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Celebrate Art and Mom!

April Newsletter

Dear TAVA GWYN MORIAN,

So much is happening in SoCal!

Winter has finally been left behind and warm sunny days have become the norm again in Southern California as spring takes root and greens begin to make a return to the LA area.

But there is more to look forward to than just that tax refund and some long overdue fun outdoors!

Easter and Passover may be over for another year, but Mother's Day and Cinco de Mayo are both mere weeks away now. And trust me, those few weeks will go by VERY quickly!

So many new memories already formed this year, and so many more soon to be had. Be sure to take the time to fully cherish those memories and celebrate spring, art, and Mom.

If you are at a loss as to what to get your mother for Mother's Day this year, you can find ideas on events to take her to see in the SoCal Art Happenings section, where FrameStore brings you information on new exhibition and gallery openings for April even as the much celebrated Pacific Standard Time comes to a final close in the weeks ahead. Check out what is new at an art gallery near you!

Also, this month we shine our Monthly Spotlight on Foursquare to give you advance notice of new ways for FrameStore to reward our loyal customers.

We continue our new Art World News section by bringing art news from both around the Southland and around the world.

And our In The Studio section sees the latest installment of an Art Education series which will showcase information on various topics from Art Mediums to styles and history.

So check out what is new below, and in the months ahead.



Spring is a time to celebrate, and FrameStore wants to celebrate it with you and those you love!

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FrameStore has been helping southern Californians take care of their photos, artwork, and mementos correctly for over 35 years.

Stop by one of our stores this week to have one of our Art and Design experts help you to turn those precious memories that will only come once into lasting and lovely art that will bring joy for decades.

Visit our website at www.customframestore.com for locations and contact information!

Monthly Spotlight:



FrameStore is Now on Foursquare!

We're excited to announce that FrameStore has joined the Foursquare movement! If you're not already familiar with Foursquare, it is a social platform with over 15 million users that allows users to "check in" and "redeem specials" for their favorite businesses/restaurants/stores. This is a great local tool that lets new customers find cool places and allows businesses to form deeper connections with their biggest fans.

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Check in at any of our locations listed above and keep an eye out for new specials and deals we will soon be offering to our loyal customers!

Art World News -

The Southland:

PACIFIC STANDARD TIME Comes to an End:

LOS ANGELES, California - On March 31st, one of the largest and most unprecedented collaborations of gallery exhibits in history came to an official end.

Pacific Standard Time is the culmination of a long-term Getty Research Institute initiative that focuses on postwar art in Los Angeles. Through archival acquisitions, oral history interviews, public programming, exhibitions, and publications, the Research Institute is responding to the need to locate, collect, document, and preserve the art historical record of this vibrant period. Between October 2011 and February 2012, a major exhibition at the J. Paul Getty Museum will present a survey of postwar painting and sculpture in Los Angeles, accompanied by a book that is at once an exhibition catalog and an overview of postwar art history in Southern California.

A massive collaboration of cultural institutions across Southern California coming together to celebrate the birth of the L.A. art scene, PST began in October 2011, with over 60 cultural institutions making their contributions to this region-wide initiative encompassing every major L.A. art movement from 1945 to 1980.

Covered widely in The Los Angeles Times, Artweek L.A., and on KCRW's Which Way, L.A.? with Warren Olney, Pacific Standard Time has energized the art scene of SoCal over the last six months.

Many of the final exhibits do remain open for a short time more, so if you have missed out so far, this is your last chance to catch some of these historic displays of SoCal Art and Art

History. <http://www.pacificstandardtime.org/>

The World:

Occupy Museums Targets New York Frieze Art Fair:

NEW YORK, New York - A branch of the Occupy Wallstreet movement calling itself "Occupy Museums" has taken aim at the New York Frieze Art Fair for alleged "financialization" of the art scene.

Frieze New York is a contemporary art fair that will take place on Randall's Island, Manhattan 4 - 7 May 2012. The fair will feature approximately 170 of the world's most forward-thinking galleries. The fair also includes specially commissioned artists' projects, a prestigious talks programme and an artist-led education schedule.

