

AMERICAN
FINE ART
M A G A Z I N E

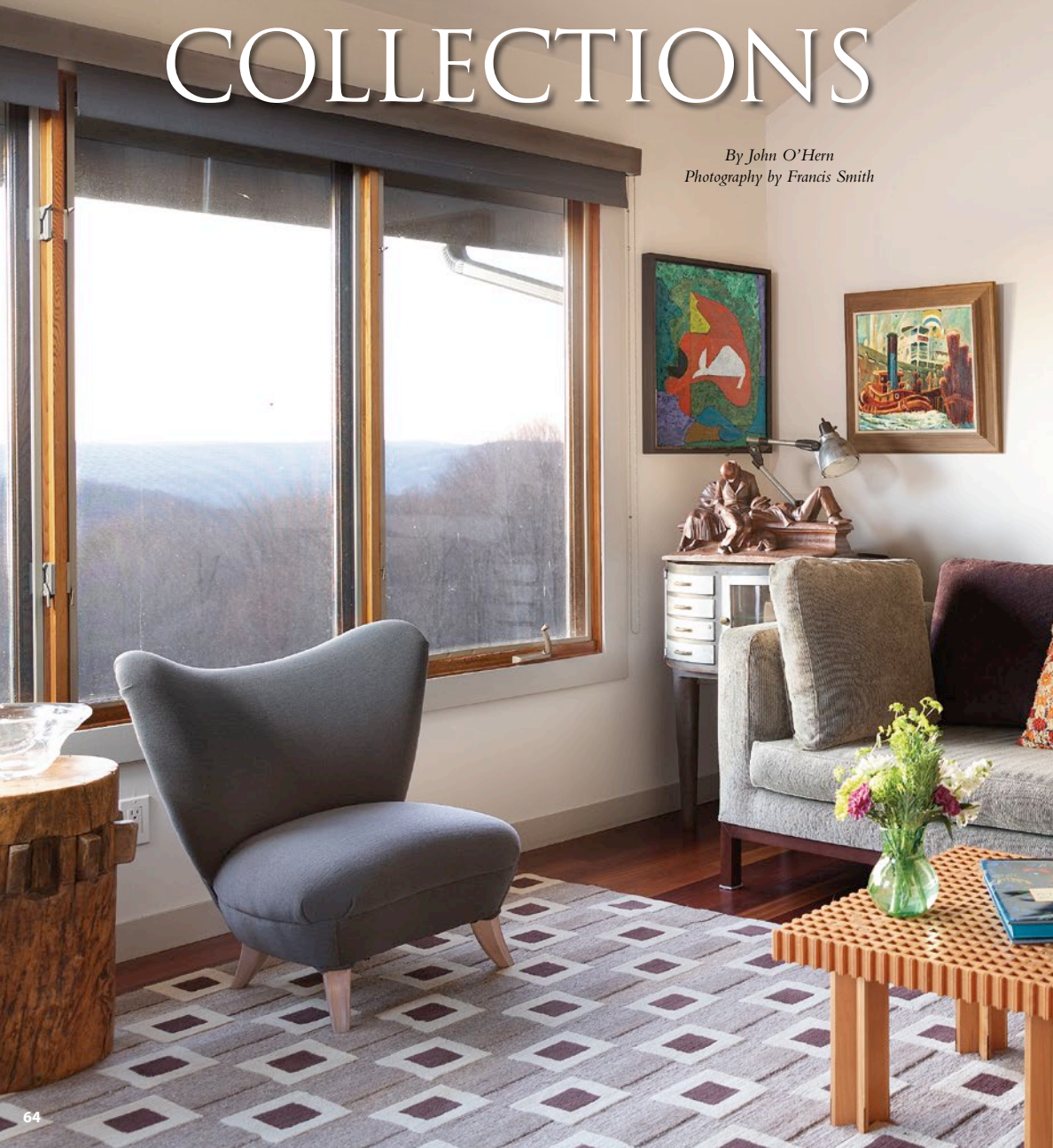
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ECLECTIC COLLECTIONS

*By John O'Hern
Photography by Francis Smith*



Keith Sherman and Roy Goldberg,
owners of Helicline Fine Art in New York,
open up their Dutchess County home



In the living room are, left to right, *White Whale*, oil on panel, by James Daugherty (1889-1974); *New York Harbor*, oil on board, by Charles Rosen (1878-1950) in a Heydenryk frame; and *Paper Workers*, 1935, oil on canvas, by Douglass Crockwell (1904-1968), in an artist-carved frame.



