

RHINO HORN GROUP

The Figurative Stampede

[HOME](#) / [ABOUT](#) / [ARTIST BIOS](#)

Naked at the Edge

SEPTEMBER 9, 2015 / RHINOHORNARTISTS



Louis M. Eilshemius, *Untitled (Figures in a Moonlit Landscape)*, c.1905, oil on paperboard, 22 1/2" x 26 1/2"

The current show at [Michael Rosenfeld Gallery](#) embraces the arrival of Autumn in a warm and exhilarating fashion. *Naked at the Edge* is a two person show of two very distinct American painters in Louis Eilshemius (1864-1941) and Bob Thompson (1937-1966). While the two painters never crossed paths, their work shares many similar elements.

SEARCH

RECENT POSTS

[Naked at the Edge](#)

[Federico Solmi:
The Brotherhood](#)

[Suggested Reading: Fall is
Coming Edition](#)

[A Tale of Two Cities Illustrated](#)

[Allen M. Hart](#)

ARCHIVES

[September 2015](#)

[August 2015](#)

[July 2015](#)

[June 2015](#)

[May 2015](#)



Bob Thompson, Circus, 1963, oil on canvas, 36 3/8" x 36 3/8"

The colors and subject matter in each of the artists' paintings comes right in time for the Fall season, which is also the beginning of the gallery season here in New York. Elishemius used earth tones, specifically muted greens, blues and browns in his fantastical landscapes of nudes, nymphs, and mythological beings. Thompson's early palette reflected dark earthy tones, but they soon made way for the signature Fauvist inspired hues that became his signature style.

Michael Rosenfeld Gallery's amazing exhibition space allows both of the artists to have ample room, while also allowing a very intimate viewing. In fact the show views both as two distinct solo shows as well as one overarching exhibition that joins these two seminal painters who were generations apart, in a contemporary dialog with one another.