Starting in London, England in 2003, the Frieze Art fair has been sponsored by Deutsche Bank since it's beginnings, making it an obvious target for Occupy Wallstreet. The recent labor dispute between Frieze New York and local carpenters union members has likely not helped and calls for protests are being promoted ahead of the May Fair opening. [Read the LA Times Article here.](#)

SoCal Art Happenings -

The Getty:



Herb Ritts:

L.A. Style

April 3, 2012 - August 26, 2012

Through hard work and a distinctive vision, Herb Ritts (1952-2002) fashioned himself into one of the top photographers to emerge from the 1980s. Ritts's aesthetic incorporated facets of life in and around Los Angeles. He often made use of the bright California sunlight to produce bold contrasts, and his preference for outdoor locations such as the desert and the beach helped to separate his work from that of his New York-based peers. Ritts's intimate portraiture, his modern yet classical treatment of the nude, and his innovative approach to fashion brought him international acclaim and placed him securely within an American tradition of portrait and magazine photography that includes Richard Avedon, Robert Mapplethorpe, and Irving Penn.

From the late 1970s until Ritts's untimely death from AIDS-related complications in 2002, his ability to create images that successfully bridged the gap between art and commerce was not only a testament to the power of his imagination and technical skill but also marked the synergistic union between art, popular culture, and business that followed in the wake of the Pop Art movement of the 1960s and 1970s.

Following its presentation at the Getty, this exhibition will be on view at the Cincinnati Art Museum from October 6 to December 30, 2012, and at the John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art in Florida from March 1 to June 2, 2013.

Santa Monica Museum of Art:



Mickalene Thomas: *Origin of the Universe*

April 14, 2012 - August 19, 2012

Mickalene Thomas: *Origin of the Universe* is the first major solo museum exhibition for the New York-based multi-media artist. Best known for her elaborate paintings of African American women against the backdrop of décor recalled from her childhood, Thomas has created an all-new suite of works that examine aspects of landscape painting. She introduces a new model of trans-generational female empowerment as she explores interior and exterior environments in relation to the female figure. The exhibition opens at SMMoA on April 14, 2012 and continues through August 18, 2012. It will then travel to the Brooklyn Museum for display from September 28, 2012 to January 20, 2013.

Thomas is best known for her bold enamel and acrylic paintings adorned with rhinestones, glitter, and "bling." Her subjects seem to have stepped directly from a 1970s Blaxploitation film, yet Thomas's influences extend far beyond. Her oeuvre stems from her long study of art history and the classical genres of portraiture, landscape, and still life. Thomas's layered facture process begins with a photographic portrait that is translated into a collage, and ultimately reenvisioned as a painting. Her imagery comprises careful borrowings from art history and from contemporary popular culture. For *Origin of the Universe*, Thomas examines art historical constructs of feminine identity, sexuality, beauty, and power in 15 works in a variety of sizes, shapes, and media. Taking cues from Marcel Duchamp's *Étant Donnés: 1° la chute d'eau, 2° le gaz d'éclairage* (Given: 1. The Waterfall, 2. The Illuminating Gas) and Gustave Courbet's *L'Origine du Monde* (The Origin of the World), Thomas presents the female figure as the origin of the universe, focusing on how the female body both engenders and inhabits landscape. The works on view are in communication with one another—portraits of Qusuquzah and Din gaze out at modernist interiors and plein-air landscapes, all confronted by the artist's arresting recreations of Courbet's *Origin*.

In nineteenth-century visual culture, black female sexuality functioned as something to be rejected or disparaged, but Thomas reconfigures these historical tropes into contemporary statements of empowerment. By casting African American women as the "heroines" of her works, she makes a profound statement regarding gender and racial identity. Thomas's dialogue with Courbet and Duchamp is a strong reclamation of history, reasserting the subjective nature of beauty. In addition to her paintings and photographs, she will create an installation in SMMoA's Project Room 1, to reinvent *Étant Donnés*, where the "peep show" reveals the true surprise of a 70s-style paneled interior in the place of Duchamp's splayed female body. Some content may be deemed inappropriate for younger viewers.

Mickalene Thomas was born in 1971. She earned a Bachelor's of Fine Arts degree from Pratt Institute and a Master's of Fine Arts from Yale University. She has participated in residency programs at the Versailles Foundation Munn Artists Program, Giverny, France, and the Studio Museum in Harlem, New York. Her work has been shown in group exhibitions at the Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit, The Renaissance Society, Chicago, and MoMA PS1, New York, and is included in the important collections of the Museum of Modern Art, New York; the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; the National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C. the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; the Art Institute of Chicago; The Museum of Fine Arts Boston; and the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art.

