

# WHAT WE'RE HEARING

FROM GALLERIES, AUCTION HOUSES AND MUSEUMS ACROSS THE COUNTRY

“So many 20<sup>th</sup>-century artists...have become bridges and inspirations to so many young contemporary artists.”

We're celebrating our 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary this December. I still represent and exhibit many of the same artists as when I opened the gallery. It's because of that consistency I've developed relationships with collectors and museum curators. Museums make up a third of our buyers, and young curators I started working with 25 years ago are today senior curators of top institutions.

The market's very strong, but it's very strong for the highest caliber works. We had an extremely busy and successful summer season, with an exhibition of Nancy Grossman's constructions from the 1960s, very elaborate wall reliefs of found objects, like shoes, metal pipes, gas masks and leather jackets. We sold a number of works to private collectors and one museum bought one of the large wall constructions.

Right now, we have Irving Norman,

who was very active in the 1940s to 1980s. We're focusing on his large-scale paintings, which reflect on the Vietnam War and Watergate and other events in history from 1969 to 1986. His crisply rendered surrealism works are extremely intricate and extremely complex. His works focus on what was going on at the time, but they're timeless because they're about atrocities of war and the loss of identity as corporate America and the industrial era take over the lives of Americans. In some of his earlier paintings, he has images of men all looking the same, sitting in front of screens all pressing buttons, losing touch with the human race.

We've added a new artist to the stable. We signed a contract to represent Barbara Chase-Riboud, a sculptor and craftsman who shares a sensibility with the other artists we feature. Her works are very distinctive abstract works composed of

bronze and fiber, which have a sense of an inward struggle, power and angst. Her *One Million Kilometers of Silk* exhibit, on display through January, is her first major gallery show in years.

So many of the 20<sup>th</sup>-century artists, particularly in the second half, have become or were bridges and inspirations to so many young contemporary artists. We are seeing more of an acknowledgement of an earlier generation of modernists, who are looked at very, very seriously by young artists. That's very exciting for us.

**Michael Rosenfeld,**  
owner  
Photograph by Matthew Newton,  
courtesy Michael Rosenfeld Gallery LLC

**Michael Rosenfeld  
Gallery LLC**  
100 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
New York, NY 10011  
(212) 247-0082  
www.michaelrosenfeldart.com



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We've been in business for 30 years and have had repeat buyers all along. I think being friendly, being knowledgeable, being honest and being here is what keeps us going strong. I like to think I've made not just clients, but friends.

We had a good summer. In August, we did a couple shows in Nantucket, where we sold a terrific Guy Wiggins winter scene in New York and a handful of Nantucket-oriented pictures. We had *A Painter's Prose* exhibition, a very successful show featuring works by William S. Robinson that showed his travels around New England.

Our successes are unpredictable. In the last month, we sold three Hudson River School paintings, a handful of impressionist paintings and a couple of

contemporary paintings. There's not a thirst for anything specific. Our gallery is quite large, maybe 4,000 square feet, so we can show a lot of art at one time.

Traditional American art has taken a hit since 2008, with that middle market of really good pictures by lesser-known artists really struggling. But, in just the past four days, we've sold a few of those pictures. That gives me hope things will open up a bit. I think persistence and patience are key to helping historic works retain value.

We're excited about our upcoming exhibit, *Her Way*, taking the whole gallery over with three centuries of American art by women artists. Two of our galleries will be dedicated to Jean Swan Gordon, whose show contains truly dazzling watercolors

of flowers and still lifes. Another gallery will feature 19<sup>th</sup>- and 20<sup>th</sup>-century art by American women, bridging impressionist, landscape and figurative work, and we'll also feature a contemporary gallery of works by women painters living today, including realism and abstraction works.

It's a great time to buy—it really is a buyer's market. Just get out there, and talk to knowledgeable dealers.

**Jeff Cooley,**  
owner

**The Cooley Gallery**  
25 Lyme Street  
Old Lyme, CT 06371  
(860) 434-8807  
www.cooleygallery.com

