

The

bui•gallery

Newsletter
MARCH / APRIL 2011

Welcome!

In Pursuit of the Finer Things

The Art of Collecting Art

Buying a work of art is very different from buying a bicycle or a dress. Generally, one ends up buying from an art gallery. And buying from an art dealer can forge a relationship between an art dealer and an art collector that is worlds away from the traditional buyer-seller relationship.

Of course, there are large amounts of money at stake but the relationship formed encompasses intangibles such as taste, emotion, psychology, passion and love.

This type of relationship can last for decades, or even a lifetime.

Even when an art collector and an art dealer are very close, there are certain things to be careful with, just like in any relationship. When a dealer finds a very special artwork, which collector does he or she call first? Some collectors like a lot of advice and guidance, some just want pointers. Some love to be called, some like to call the art dealer.

But when I, as an art dealer and gallerist find a very special work, I always have a particular client in mind. By pursuing together the finer things in life, I help my clients build art collections that are unique to their tastes.

Betty Bui

Photo VN, a new tradition

Photography. Almost everyone does it. Less people do it well. Even fewer succeed. But quality aside, few can deny that in recent years, photography has emerged as one of the most popular and yet, most elusive, art forms practiced by the masses. Due to the falling price of digital equipment and a plethora of social networks and file sharing sites, it seems as if almost anyone with an SLR can make 'art'.

Debates ensue.

The validity of photography as an art form is a hotly contested topic, one that photographers are slowly winning. Each year, art fairs are crowded with more and more photo artists, claiming top prizes and exhibition spaces once reserved for only the crown jewels of the art world: contemporary sculpture or modern painting.

The tide, however, is turning. Because of the accessibility of digital mediums, the internet allows artists without connections or money to build networks and fame, even branding themselves with their own ingenuity and talent. Like what happened with the music industry, digital photography is revolutionizing the art world.



David LaChapelle "Can You Help Us?"



Tuan Huyen "2010 Ha Anh"

So in a developing country like Vietnam, it's no wonder that photography has become the most popular art form around. Easily accessible, requiring little to no development cost, one is hard pressed to walk the streets of Hanoi and not see young students or professionals practicing their trade.

In an effort to promote this vital appendage to the ever developing Hanoi art scene, the Bui Gallery will host an annual spring exhibition celebrating the achievements of local and international photography with: "Photo VN".

Last year it was all about the streets, the people, the lifeblood of Vietnam, showcased by Hanoi quintet Aaron Joel Santos, Jamie Maxtone-Graham, Na Son Nguyen and Diego Cortizas in *Days and Nights* (March 2010). This year, we're going in the opposite direction and embracing the modern side of Vietnam, the ever growing desire for luxury goods and obsession with fame and money with our Pop Art Extravaganza: *Superstyle* (March/April 2011) featuring photo and film icon David LaChapelle and Vietnamese photographers Yu Nguyen and Tuan Nguyen.

We look forward to spending our upcoming springs with you as we together watch this exciting, yet elusive, medium morph and grow.

The Bui Gallery :



Bui Box Opens

Hefty art price tags a bit out of your range? The Bui Gallery's newest addition Bui Box opened this month, featuring affordable prints and sketches from local artists. Starting things off are Pham Huy Thong, with sketches from his previous BG series, Dong Bao (Bui Gallery, Nov/Dec 2010) and Nguyen The Son's New Higher Level (Art Vietnam, October 2009). We've got everything from large prints, pen drawings to book marks and soon to come Bui Gallery bags and posters. Subscribe to our blog or Facebook to stay updated on new arrivals.



The Bui Gallery Collection Finds a New Home: Hotel Métropole

Next time you're at the Métropole, head over to the Old Wing and Spices Garden; you might see some familiar faces. To welcome the Year of the Cat, the Bui Gallery is excited to decorate the legendary hotel with our permanent collection. Half Javanese, half Chinese calligrapher, Djoko KS (September 2010 -Energy Within) graces the reception area of the old wing as well as the sitting areas of the three residence floors with his bold layered calligraphy and earthy tones. Coloring the three stairwells are Ha Manh Thang's bold canvases (April 2010 - Not Memory), giving the historic building a contemporary feel with a local voice. Not to be missed is Les Horvat's photographic journey of Vietnam (June 2010 - Momentum of the River's Flow: An Australian's View of Vietnam's Long Journey) located in the sitting areas of the old wing. And last but not least, brightening up Spices Garden are Lionel Descostes' contemporary embroidery pieces (November 2010 - 10 Years in Hanoi). Keep an eye on the collection; we'll be updating it regularly as shows change in the main gallery on Ngo Van So.



