

Brian Sinfield Gallery Ltd

Fine Art Dealers and Brokers

Newsletter Spring 2009

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In *The Independent on Sunday* (22nd Feb) there was an article about the collapse of the contemporary art market, or rather the collapse of the overhyped froth at the very top. The artist Anthony Caro bemoaned the fact that the market value of paintings had become more meaningful to artists than creating beautiful work. He was quoted as saying 'Some art has got some stupid, outrageous values and it is very sad that money has become a very important part of the art world.' Then there was Mr Nahmad, one of the world's biggest dealers, also having his say: "There is the real art market, with real artists, and then there is the stupid art market which uses publicity to make some artists become very expensive. That doesn't mean they are good. Damien Hirst's diamond skull at \$100m was a stupid thing; \$100m is an offence. Hirst started with \$10,000 – that's OK. But \$100m? That's ridiculous."

Perhaps, but there is good modern art that hasn't been the subject of over-hype. There also appears to be signs of a swing back towards more figurative work, those paintings that show an element of skill and substance as well as vision. Whether the market is yet ready to embrace Victorian and Edwardian paintings, both of which have been decidedly out of fashion, remains to be seen.

The big question at the moment is the effect the recession is having on the art market as a whole. Art fairs have reported mixed fortunes, as have exhibitions but the art market is a resilient beast, and tends to look upon recessionary times as little more than a blip, and nothing particular to worry about. People buy paintings for all sorts of reasons – because they have a particular space on their wall, because they collect, because they look for investment, or simply because they love pictures. In recessionary times putting money into something tangible is not such a bad idea. You may or may not see a big price hike, but you will seldom lose much when you come to sell, and you just might make a profit.



Sir Kyffin Williams RA -
Welsh Hill Farmer with Cattle and Dogs, and verso of Two Boys in a Park, Circa.1960
63 x 74 cm Oil on Canvas. This painting has been framed to show both sides of the canvas.

JOHN THOMPSON

We recently took delivery of a new group of work by John Thompson. This artist has had tremendous success over the last couple of years with sell out shows across the country.

Group Series 2642
Mixed media on paper
50.8 x 40.64 cm



Group Series 2941
Mixed media on paper 55.88 x 76.20 cm



INDIAN MINIATURES

During a trip to India in the early 90s I became fascinated by the art of Indian miniature painting. It wasn't possible to obtain antique miniatures because the government had banned their export. During the Raj vast numbers of them were brought to England and now mostly reside in museums and the Royal Collection.

There were many shops selling miniatures, particularly in the big tourist centres of Rajasthan, but although attractive, these were of relatively poor quality, aimed at tourists. I needed to source work from the best artists and so, over a period of three years I visited dozens of artists in their homes in the back streets of villages throughout India, and coaxed good quality miniatures from the back of dealer's shops. These form the basis of the collection on offer today.

Contemporary 20th century miniatures, follow the centuries old custom of copying. The Persians, who strongly influenced Indian miniature painting considered the best artists were those who made the best copies. In India miniature painting reached its peak under the Mughal Emperor, Akbar (1556-1605) whose studios turned out vast numbers of exquisite miniatures. As soon as one painting was complete a copy was made, and then further copies, so that the miniatures we see today can trace their imagery back centuries. The best modern works are produced using similar materials to those centuries ago – ground earth colours, natural dyes from plants, a vivid yellow derived from the urine of cows, and gold leaf. Paper from old books and manuscripts is often used as this material is easy to come by and burnishes well.

JANI

While touring the continent last year we came across a small shop, doubling as a studio, in the side street of a village in central France. Inside was a delightful lady artist who introduced herself as Jani. Her work possessed a certain mysticism, clearly based on Eastern symbolism, geometric in construction with deep subtle colouring. The artist found this geometry in Eastern Mandalas and Tankas as well as in the architecture and decoration of Asian palaces. Her meeting with the Dalai-Lama in 1970 further influenced her work and set her firmly on the course she follows today.

She has been exhibiting seriously since 1967. Her work has been exhibited in Paris, Venice, Brussels, New York and Chicago, in England and Denmark, as well as all over France. She is the winner of many awards.

My wife fell for these pictures immediately and purchased three. We later asked Jani if she would like to exhibit with us, hence the three paintings on display at the gallery.