Mickalene Thomas: *Origin of the Universe* is organized by the Santa Monica Museum of Art; SMMoA Deputy Director Lisa Melandri is the exhibition curator. The exhibition will be accompanied by a series of free, engaging public programs and a full-color, illustrated catalog published by SMMoA and distributed by DAP. The publication includes an interview with the artist by Melandri; an essay that contextualizes Thomas's work by writer/curator Sarah Lewis, Professor at Yale University School of Art; and an in-depth investigation of Thomas's nineteenth-century influences by scholar Denise Murrell, a 2011 PhD Dissertation Fellow at Reid Hall of Columbia University in Paris.

Generous support for this exhibition has been provided by The National Endowment for the Arts, Lehmann Maupin Gallery, New York, The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, and Susanne Vielmetter Los Angeles Projects. Additional support has also been provided by the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors through the Los Angeles County Arts Commission & Janine and Lyndon Barrois.

LACMA:



In Wonderland:

The Surrealist Adventures of Women Artists in Mexico and the United States

January 29, 2012 - May 6, 2012

North America represented a place free from European traditions for women Surrealists from the United States and Mexico, and European émigrés. While their male counterparts usually cast women as objects for their delectation, female Surrealists delved into their own subconscious and dreams, creating extraordinary visual images. Their art was primarily about identity: portraits, double portraits, self-referential images, and masquerades that demonstrate their trials and pleasures. The exhibition includes works in a variety of media dating from 1931 to 1968, and some later examples that demonstrate Surrealism's influence on the feminist movement. Iconic figures such as Louise Bourgeois, Leonora Carrington, Frida Kahlo, Lee Miller, Kay Sage, Dorothea Tanning, and Remedios Varo are represented, along with lesser known or newly discovered practitioners.

Richard Heller Gallery:



Firelei Báez:

Not Even Unalterable Limitations

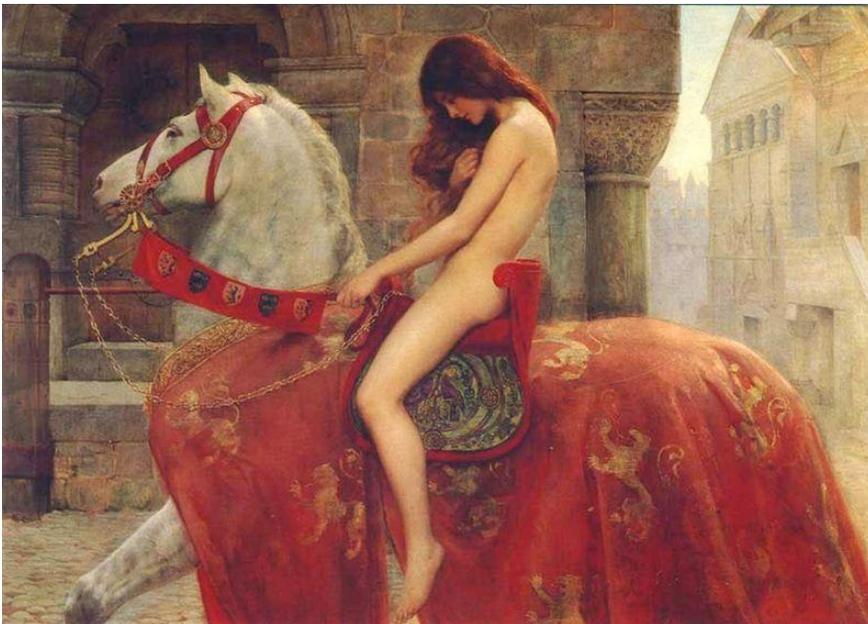
April 7, 2012 - May 5, 2012

"Not Even Unalterable Limitations" is a solo exhibition at Richard Heller Gallery in Los Angeles featuring multiple works of gouache on paper, with occasional elements of ink and graphite. Lots of minimalist whitespace and natural elements abound with these images of mostly women, creating an Earthy yet ethereal juxtaposition.