All pieces displayed at the Métropole are for sale.



David LaChapelle & the Importance of Pop Art in Vietnam



David LaChapelle "Dear Doctor, I've Read Your Play"

Like it or not, the nouveau riche have taken over. Cyclos make way for orange Bentleys, as the newest 'it' crowd packs nightly into trendy clubs, ready to wake up the next day and contribute to the every steady rise in development projects across the country. Open any magazine and what's on people's minds is pretty clear: luxury, beauty, the high life. Criticize, embrace, or simply mock – the choice is yours. While some may turn up their nose at the lack of refinement, this movement is worth taking a look at. And what's a better way to observe the fusion of cultural symbols and luxury brands than Pop Art?

David LaChapelle thinks so. While some may find his fantasies hard to stomach or even approach, they are oddly applicable in Hanoi at this point in Vietnam's fascinating history. After all, LaChapelle is all about over the top. It's about shocking the viewer with scenes so striking that it is difficult to look away. Combined with iconic celebrities that few people in the world *wouldn't* recognize, LaChapelle's intricate scenes, made to resemble film clips, capture in stillness our own perceptions. Herein lies the key point, because LaChapelle isn't forcing us into his world, rather, he is opening up his viewer's and allowing them to see themselves. Everyone has a sort of 'storyline' they attribute to celebrities based on the personalities presented to them through media. LaChapelle's photos recreate this fantasy world and allow us to critically step away from our own preconceptions and see what has been fed to us at a distance.

Pop art is all about choosing traditional and mass media symbols and synthesizing them into a commentary on the modern man's experience. Because the life of an average nouveau riche Hanoian is something like living in a Roy Lichtenstein print, many argue that stylistically Vietnam is most ready to embrace Pop Art. Some have already begun, most famously with Ha Manh Thang's recreations of traditional symbols paired with Japanese and Korean marketing icons. (*Not Memory, March 2010*)

But it isn't all so serious. LaChapelle's photographs are meant to include the masses, not steer them away with morose meditations on the state of man and other such inevitable diatribes. Instead, he seeks to entertain, to amuse and perhaps enlighten, but it's meant to be a side effect rather than the principal point.

"Or is that the point?" he asks.

Artist in Residency: Pham Huy Thong - 'Hands'

It's no secret that Pham Huy Thong's (*Dong Bao, December 2010*) art asks his viewers to engage with the social questions of our time. At the Rimbun Dahan Art Residency, Malaysia, Pham Huy Thong began to build up his body of work a brand new painting series called "Hands". As an active social critic, Thong's art work is the vehicle with which he delivers his message.

Pham Huy Thong believes that there are a number of types of politics. For example: Personal Politics, Every day politics, Family politics, Professional politics, National politics and International politics. As people living in society, we always have to act under social norms and conventions. We have to go to funerals in dark suits with sad faces, or go to weddings with big smiles regardless of whether we are actually happy or depressed. In our aim to be accepted by our "community", we have to hide our true emotions, and find a different way to express ourselves.

Under the rule of our social norms and conventions, personal identity disappears.

So in this series, Thong doesn't want to portray any particular person. People in the paintings are hiding their identities as well as their thoughts. Thong removes his subject's heads and replaces those heads with hands. Hands have the ability to depict a wide variety of human emotions such as anger, power, fear, happiness etc. The people in Thong's Hands series look very alive, active and sly even though the viewer cannot be sure of their identities.

Text by Pham Huy Thong. Edited by Samantha Libby.

CITYFILE: Amanda Eliasch



Residence:

LONDON, PARIS AND LOS ANGELES. I live in Tamara de Lempicka's art studio in Paris.