On the left in the living room is *Abstract*, gouache on paper, by Irene Rice Pereira (1902-1971). Beneath is *Magiscope 20, 2000, 2002*, assemblage, by Feliciano Bejar (1920-2007). Above the hearth is *August Landscape*, oil on canvas, by Georgina Klitgaard (1893-1976). On the mantel is Mark di Suvero's *Untitled* steel sculpture. On the hearth is *Barge Toller*, patinated plaster, by Max Kalish (1891-1945). To the right are, top to bottom, *Celler with Horseshoe*, circa 1938, oil on canvas, by Joseph Solman (1909-2008), and *New York City El*, oil on canvas, by Anna Elkin Meltzer (1896-1975). Next to them is *At the Theatre*, oil on canvas, by Henry Glintenkamp (1887-1946). The Meltzer and Glintenkamp are in Heydenryk frames.

Keith Sherman and Roy Goldberg have been together for 32 years. When they were in their 20s they moved into a 1920s art deco building in New York and wanted to know more about the period. In the days before the internet, a trip to the Strand Book Store in Manhattan turned up books on the subject. Even with the internet, the couple have amassed a formidable library on the period. "We do research on artists both before and after we purchase a piece," Roy explains.

In the days of flea markets and antiques shows, each discovered an object from the 1939 World's Fair and gave it to the other. Roy declares "three makes a collection" and when the third hand-crafted piece from the fair appeared (they eschew tourist items) the collection began. They

now have a room in their Dutchess County country home dedicated to the fair and their collection of over 1,000 pieces relating to it. Keith notes, "The 1939 World's Fair celebrated the triumph of our struggling society as hope prevailed for the future in order to move civilization forward. It's a connection from the past, to the moment and beyond. 2019 marks the 80th anniversary of the Fair."

Their single collection has since grown into many—from the world's fair to Broadway to in-depth collections of artists of the period. A collection of hands—mostly glove forms in ceramic, Bakelite, wood, stone and steel, rest on and beneath a stainless steel veterinarian's table.

Above them is a collection of drawings by Miles White (1915-2000) who, Keith explains, "created costumes

for the original Broadway productions of *Oklahoma*, *Carousel* and *Bye Bye Birdie*. He was a close friend of ours for the last 20 years of his life. We live with one of his two Tony Awards and a dozen drawings."

Meeting the artists and their relatives has added to their pleasure in acquiring art from the period. They had purchased *Reginald Marsh Sketching at Coney Island Beach* by Peter Hopkins (1911-1999) at auction. "We were drawn to it because we loved the imagery," Roy recalls. "Keith found two Peter Hopkins in the phone book and called the most likely one in Westbeth who turned out to be the artist. We went to visit him and brought a photo of the painting. His eyes welled up with tears. He had only one of his paintings, a portrait of his wife, in his fifth floor walk-up."



