ray and Ken Price; Jasper Johns; and Robert Gober, among others. In this location, Marks intends not only to welcome California artists but also to focus on artists who are underexposed on the West Coast. Either way, both artists and art enthusiasts will feel at home at Marks and Kelly's place. —M.F.

Matthew Marks, 323.654.1830,
www.matthewmarks.com

OLD MASTERS Otto Naumann Ltd.

OTTO NAUMANN HAS had more Rembrandts in his gallery than any other dealer in the world. This spring, he offered his sixth, *Portrait of a Man with Arms Akimbo*, which was signed and dated by the artist in 1658. It is one of the last works from Rembrandt's late period that is still in private hands. Dutch and Flemish paintings have been the New York dealer's specialty for the majority of the 20 years he has been in business, but more recently he has expanded into other areas. In all cases, Naumann is




relentless in his pursuit of the best stock: In December 2011, he made headlines when he paid \$4.8 million for a Diego Velázquez portrait at Bonhams London.

Naumann's booth is one of the main draws at TEFAF, Europe's most prestigious art fair, which takes place each March in Maastricht, the Netherlands. This year he presented an 8.5-foot-high altarpiece by Carlo Maratta—*The Birth of the Virgin*, which was painted between 1681 and 1682 and had not been publicly shown since 1685—and built an altar around the painting to display it to its best advantage. He sold it for less than the \$5 million asking price—but still at “a good price,” he says. “Most of the vetting committee came over and congratulated me, because they had never seen anything like it.” —M.F.

Otto Naumann Ltd., 212.734.4443,
www.ottonaumannltd.com

COLLECTIBLES Bonhams

THOSE IN SEARCH of a single great source for rare, covetable, and quirky objects will find it through Bonhams. A samurai sword forged by the 14th-century master Naotsuna, a Montblanc Magical Black Widow fountain pen, and a 12-tune musical turntable clock made during the reign of George III all appeared on the auction house's block last year, accompanied by many more such curious items. Bonhams holds auctions in London, where it was founded in 1793, as well as in other metropolises, including New York City, San Francisco, and Los Angeles. In all, the firm offers more sales per year than any of its competitors and spans more than 60 fields, paying particular attention to a stunningly diverse array of collectibles—from sports and entertainment memorabilia to scientific instruments, toys and dolls, decorative arts, and more. —M.F. 

Bonhams, 212.644.001, www.bonhams.com

Charles X bronze-and-ormolu clock offered by Mallett through 1stdibs (top); Carlo Maratta's 17th-century altarpiece, *The Birth of the Virgin*.