Who is your favorite artist?

I have no favorite artist, but I have favorite pieces, pieces that move me. My first piece by Dexter Dalwood was of Stalin's War Room. I went to the show of Dexter's in London and fell in love with it. A large black background with a red telephone. Sadly my husband loved it too and when we divorced it went with him. I had a coup de foudre over Polly Morgan's magpie on a telephone and also on the White Elephant by Marc Quinn sold in aid of The Elephant.

What is the first art piece you ever bought?

The Dexter Dalwood painting of Stalin's War Room from Gagosian Gallery, it was an incredible exhibition, unfortunately all were sold but I loved this painting. I actually begged for it.

In which way does your art collection reflect your life?

I choose pieces by artists that move me. I love the white elephant by Marc Quinn, huge with a beautiful white orchid on its back. I want the art to almost talk to me, they become friends, and in most cases I would not like to part with them. The collection of course reflects my life, huge and glamorous, almost childlike. I am always attracted to the color pink, and when I saw Duggie Field's Marilyn it hit my heart strings. Pink keeps me happy, I have to be kept at room temperature. Marilyn is the 20th blonde icon, with the numerology 25/7, the same as mine; my brain works like that, connecting on many different levels. I would like to build something that my grandchildren would like to look at, passing ideas on to them even if I was no longer around.

What is your preference? Sculptures, drawings, paintings, photographs?

I am a photographer, so photographs are a love of mine, but with so many digital prints, it does not have the same feeling. I love the handprinted photographs of Man Ray, I like the moody lighting. Sculpture is interesting. I loved the huge skull chair I bought from Phillips de Pury, The Sensory Deprivation Chair and I adore my swords from Mark Brazier Jones. The tiny drawings of Dan Perfect and Tracey Emin hold my attention as do her neon lights. If you like something you like it, it is as simple as that.

What does contemporary art mean to you?

The world of contemporary art changed my life forever. It made every day living fascinating. The shows, the



galleries, the friendships. I have really had a good time, and learned a lot. I wrote and took photographs for a book for Italian Vogue and Assouline about 8 years ago. It was a life changing experience, of color and vitality. It was a degree on all aspects of this fascinating and ever changing world. After that book, another two with Enrico Navarra, Made by Indians and Made by Brazilians.

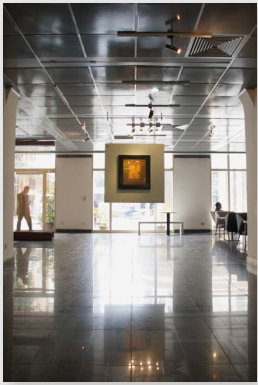
Why do you collect Art?

Art does not mean art, it sounds like a commodity. It is of course and it is not. No I love looking at it, and letting it live. I feel the pieces have lives of their own and if they match my life then they are welcome to join it. I also like learning about new and exciting ideas. It is educational.

Staff about town

Lionel Descostes at L'Espace

Lionel wows again. Over the past many years, Lionel Descostes produced so much quality work that we couldn't fit it all in the gallery for his exhibition this past November. So we're really happy that L'Espace got into the game, kicking off their year of exhibitions with "From a Stroke to the Thread," where Lionel shows off both abstract and figurative works. Especially worth getting lost in are the works from his mesmerizing "grids".



Open Edit: Mobile Library

Ok so this one may be a bit 'out' of town, but we couldn't resist updating you on the recent project of Bui Gallery artist couple: Sandrine Llouquet and Bertrand Peret. In partnership with San Art, HCMC, the duo contributed to the ongoing project 'Books Set Sail' which encourages viewers to interact with a massive library, allowing them to tear, edit, highlight or alter the material as they see fit. So interested in manipulating material for the Asia Art Archive? Next time you're down south, stop by this continuing series and let Llouquet and Peret lead the way.

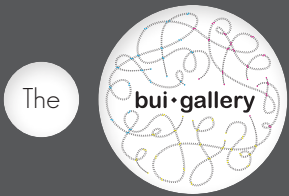


Classical/Modern at Goethe

Renditions of Kurt Weill's famed collaboration with playwright, Bertol Brecht in the Threepenny Opera might have been the last thing you'd expect to hear on a Saturday night in Hanoi. But there it was, finishing off two Brandenburg concertos to a packed house. What's been great about Goethe's recent programming has been their willingness to embrace both classical film, art and music while also putting on some really fine contemporary installation art and documentary screenings. Keep this venue on your radar.