Firelei Báez was born in the Dominican Republic to Dominican and Haitian parents and lives and works in New York. Báez received her BFA from Cooper Union, and her MFA at Hunter College. Her work has been exhibited in various national and international institutions, including the New Jersey City Museum, El Museo Del Barrio, The Cortona Archeological Museum (Cortona, Italy), The Caribbean African Diaspora Institute (CCADI) and in the Bronx Artist Biennial, BX1. She participated in Aljira Center for Contemporary Art's Emerge Program, and was a recent resident artist in The Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture. She has received many prestigious awards including The Joan Mitchell Painters and Sculptors Award, The Jaque and Natasha Gelman Award, and The Bronx Recognizes Its Own (BRIO) Award among others. In 2011 her work will be featured in El Museo's Sixth Biennial The [S] Files/The Street Files.

In the Studio -

In the Studio: **Art Education**



Techniques and Mediums:

Oil Painting

Oil painting is the process of painting with pigments that are bound with a medium of drying oil. Often an oil such as linseed was boiled with a resin such as pine resin or even frankincense; these were called 'varnishes' and were prized for their body and gloss.

Other oils occasionally used include poppyseed oil, walnut oil, and safflower oil. These oils confer various properties to the oil paint, such as less yellowing or different drying times. Certain differences are also visible in the sheen of the paints depending on the oil.

Painters often use different oils in the same painting depending on specific pigments and effects desired. The paints themselves also develop a particular consistency depending on the medium.

Oil paint eventually became a principal medium in art as its advantages became widely known. The transition began with Early Netherlandish painting in northern Europe, and by the height of the Renaissance oil painting techniques had almost completely replaced tempera paints in the majority of Europe.

History

Although the history of tempera and related media in Europe indicates that oil painting was discovered there independently, there is evidence that oil painting was used earlier in Afghanistan. Surfaces like shields - both those used in tournaments and those hung as decorations - were more durable when painted in oil-based media than when painted in the traditional tempera paints.

Most Renaissance sources, in particular Vasari, credited northern European painters of the 15th century, and Jan van Eyck in particular, with the "invention" of painting with oil media on wood panel. However, Theophilus clearly gives instructions for oil-based painting in his treatise, *On Various Arts*, written in 1125. At this period it was probably used for painting sculptures, carvings and wood fittings, perhaps especially for outdoor use.

Early Netherlandish painting in the 15th century was, however, the first to make oil the usual painting medium, and explore the use of layers and glazes, followed by the rest of Northern Europe, and only then Italy. Early works were still panel paintings on wood, but around the end of the 15th century canvas became more popular, as it was cheaper, easier to transport, and allowed larger works. Venice, where sail-canvas was easily available, led the move. The popularity of oil spread through Italy from the North, starting in Venice in the late 15th century. By 1540 the previous method for painting on panel, tempera, had become all but extinct, although Italians continued to use fresco for wall paintings, which was more difficult in Northern climates.



Techniques

Traditional oil painting techniques often begin with the artist sketching the subject onto the canvas with charcoal or thinned paint. Oil paint is usually mixed with linseed oil, artist grade mineral spirits or other solvents to create a thinner, faster or slower drying paint. Because these solvents thin the oil in the paint, they can also be used to clean paint brushes. A basic rule of oil paint application is 'fat over lean'. This means that each additional layer of paint should contain more oil than the layer below to allow proper drying. If each additional layer contains less oil, the final painting will crack and peel. There are many other media that can be used in oil painting, including cold wax, resins, and varnishes. These additional media can aid the painter in adjusting the translucency of the paint, the sheen of the paint, the density or 'body' of the paint, and the ability of the paint to hold or conceal the brushstroke. These variables are closely related to the expressive capacity of oil paint.

Traditionally, paint was transferred to the painting surface using paint brushes, but there are other methods, including using palette knives and rags. Oil paint remains wet longer than many other types of artists' materials, enabling the artist to change the color, texture or form of the figure. At times, the painter might even remove an entire layer of paint and begin anew. This can be done with a rag and some turpentine for a certain time while the paint is wet, but after a while, the hardened layer must be scraped. Oil paint dries by oxidation, not evaporation, and is usually dry to the touch within a span of two weeks. It is generally dry enough to be varnished in six months to a year. Chair Caning (*Nature-morte à la chaise cannée*), Picasso pasted a patch of oilcloth with a chair-cane design onto the canvas of the piece.

Process

The artist might sketch an outline of their subject prior to applying pigment to the surface. "Pigment" may be any number of natural substances with color, such as sulphur for yellow or cobalt for blue. The pigment is mixed with oil, usually linseed oil but other oils may be used as well. The various oils dry differently, creating assorted effects.

