

OFF THE WALL

News & Views from JUST LOOKIN' GALLERY

Published for Ethnic Art Lovers Everywhere

Spring/Summer 2003



It's been quite a while since I've had time to write this newsletter. We have been so busy helping you appreciate and collect art that spending a few days at the computer was near impossible. We want

to thank all of you for calling to make sure you were still on the mailing list to receive "Off the Wall." It was so gratifying to hear how much you look forward to reading it. And major thanks for all your kind words about the content of the newsletter - we will continue to make it the best we can. ❖ This Summer is finding many artists busy with commissions, book covers and museum shows as Black art gains ever greater respect and reception. ❖

James Denmark is busier than ever. A retrospective of his work was exhibited at the York W. Bailey Museum at Penn Center, SC. Featuring over 20 originals - including the seldom exhibited "The Princesses" - attendance and sales were brisk. A whole new generation of art lovers are discovering Denmark and he is currently one of the most often commissioned artists in America. Keeping up with the demand for his work has him creating seven days (and nights) a week - not bad for 'retirement.' He just sent us a variety of great new watercolors and 1970's charcoals. ❖ **Cal Massey**, at the age of 77, is also busier than ever. He just had his first show in Brooklyn, designed the medallion to commemorate the shuttle tragedy and is working on several new commissions - most notably a huge painting of Absalom Jones for the oldest AME Church in Philadelphia. ❖ Two of **Keith Mallett's** long ago sold out limited editions, "Tree of Life" and "From Strong Roots" are being used for the cover of 'Chicken Soup for the African American Soul.' He was also honored by the World Family Conference (Brigham Young University) who selected his print "Loving Touch" as a gift for their delegates. ❖ **Margaret Warfield** recently had the honor of painting "Dawn to (Continued Page 4, Column 1)



Artists We Have Lost

The last newsletter had just gone to press when we got the news of Carl Owens passing. A few weeks before that we lost Stephanie Pogue. And we recently lost a huge force behind the proliferation of African American art in America, master printmaker Robert Blackburn.

Robert Blackburn 1920 - 2003

What can you say about someone who remained at the center of the black art world for much of his career; taught at every major art school in New York City and influenced countless artists? He will be missed! Through the Federal Works Progress Administration, he was introduced to printmaking (along with Jacob Lawrence & others) at the Harlem Community Art Center in 1938. In 1948, looking at the scarcity of opportunities for black artists, he moved to Chelsea and opened the Printmaking Workshop which continued under his direction for 53 years. Originally organized as an informal cooperative where he and his friends (Beardon, Catlett, Cortor, Norman Lewis to name just a few) could experiment with fine art lithography; Blackburn became adept at, and taught, all printmaking techniques. The Library of Congress owns over 2,000 prints (the work of over 1,000 artists) pulled by Blackburn.

Carl Owens 1929 - 2002

Carl's passing was particularly hard on us since we had the honor of representing him the last three years of his life. Those of you that fell in love with his originals over that time (and the over 30 of you that took him into your homes) know that there is simply

ARTY - FACTS

Gallery Hours

Tues - Fri 10 AM to 7 PM
Saturday 10 AM to 6 PM
Sunday Noon to 5 PM

Mondays and Holidays
by appointment

"There are painters who transform the sun into a yellow spot, but there are others who, thanks to their art and intelligence, transform a yellow spot into the sun."

Pablo Picasso

A Few Words about Inspecting New Art Purchases

Have you ever bought a framed work of art on paper somewhere other than a gallery? A lot of us have purchased pieces at festivals, home shows, directly from the artist, etc., only to discover too late that the piece was not conservation framed. If we don't like the frame, we know we'll get around to re-framing it someday. So it goes home and up on the wall. That's why we buy art, right? Absolutely, but as art lovers and collectors we have a responsibility to preserve our treasures. A quick stop at Just Lookin' or any conservation framer for an inspection can save you lots of money (and headaches) later. An inspection involves removing the dust cover paper on the back, making sure the mats are acid free (pure rag mat for really valuable pieces,) inspecting the mounting to make sure it is up to conservation standards for both the type of paper and medium, checking the inside of the glass to make sure it isn't touching the art and checking for light and acid damage. If everything looks fine we put on a new dust cover, wire, replace any paperwork from the old dust cover and we're done. Unfortunately, especially with older pieces, we often find problems that should be corrected. The most common are improper (non-conservation) matting and mounting. Most problems can be easily corrected. Early inspection will

