The Armory Show 2015

In the vast sea of contemporary art shown at The Armory Show last week, by an impressive roster of international art dealers, Two Palms Press showed a spectacular series of brand-new and remarkably well-priced prints by New York artist Terry Winters (b.1949).

With so much media attention on record shattering prices for artwork at auction it was refreshing to find works that made my heart sing – and that are truly within reach of mere mortals...

These screen prints, with a rich surface by Terry Winters, cost $5,000 each unframed; they are large enough and have enough ‘wall-power’ where a single work can hold a good sized wall, alone or in series.

The Armory Show as we now know it, is the grown-up version of a ‘gorilla art fair’ that started in 1994 called The Gramercy International Art Fair, which was held in bedrooms at the then downtrodden Gramercy Park Hotel.
Started in 1994 by four of the original pioneers of the Chelsea art district, The Gramercy International Art Fair was new, offbeat, very exciting and hugely successful. From its first years a vast number of people came to look and buy the contemporary art laid out on beds, hung on the walls, installed in bathrooms, etc.

Here ‘bad girl’ British artist Tracey Emin ‘in bed’ with the art dealer Jay Jopling at the 1994 Gramercy International Art Fair.

For 20 years I have attended some form of The Armory Show in New York City, an ever evolving marketplace where world class art dealers offer a remarkable range of artwork under one roof, where everything is for sale.

And while I am really quite happy to have almost any excuse to look at art for pleasure, I often attend The Art Fair on a mission: to find artwork for current interior design projects.

After looking at art in galleries, museums, homes, studios, books, magazines and more recently on-line for more than forty years, it is a great joy for me to introduce my clients, often for the first time, to the remarkable joys of living with fine art. Many of the treasures that I found this year at The Armory Show were 20c abstract paintings and prints.

‘Domestically-scaled’ is a terms that I use when looking for art that can hang on the walls of New York City apartments. In this case I was looking for a work to hang on a wall framed by a doorway – I found two beautiful works from New York dealer Michael Rosenfeld.

Initially known for his participation in the ‘Harlem Renaissance’, this robust and joyous small abstract painting ‘Untitled’ 1965 by African-American artist Beauford Delaney (1901-1979) was painted during the many years he lived in France.

This small painting from the late 1950’s ‘Study for Transverse’ by abstract expressionist Jack Tworkov retains its original artist’s painted frame and comes from the private collection of the artist and writer Mira Schor. It is a rich and charming study for the much larger painting ‘Transverse’ that followed.
In his first year participating in The Armory Show, French dealer Claude Lemard showed gorgeous and joyful paintings by a French Lebanese artist named Shafic Abboud whose work is all but unknown in New York, but highly coveted in Europe and the Middle East. I was particularly taken with this painting titled ‘Flowers in February’.

Living with fine art is one of the truly great luxuries I encourage my clients to experience in their daily lives. And while large budgets can offer a wider selection of options, there are great works of art in all price ranges; this belief was reiterated for me once again at The Armory Show this year.