April 2015

March 2015

February 2015

January 2015

December 2014

November 2014

October 2014

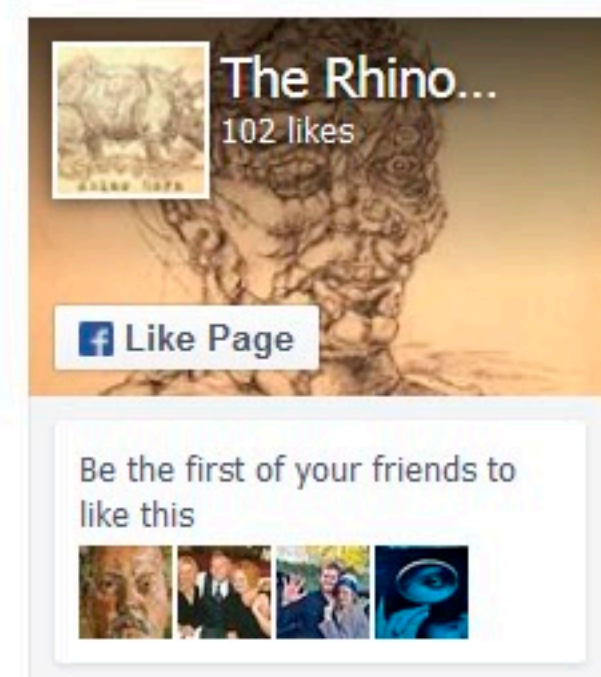
September 2014

August 2014

July 2014

June 2014

**LIKE THE RHINO HORN GROUP
ON FACEBOOK**

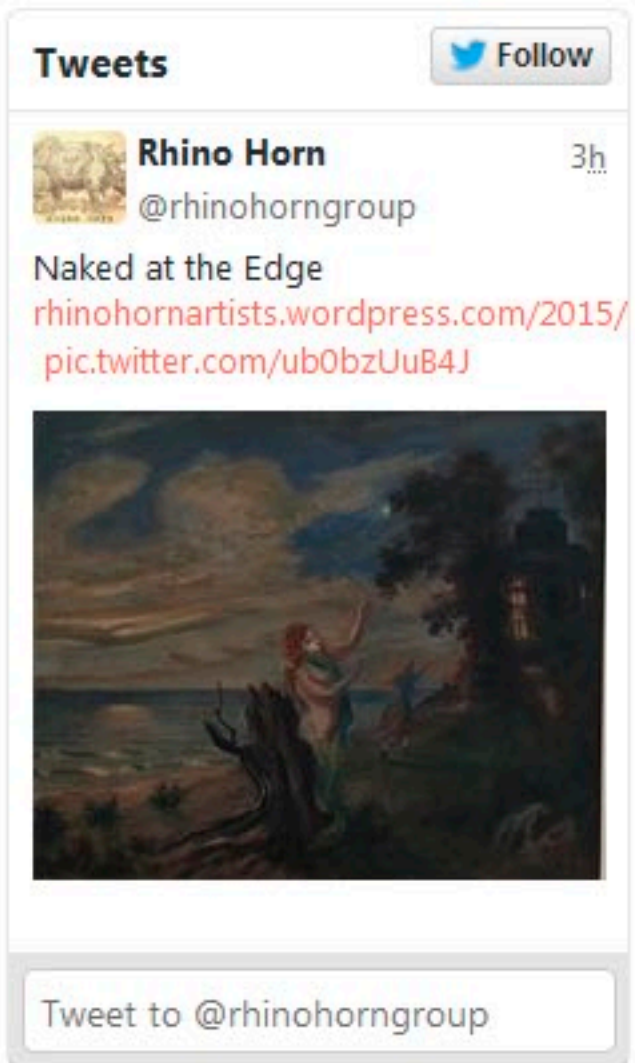


**TWEETS BY THE RHINO HORN
GROUP**



Bob Thompson, *The Golden Ass*, 1963 oil on canvas, 62 1/2" x 74 1/2"

Thompson's work welcomes you into the gallery. There's a diverse spectrum of paintings in this show covering Thompson's brief but prolific career. In keeping with the show's title, the figures in Thompson's canvases are exclusively nudes within a landscape. Thompson's influences are reflected through his understanding and respect of art history, and his personal expression as a black artist in a white art world. Old Master's and Goya are launching points for Thompson's masterful improvisational process. In the same spirit that Ornette Coleman created avant-garde music, Thompson created avant-garde imagery that broke free from all preconceived conventions in visual art. The emotional energy that flows throughout Thompson's paintings result in idyllic, classical scenes, raucous bacchanals, and dystopian nightmares. This exhibition features some wonderful canvases that are familiar to the Thompson connoisseur such as *The Golden Ass*, which takes its name from the only remaining Latin novel *The Metamorphoses of Apuleius* (which St. Augustine referred to as *The Golden Ass*) and riffs on one of Goya's *Los Caprichos* etchings, *Capricho No 42: Tú que no puedes* (*Thou who cannot*). Like the novel, Thompson's figures are seen transforming between birds and of course the eponymous Ass. Birds are seen in a large number of Thompson's paintings. While the human figures often resemble the material, the birds are an allegory of the human spirit.





Louis M. Eilshemius, *Untitled (Pagan Rites)*, c.1916, oil on paperboard

While Thompson's work conflated the liberated energy of Jazz music, Eilshemius channeled the classical improvisations of Chopin. Eilshemius was a wearer of many creative hats. He was a poet, musician, and critic who was acclaimed for his caustic letters to the editors of various New York media publications. Also similar to Thompson, Eilshemius' subject matter dealt largely with fantasy and classical themes painted in a subconscious manner. He created an alternate universe from within the paint. Many of Eilshemius' dreamlike compositions depict mythological imagery such as mermaids, sea monsters, and pagan deities, often performing rituals. These paintings conflated the traditional technique of the artist's academy with bold themes, which made Eilshemius an outsider in the late 19th and early 20th Century art scenes.

It has been a great shame that these two artists are still under recognized for their visionary careers, but this was certainly not the case among their contemporaries and influential artists. Thompson and Eilshemius were not only "painter's painters," but poet's painters, and musician's painters as well. Although decades old, their paintings remain fresh and relevant to the discourse of painting. In light of today's proliferation of derivative abstraction and hard edge painting, it is vital to see that unique and truly original painting such as Thompson's and Eilshemius has persevered. This exhibition is a welcome start to the New York City art season.