Alphabet Soup Part 2

*Next to the word print, multiple originals (or original graphics) is one of the most confusing terms we use. We are going to attempt to clarify terms you will see written in pencil in the margin of prints (sometimes on the back of really old prints) and used to describe prints. If you would like more information on the **techniques** used to create multiple originals call and ask for "Collecting Original Graphics" and reprints of Arty-Facts from back issues of "Off the Wall."*

Multiple Originals are all forms of intaglios (aquatint, drypoint, engraving, etching, and mezzotint), hand-pulled lithographs, serigraphs, woodcuts and linocuts. They are created by an artist on a plate, stone, mylar or block with the intent of being printed (pulled) in a small edition by either the artist or under the artist's supervision.

Many of our printmaking terms come from the French. Following are some of the most commonly used terms:

- Bon A Ttirer** - Literally means "good to print." This is usually used on a trial proof to indicate that this is the standard for the edition.
- HC (Hors de Commerce)** - An impression pulled outside the edition for the personal use of the artist or publisher.
- Impression** - An impression is any print taken from a particular plate, block, etc.
- IMP (Impressit)** - No, this does not refer to the childlike behavior of some artists. It indicates (and usually is written before) the name of the printer. Used most often today to indicate the print was pulled by the artist.
- Lith.** - Abbreviation of lithographer. Was used extensively during the 19th century.
- Plate** - Any metal printing element.
- Printing** - The action of making a print from a block, plate, stone or through a screen by any printmaking technique.
- Proof** - A very abused term. Originally meant impressions pulled by the artist to check progress of a work before final printing.
- State** - Proofs taken while work is still being done on the plate, block, stone, etc. to check different stages of progress. Each one showing additional work constitutes a different state. The last one is usually designated the artist's proof. Artists will often number (and sell!) these states.

*Hope we haven't confused you even more. If you have any questions call or e-mail us. Next issue we will tackle the confusion surrounding **PRINT** - in my opinion the most overused and abused word in the world of art.*

"Art creates an avenue for me,
an avenue I would like to travel.
I want to play a part in helping
to build the road. But in reality,
it's helping to build me."

Paul Goodnight

Hang Ups

What is it about summer that makes us want to change our living spaces? It seems everyone I know is painting, moving or doing some type of redecorating. What a great time to think about new ways to arrange your art. If you are wallspace stressed (and most art lovers are!) this is the time to work on new groupings or maybe even re-hang your entire house. If you haven't already taken everything off your walls, this is a great way to start. It only hurts for a hour or two - promise!!! Look at your now new (empty) walls and start over. Do you have room to lay all your art out on the floor? If not; prop it around your living room, family room, whichever room you are going to begin in and start looking for pieces that work together in a new arrangement. Have you fallen into the one big piece over the sofa trap? Try offsetting it to one side and adding pieces next to



See - you don't have to move to have room for more art!



How to decide what hangs where? Look for like subjects, color harmony, similar textures, any element that helps tie the pieces together. Most of us have lots of female imagery - this is a good place to start. That painting that looks just okay in the bedroom might shine on the hallway wall. Experiment! Prop pieces against the wall or on the floor and move them around. Try different pieces next to each other. You'll be amazed at the harmonious relationship that often exists between disparate pieces. Most of us collect art for years. If you haven't tried putting newer paintings next to earlier pieces, you may discover great new ways to arrange your walls! Remember - the only rule is to love the way the room looks when you're done.

Visit us on the web

www.justlookin.com

We are in the process of updating and improving our web site. We welcome your comments and suggestions. Look in your 'inbox' early September for our web 'Grand Opening' specials. These will be available only if you receive our e-mail "invitation." Make sure we have your correct e-mail address so you don't miss out.

BE THE FIRST

If you haven't been receiving e-mail notification when works by your favorite artists arrive - you're missing out on some great art. Make sure we have your e-mail address and artist & subject wish list. If you would like notification via regular mail, call me at 800 717-4278 for quarterly updates.

