

The Fairest of the DALLAS (ART) FAIR



Meet five fabled gallerists who will be toting modern and contemporary treasures to Texas when the second annual Dallas Art Fair unfurls, Friday through Sunday, February 5 through 7, at the Fashion Industry Gallery. Prepare to collect. Catherine D. Ansporn reports.



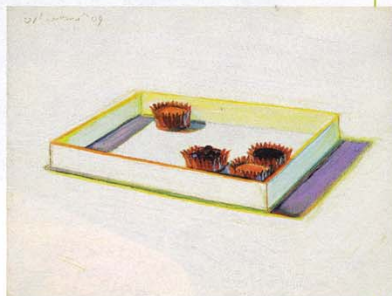
John Berggruen

COURTESY JOHN BERGGRUEN GALLERY

JOHN BERGGRUEN
John Berggruen Gallery, San Francisco



One of a handful of dealers who has been mounting museum-worthy shows for four decades, this acclaimed West Coast gallerist has strong Texas ties. With his longstanding membership in the Art Dealers Association of America and a blue-chip stable stocked with European and American masters (Matisse and Picasso to Thiebaud and Ruscha), Berggruen and wife Gretchen have enviable connections, friendships and a history, particularly in Dallas, dating back to the mid-1970s. This makes exhibiting in the Dallas Art Fair “great fun,” notes Berggruen, who fondly recalls “clients and friends Ray and Patsy Nasher” as well as “Margaret McDermott, Anne Bass, and Anne and John Marion.” Major collector Robert Hoffman was even a wedding guest at the Berggruen nuptials in 1985. The San Francisco gallerists have also been attendees at Two x Two for AIDS and Art. And for Berggruen, art dealing is literally in his blood. His father was legendary European gallerist Heinz Berggruen, a confidant of Picasso who left his collection of modern greats to museums in the United States and

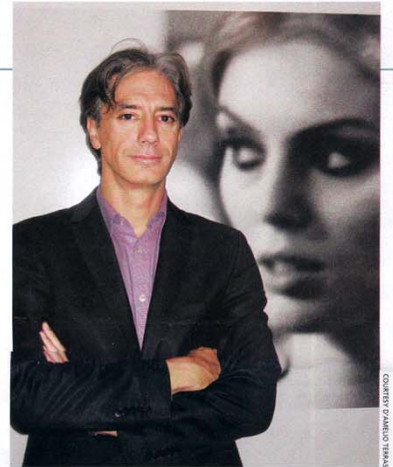


Wayne Thiebaud's *Chocolate Pieces*, 2009, at John Berggruen Gallery

even Germany — a significant gesture for a man of German Jewish heritage who had fled Berlin in the 1930s for San Francisco, where he was one of SFMOMA's first curators before “Modern” was in the museum's name. While he was not raised by his father, the young Berggruen went to Paris in 1966 to get to know him and, after stints at galleries in London and New York, moved home to San Francisco to found his own gallery in 1970. Since then, Berggruen has presented important painting and sculpture by 20th-century greats including Georgia O'Keeffe (the artist's first exhibition in a San Francisco gallery), Robert Rauschenberg, Wayne Thiebaud, Mark di Suvero, Dallas native David Bates and Bay Area figurative artists Elmer Bischoff, Richard Diebenkorn, Nathan Oliveira and David Park.

ARTIST: WAYNE THIEBAUD

“We looked at each other and said, ‘Are we opening a gallery?’” recalls Chris D’Amelio of the plunge he and Lucien Terras took in 1996. The two became acquainted while working at Paula Cooper, notes D’Amelio, who points out the pair’s “personalities and strengths are complementary and beneficial for clients and artists: I’m verbal, direct, jumping at opportunities, American. Lucien is European, cerebral, patient, quieter.” Together the astute dealers blazed a trail, forming D’Amelio Terras as “one of the original seven galleries in Chelsea — now there are 300.” He remembers a time when the district was a remote outpost braved by a handful of curators and collectors: “No one would go unless they were headed to Dia.” Flash forward a dozen years, and the gallery is a Chelsea anchor, with a reputation for presenting artists “with independent ideas who are working within an area where they develop a distinctive voice.” This includes a heavy dose of minimalism but with a conceptual bent, so that what the protagonist creates is “extraordinary. So we’re glad to champion it,” D’Amelio says. Many within the gallery’s 23-person stable possess ties to Texas, such as



Chris D’Amelio with Sam Samore’s *Allegories of Beauty (Incomplete) #1*, 1990s

DYWELL OTTEWILL/ISTOCK

CHRIS D’AMELIO
D’Amelio Terras Gallery, New York



Sara VanDerBeek’s *A Different Kind of Idol*, 2006, at D’Amelio Terras

DYWELL OTTEWILL/ISTOCK

San Antonio-based, Whitney Biennial-exhibited Dario Robleto; Museum of Fine Arts, Houston Glassell Core Fellows Demetrius Oliver and Leslie Hewitt (along with fellow D’Amelio Terras photographer, Sara VanDerBeek, two of six featured in MoMA’s current “New Photography 2009,” through January 11); London-based Cornelia Parker, whose Artpace residency earned her a Turner Prize nomination; and Corpus Christi-raised sculptor Tony Fehrer. All are contenders to be exhibited in the gallery’s booth, as well as (possibly) some early 1950s and 1960s-era Yayoi Kusamas — D’Amelio helped rediscover the proto-Pop sculptor in the mid-1990s. While you’re there, meet Dallas native Trina Gordon, the gallery’s associate director, whom D’Amelio credits with propelling the idea to exhibit at this year’s fair.