Traditionally, artists mixed their own paints from raw pigments that they often ground themselves and medium. This made portability difficult and kept most painting activities confined to the studio. This changed in the late 1800s, when oil paint in tubes became widely available. Artists could mix colors quickly and easily, which enabled, for the first time, relatively convenient "plein air", or outdoor, painting which was a common practice in French Impressionism. The artist most often uses a brush to apply the paint. Brushes are made from a variety of fibers to create different effects. For example, brushes made with hog's bristle might be used for bolder strokes and impasto textures. Fitch hair and mongoose hair brushes are fine and smooth, and thus answer well for portraits and detail work.

In the past few decades, many synthetic brushes have come on the market. These are very durable and can be quite good, as well as cost efficient. Floppy fibers with no snap, such as squirrel hair, are generally not used by oil painters. The artist might also apply paint with a palette knife, which is a flat, metal blade. A palette knife may also be used to remove paint from the canvas when necessary. A variety of unconventional tools, such as rags, sponges, and cotton swabs, may be used. Some artists even paint with their fingers.

Most artists paint in layers, which is simply called "Indirect Painting". The method was first perfected through an adaptation of the egg tempera painting technique and was applied by the Flemish painters in Northern Europe with pigments ground in linseed oil. More recently, this approach has been called the "Mixed Technique" or "Mixed Method". The first coat or "underpainting" is laid down, often painted with egg tempera or turpentine-thinned paint. This layer helps to "tone" the canvas and to cover the white of the gesso. Many artists use this layer to sketch out the composition. This first layer can be adjusted before moving forward, an advantage over the 'cartooning' method used in Fresco technique. After this layer dries, the artist might then proceed by painting a "mosaic" of color swatches, working from darkest to lightest. The borders of the colors are blended together when the "mosaic" is completed. This mosaic layer is then left to dry before applying details.

Artists in later periods, such as the impressionist era, often used this Wet-on-wet method more widely, blending the wet paint on the canvas without following the Renaissance-era approach of layering and glazing. This method is also called "alla prima". This method was created due to the advent of painting outdoors, instead of inside a studio. While outside, an artist did not have the time to let each layer of paint dry before adding a new layer. Several contemporary artists use a blend of both techniques, which can add bold color (wet-on-wet) as well as the depth of layers through glazing.

When the image is finished and has dried for up to a year, an artist often seals the work with a layer of varnish that is typically made from damar gum crystals dissolved in turpentine. Such varnishes can be removed without disturbing the oil painting itself, to enable cleaning and conservation. Some contemporary artists decide not to varnish their work, preferring that the surfaces remain varnish-free.



Materials

Traditional artists' canvas is made from linen, but less expensive cotton fabric has gained popularity. The artist first prepares a wooden frame called a "stretcher" or "strainer". The difference between the first and second is that stretchers are slightly adjustable, while strainers are rigid and lack adjustable corner notches. The canvas is then pulled across the wooden frame and tacked or stapled tightly to the back edge. Then, the artist applies a "size" to isolate the canvas from the acidic qualities of the paint. Traditionally, the canvas was coated with a layer of animal glue, and primed with lead white paint, sometimes with added chalk. Panels were prepared with a gesso, a mixture of glue and chalk.

Modern acrylic "gesso" is made of titanium dioxide with an acrylic binder. It is frequently used on canvas, whereas real gesso is not suitable for that application. The artist might apply several layers of gesso, sanding each smooth after it has dried. Acrylic gesso is very difficult to sand. One manufacturer makes a sandable acrylic gesso, but it is intended for panels only, not canvas. It is possible to tone the gesso to a particular color, but most store-bought gesso is white. The gesso layer will tend to draw the oil paint into the porous surface, depending on the thickness of the gesso layer. Excessive or uneven gesso layers are sometimes visible in the surface of finished paintings as a change in the layer that's not from the paint.

Although surfaces like linoleum, wooden panel, paper, slate, pressed wood, and cardboard have been used, the most popular surface since the 16th century has been canvas, although many artists used panel through the 17th century and beyond. Panel is more expensive, heavier, harder to transport, and prone to warp or split in poor conditions. For fine detail, however, the absolute solidity of a wooden panel gives an advantage.

We here at FrameStore wish you happy Mother's Day, and all the best for a colorful and lively spring, and hope that this season will be filled with art, love, memories and lots of colour!

Sincerely,

Chuck Mitchell
FrameStore