**"My visions lead me to a single purpose: to research the heritage of African peoples. As we seek to know ourselves, our culture; we are ready to help others."
Claude Clark**

Spotlight (Continued from Page 1, Column 2)

mediums as Carl was. I once said Carl could take a rock and draw something wonderful. Teaching until a few months before his death, Carl influenced so many of today's contemporary artists; not just with his art but by his generosity and spirit. We will all miss him!

Stephanie Pogue 1944-2002

I didn't know anything about Pogue when I wandered into a print exhibit at Clark College (Atlanta) in 1982. I immediately became a devotee! Her curvilinear lines and symbolism drew me instantly. Her extensive use of orange gave her late 80's work an ethereal warmth that I have never seen duplicated. And her skills as a printmaker were wonderful. It was great to see so much of her work in the early and mid 90's at exhibitions at Howard and the University of Maryland. Her contributions to academia at both Fisk University (Nashville) and the University of Maryland will continue to inspire future generations of artists.

Don't Miss An Issue !!!

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- ❖ Make a Purchase - OR
- ❖ Call and tell us you would like to receive the next issue - OR
- ❖ E-mail
justlookin@justlookin.com



SHOWS & SPECIAL EVENTS

September 28 to October 26

"Dualities"

the art of

Charly 'Carlos' Palmer

Saturday September 27

Private Preview Reception
at the Pehl Collection

(please call if you would like to be added to guest list)

Sunday September 28

Artist Reception at
Just Lookin'

1PM to 8PM

Saturday & Sunday
October 11 - 12 2003
Art on the Riverfront II
Wilmington, DE
11 am to 6 pm

National Black Fine Art Show
January 29 - February 1 2004
Puck Building - SoHo - New York

News (Continued from Page 1, Column 1)

Dusk" for 'Stories In Time' a Cultural Presentation Book by Josie S. Bailey. ❖ We are thrilled "Checkmate" by **Joseph Holston** just sold out. Sorry if you missed it. Many of his other etchings are sold-out or very close. Call or e-mail me if you would like a list of what pieces are currently available. ❖ **Jonathan Romain** had the honor of a commission from Altria (Phillip Morris) for their billion dollar roundtable. ❖ There is just no way to describe **Carolyn Crump's** new jazz series. Each of the 7 pieces took between 23 and 46 separate castings to create. They are the largest and most dimensional cast paper sculpture we have ever seen. Some elements extend out more than an inch from the background. ❖ Artist **Jamaal Sheats** is the newest addition to the Just Lookin' family. Working in a variety of metals, this young artist has mastered the centuries old technique of repousse. ❖ **Danny Broadway** is exhibiting amazing depth in both his choice of (Continued next Column)

"My art evolves out of the need to communicate ideas and experiences that have influenced my life and the lives of those of my culture and my community."

Samella Lewis

News (Continued from Previous Column)

mediums and styles. His saturated use of color and texture is bringing him accolades and he is starting to be noticed by collectors across the country. ❖ **Charly 'Carlos' Palmer** has been busy painting three really distinctive series for his exhibit "Dualities," opening here at Just Lookin' with a reception for him on September 28. The "I Am a Man" (Carlos) series is already enjoying brisk sales. Exploring the Civil Rights Movement of the Sixties with the intensity of the time, pieces range from small simple watercolors to large mixed media on wood. "Timelessness" (Charly) is a series of watercolors that revisit the black & white photos of our youth. There is also a series of still lifes in acrylic and watercolor; and new paintings of those wonderful strong female faces that Charly does so well. Join us in September and meet Charly/Carlos. ❖ Have you seen the new **Valentine New York Magazine**? If not, call us and we'll send you the current issue. Hats off to Michael Valentine for producing such a quality publication devoted to fine African American art. We've longed for another publication as good as the International Review of African American Art and we think this might just be it. Make sure you take a look. ❖ Hope you have included a museum visit, arts festival or gallery in your plans for summer. Even if you are just looking, (sorry - couldn't resist) galleries and museums are a great place to escape the heat while enriching your knowledge. Until next time - Have a great summer & HAPPY COLLECTING!

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