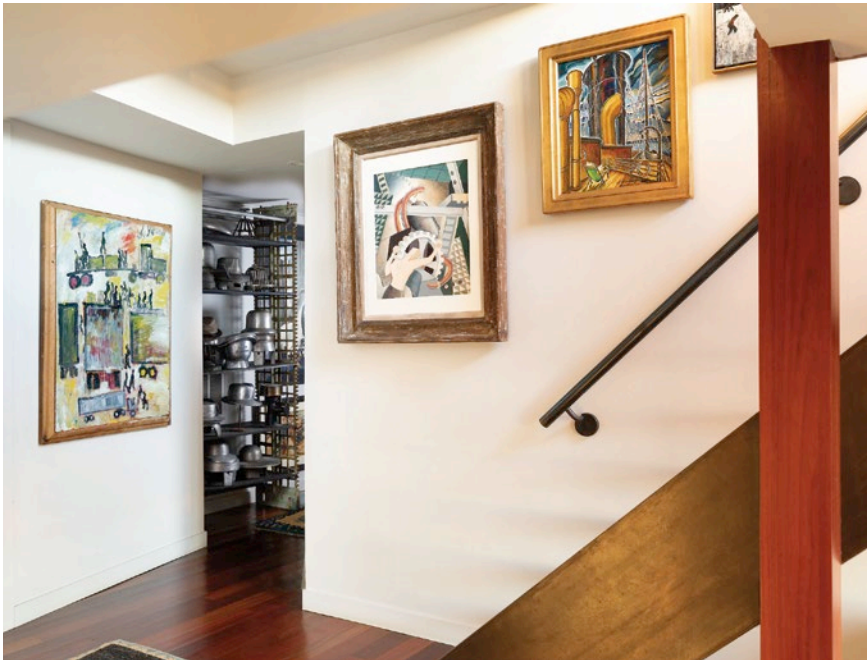
In the entryway, *The Tube Station* (Coppel CEP 32), circa 1932, linocut on tissue thin Japan paper, edition 39 of 60, by Cyril Edward Power (1872-1951), hangs above a painted iron shooting gallery target, *Public Enemy #1*. On the right are, from left, *Fire Escape*, oil on canvas, by Jack Perlmutter (1920-2006), and *Geometric Abstraction*, oil on canvas, circa 1945, by Rolph Scarlett (1889-1984).

“We befriended him toward the end of his life,” Keith adds. “We have correspondence from him about the period and his being a student of Reginald Marsh.”

Roy notes, “A frame can transform a painting. We’ve been careful to have them relate well to the paintings.” Keith adds, “In the ‘90s Joseph Rollins used to have a 1-inch ad in *The New York Times*, ‘WPA Paintings for Sale’. We went to visit him in the Village. He turned us on to frames by The House of Heydenryk, which has been in business for over 170 years and opened a shop in New York in the 1930s. Rollins encouraged us to avoid the frames in the main shop and to go downstairs to find old frames and have them cut to the size we needed.”

The couple own a painting by Douglass Crockwell (1904-1968) who painted murals and posters for the WPA. Keith relates, “A decade ago, as a birthday gift for me, Roy took us to D.C. to see the Smithsonian’s *1934: A New Deal for Artists* exhibition. It took our breath away. So many of the paintings were inspiring beyond words. Many stood out, especially one in particular, *Paper Workers* by Crockwell. We both fixated on it.

“Two years later I was visiting some galleries in New York, and I saw the painting hanging



Opposite the stairs is *Trucks in the City*, oil on board nailed to wood frame, by Purvis Young (1943-2010). Through the doorway is a collection of steel hat molds on a vintage steel bookcase from the Carnegie Mellon University Library. At the bottom of the stairs is an untitled gouache on board by Douglass Crockwell (1904-1968), and next to it is *Arcturus, Helsingfors*, 1935, oil on canvas, by Eve Drewelowe (1899-1989).



Above the bed are, from left to right, *Abstract*, circa 1940s, oil on canvas in a carved vintage frame, by Walter Quirt (1902-1968); *Tennessee Valley Authority*, circa 1930s/40s, an unsigned WPA era mural study, three panels, oil on canvas mounted on board; *Die Schachspieler, (Chess Players)*, circa 1930, oil on board by Sándor Bortnyik (1893-1976); *Reginald Marsh Sketching at Coney Island Beach*, circa 1930s/40s, oil on canvas, by Peter Hopkins (1911-1999) in a Heydenryk frame; and, beneath it, *Three Workers*, circa 1930s, by M.N. Shee. The painted plaster sculptures are *The Power* and *The Glory* by Agnes Yarnell (1904-1998).