These pictures range in size from 19 x 13 cm to 28 x 19 cm and in price from £350 to £750.

ANTHONY GILBERT 1916-1955

In 1995 we were offered the opportunity to handle the estate of Anthony Gilbert who had lived at Charlbury. Since the artist had worked in London and much of his work had been produced for Vogue as well as other magazines, we thought it best that the exhibition should take place in London. For that reason, with the blessing of Ann Gilbert, the artist's widow, we passed the whole collection over to David Messum who held a major exhibition at his gallery in Cork Street to considerable acclaim.

The small group that we are offering was found later, when two additional albums came to light. Some of the pictures have been framed and some mounted only.

Anthony Gilbert was an exceptionally talented illustrator whose work was much in demand in the 40s and 50s. The enduring image of the clock on 'After Eight' chocolates was designed by him. He also developed a number of unusual painting techniques. His images of women were always elegant, with echoes of art deco, and are highly decorative.

LEN TABNER

We recently took delivery of two stunning paintings by Tabner, one of the greatest sea painters of our time.

Few painters since Turner have immersed themselves so thoroughly in the eye of the storm in order to capture the drama of nature. Tabner's paintings reflect the character of the man himself - tough, unyielding, at one with the elements and completely focused.

Len Tabner
On the Saltings, Thursday 12 June 2008
 Mixed media 79 x 134 cm



EXHIBITIONS - 2009

21 June - 3 July Peter Kuhfeld and Saied Dai
(joint show)
October/November P J Crook
November Fred Cuming RA

These dates are preliminary only, and may change. Please ring to confirm.

Please note that we do not have fixed opening hours, except during exhibitions. However there is usually someone here on Tuesdays, Thursdays, Fridays and most Saturday afternoons. If you are making a special trip it is advisable to ring before you come 01993 824 464.

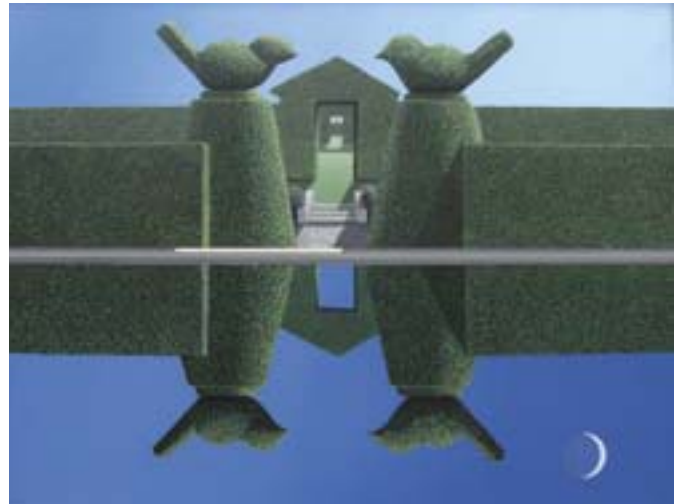


Fred Cuming RA
Fowey, First Light
Oil on Board 76 x 76 cm

One of a number of poetical works in stock by one of our most senior Royal Academicians.

Michael Kidd's enigmatic paintings continue to attract comment, particularly his formal garden scenes such as *Moonpond*. This is one of two new paintings in a slightly smaller format than usual.

Michael Kidd
Moonpond
41 x 53.5 cm



ADAM BINDER

Animals feature strongly in the work of most sculptors, and in this regard Adam Binder is no exception. However, in the large pieces he is now producing there has been a move away from the stereotype towards the semi-abstract. This makes his work very attractive as it illustrates how an artist sees form and mass. The polar bear is a particularly intriguing piece.



GEORGES CSATO 1910-1983

In our 2004 Csato exhibition we were able to show the whole range of this remarkable artist's work. There were large abstract canvasses, and also small works, often collages, some of no more than four by six inches. All were sold. We thought we had exhausted the supply until Jennifer Nadin, the owner of Csato's work, turned up with a small cache she had found in a drawer, together with a few other images.

George Csato's fascinating life in pre and post war Europe and Russia and his brush with Stalin is outlined in the exhibition catalogue of his work, which is available from the gallery.

from left to right Georges Csato: C27; W27; Collage No 18