Andrew Edlin with works by Henry Darger

ANDREW EDLIN
Andrew Edlin Gallery, New York

One of today's most respected names in outsider art, gallerist Andrew Edlin began "through serendipity," he reveals. His epiphany came close to home: by representing his uncle, Paul Edlin, a largely self-taught artist known for his collages formed from postage stamps. The senior Edlin had a hearing problem that contributed to his reclusive nature, so when his nephew stepped in to facilitate art-world connections for him, a gallerist was born. Edlin opened his doors in 2001, moving to a prime first-floor Chelsea space this fall (previously home to Bellwether Gallery), where he continues his commitment to both outsider and trained artists. He maintains a significant international art-fair presence (including exhibiting in this month's Art Basel Miami Beach) and serves on the board of the American Visionary Art Museum in Baltimore (and is responsible for recruiting DAF founder Chris Byrne to its board). Edlin also represents the estate of arguably the preeminent

outsider artist ever: the late Henry Darger, a self-taught master known for epic watercolor sagas of little girls engaged in battle; the painter is the subject of a new volume published by Prestel Press, as well as currently on view at MoMA in "Compass in Hand: Selections from the Judith Rothschild Collection," through January 4. Returning to DAF for the second year, Edlin plans to exhibit "my home run, Henry Darger," as well as works by other collectible visionaries including Amanda M. Smith, Tom Duncan and Domenico Zindato. He wants DAF visitors to "open their eyes" to outsider talents, which have a historical precedent of "influencing other artists, from the Surrealists onward." Jean Dubuffet, he points out, collected works made by inmates from mental hospitals and insane asylums. "A lot of contemporary collectors respond to this material," Edlin says. "They sense something different. It's the purest form of art."

Henry Darger's *Untitled (At Wickey Dan are pursued)*, not dated, at Andrew Edlin Gallery



Jason McCoy with James Brooks' *Cantanda*, 1958

JASON McCOY
Jason McCoy Inc.,
New York

grew up in the art world — it was never foreign to me," says Connecticut-raised Jason McCoy, whose most impressionable foray included a management and sales position at the Marlborough Print Gallery, where he began in the late 1960s before going on to serve as an assistant director at SoHo pioneer Reese Palley Gallery, then became gallery director for Tibor de Nagy. McCoy launched his own space in 1982 as one of the second or third private dealers in SoHo. In 1989, he moved to the Fuller Building on East 57th Street, a prestigious midtown nexus, which the gallery augments by presenting exhibitions in satellite spaces in Chelsea and Copenhagen. Then there's a fabled family tie: McCoy's uncle and aunt were none other than Mr. and Mrs. Abstract Expressionism, Jackson Pollock and Lee Krasner, both of whom number among the modern masters he exhibits. "My interest is in abstraction in America," he says. "We try to be specific, offering very fine examples — masterpieces — which we do not see in isolation, but as part of the broad range of history." McCoy, also a longstanding ADAA member and a returning dealer to the fair, represents current and former Texas artists including Houston-based Terrell James — "a fine painter who works within a tradition of abstraction" — and University of Texas graduate Rachel Hovnanian, a former Houstonian whose show now up at the gallery, "Power & Burden of Beauty," skewers gender stereotypes while producing objects of exquisite delicacy. The gallery represents the estate of ab-ex master Stephen Greene — whose daughter, Alison de Lima Greene, is the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston's curator of contemporary art and special projects. McCoy also has exhibited paintings by late Whitney-collected Houston artist Virgil Grotfeldt. McCoy praises the "Texas eye," which he characterizes as "highly sophisticated ... My aunt [Lee Krasner] was a friend of Mrs. de Menil. And the Menil is one of the most beautiful museums in the world."



Rachel Hovnanian's *Beauty Queen Totem*, 2009, at Jason McCoy Inc.

Headed toward the four-decade mark as an art dealer, Fredericka Hunter is one of the preeminent gallerists in Texas — and America. An art history graduate of the University of St. Thomas (Houston) and a protégé of Dominique and John de Menil, she and co-owner Ian Glennie began in the early 1970s with "a venture to sell prints by the top printmakers." From these modest beginnings, Texas Gallery was formed, going on to present a roll call of the 20th century's most seminal artists: Donald Judd (Hunter is a board member of the Chinati Foundation), Andy Warhol, Robert Mapplethorpe, Robert Rauschenberg, Brice Marden, Chuck Close and Lynda Benglis. Hunter relays the gallery's philosophy. "We have not tried to be so avant-garde or blue-chip as interested in what is interesting, what is good, what is perhaps undervalued, what points the way forward in a meaningful way ... so we have no orthodoxy ... Rackstraw Downes, a painter of landscapes en plein air (and who just won a MacArthur and who works in Texas half the year) is right up there as far as quality and depth as, say, Bill Jensen, our next show, who works in a strictly modernist abstract way" (through December 26). What to collect now?: "I am most comfortable right now with painting and the depth that comes from skill and hard work on the part of the artist. I will always believe that 'the investment' should be in what one loves first ... One should not expect a 20 percent return à la hedge-funds standards in a year's time." Why exhibit again in the Dallas Art Fair? "Dallas is an 'arty' town and a logical place for an art fair. We support the wonderful effort of Chris Byrne whom we love. The turnout last year was fantastic, even at the worst possible economic time. How can we not

be at one in our own state that is well done? As far as what we will show in our booth, we have some quirky ideas for presenting disparate and unusual material of quality — real collector's fare, not trophies, per se."

Bill Jensen's *With Color V*, 2009, at Texas Gallery



Fredericka Hunter with Stephen Mueller's *Polyhymnia*, 2008

FREDERICKA HUNTER
Texas Gallery, Houston