Hanging above the hand collection are works by Mark White (1915-2000). Top row, from left, are *Jamaica*, 1957, mixed media on paper, original costume drawing for the Lena Horne musical; *Tallulah Bankhead*, mixed media on paper; *Ethel Merman in the film There's No Business Like Show Business*, mixed media on paper; *Portrait of Keith*, 1985, Fire Island Pines, mixed media on paper. Beneath *Jamaica* is an untitled White drawing. On the right wall are, from top, *Bye Bye Birdie*, 1960, watercolor and ink on paper, a costume sketch for Chita Rivera with gold lamé fabric swatches on verso, and *Bye Bye Birdie*, 1960, costume sketch for Conrad Birdie with gold lamé fabric swatches on verso.





Clockwise from left: Under the back staircase are four of seven paintings depicting the 1939 World's Fair by Leila Sawyer (1883-1977). The terra-cotta sculpture is *Strike*, circa 1940, by Angelo Caravaglia (1925-2008).; On the left wall in the library are, top to bottom, *Airship Akron*, 1931, gelatin silver print, by Margaret Bourke White (1904-1971), and *Riveting the Post*, mixed media, by Gerrit Beneker (1882-1934). Above the sofa are, from left to right and top to bottom, *The Fighter*, circa 1930s, gouache on paper, by John Ruggles (1907-1991); *Queen City of the Lakes*, oil on canvas, an unsigned WPA era mural of the City of Buffalo, New York; *Mural Study for a Post Office*, 1938, tempera on board, by Seymour Fogel (1911-1984); and *Industrial Cityscape*, oil on board, by Aaron Bohrod (1907-1992). On the right is *The Telephone Connection*, circa 1930s, watercolor and pencil on paper, by James Dougherty (1889-1974). The wood sculpture is *Strident Man*, circa 1930s/40s, by Lou Bunin (1904-1994).; Above the bed is *1932 Olympics mural study*, oil and gold leaf on board, by Innocenzo Dariao (1903-1993). Next is *Swaggering Laborer*, watercolor on paper, by Carl Sprinchorn (1887-1971) and, beneath *Sailor Jack*, *March*, 1946, oil on canvas, by Henry Schnakenberg (1892-1970) is *Nowhere to Go*, oil on canvas, by Norman Barr (1908-1994). The art deco sculpture, circa 1930s, is silver over copper by Kupur. On the adjoining wall from top to bottom are *The Glance*, oil on wood panel, monogrammed 'GFK 41', and *Backstage, The Ambassador*, circa 1940s, oil on canvas, by Sam Norkin (1917-2011). In the hall are *Industrial Scene*, mixed media on paper by Thornton Oakley (1881-1953) and *Mural Study for Detroit Naval Academy*, gouache and ink on board, by David Fredenthal (1914-1958).

in a gallery. I was confused—it had just been hanging in the Smithsonian. It turns out that the artist painted two. Shortly thereafter that work ended up in The Hyde Collection in Glen Falls, New York, where Crockwell was the first director.

“A few years later we bought at auction an unsigned painting. The blocklike head reminded us of figures in *Paper Workers*, and we became convinced that this work must be by Crockwell. We approached the curator at the Hyde who eventually shared a photo with the artist's granddaughter. She

authenticated the work as by the hand of her grandfather.”

Keith continues, “‘Oh, do you happen to have any more of his work?’, I asked. To my utter astonishment, she told me she lives with the third version of *Paper Workers* that her grandfather painted in 1935. It is pretty much the exact same image that hangs in the Smithsonian and in the Hyde. Pinch me now. We spent a full day in the car driving back and forth to northern Vermont to pick up *Paper Workers*.”

The connections among the artists in the couple's collection abound. Rolph

Scarlett (1889-1984) was a disciple of Hilla Rebay (1890-1967), the first director of the Guggenheim Museum, whose painting, *Abstract*, hangs in the entryway. Rebay convinced Solomon R. Guggenheim to collect the work of her lover Rudolf Bauer (1889-1953) one of whose paintings is also in the collection.

The couple's love for the period is also manifest in their gallery Helicline Fine Art. The Helicline was the 950-foot long ramp that connected the Trylon and Perisphere at the 1939 World's Fair and is symbolic of the couple's desire to connect people with art. ■