Lai Dieu Ha at Nha San

This year's first art performance of Nha San after tet left a permanent impression on its audience. Lai Dieu Ha awed her viewers with an intense and shocking show. Her performance, during which she used only a flat iron and a bucket full of pork skin, depicted how easily the borders between herself and her environment can blur away. With extraordinary stunts she pushed her body to an extreme level and inspired us to question ourselves "Where are the borders of our bodies?" and "How hard can we strain them?". Overall, Lai Dieu Ha was able to evoke not only trepidation and squeamishness within her audience but also respect - respect for her courage to make her own body an experiment of will power.



Bui Gallery's Network

THE MIDDLE EAST

Dubai: Art Dubai 2011

March 16 - 19, 2011

Dubai

"As the leading contemporary art fair in the region, Art Dubai has become the essential gathering place for collectors, artists and art professionals from across the Middle East, North Africa, South Asia and beyond. The fair's fifth edition brings together more than 75 galleries from across the world and a collateral programme of events including Global Art Forum_5, Art Park, the Abraaj Capital Art Prize, exhibitions, film screenings, talks, installations and performative tours."

(www.artdubai.ae)

USA

Art Naples

March 18 - 21, 2011

Naples (Florida) International Pavilion

The premiere of Art Naples presents a wide spectrum of international contemporary art, photography, video, installation art, sculpture, and design including daily lectures and artist panel discussions.

(www.artfairnaples.com)

Arteaméricas

March 25 - 28, 2011

Miami Beach Convention Center

"Arteaméricas is the premier fair of art from Latin America. Returning for its ninth installment in 2011, it will showcase the latest trends in paintings, sculpture and multimedia. Galleries from all over Latin America will be participating, representing hundreds of emerging artists and renowned masters. The fair takes place in Miami Beach, drawing a diverse and upscale audience to enjoy high-quality art within an intimate setting. arteaméricas is not only the Latin American art fair, but also the art fair of the Americas."

(www.arteamericas.com)

Art Chicago

April 29 - May 2

Chicago

"Art Chicago 2011, the international fair of contemporary and modern art, is the largest, most important art event in the Midwest, providing collectors, curators and art enthusiasts a comprehensive survey of current and historic work, from cutting-edge to modern masters."

(www.artchicago.com)

EUROPE

Lille Art Fair

March 24 - 27, 2011

Lille Grand Palais

Lille Art Fair displays a meeting point for all those who love contemporary art in all its forms, such as Painting, Drawing, Sculpture, Video, Screen Printing, Lithography, Etching and more.

In addition, an exclusive evening of performances and discussions between artists, gallery owners and the public will take place at this year's event "Nuit de l'Art".

(www.lilleartfair.com)

ArtParis 2011

March 31 - April 3

Paris, Carrousel du Louvre

"Art Paris 2011 is stretching the limits of traditional fairs to propose a new kind of modern and contemporary art fair based on artistic projects specially designed and carried out with its participating galleries and their artists.

ArtParis 2011 presents several exclusive artistic projects, but also geographic and thematic platforms and numerous cultural events for a stunning edition!"

(www.artparis.fr)

Art Brussels

April 28 - May 2

Brussels Expo Hall

Art Brussels provides a platform for upcoming talented contemporary artists in Europe, by representing a collection of paintings, sculptures, photography, video and installation from 170 strong established national and international galleries.

The fair has the highest international profile in Europe, with 80% of its participants coming from over 25 different countries.

(www.artbrussels.be)

ASIA

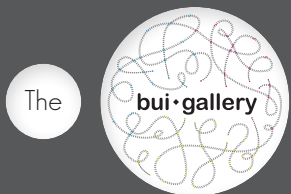
Art Fair Tokyo

April 1 - 3

Tokyo International Forum

Tokyo's biggest art fair offers not only a large range of genres and periods of artworks from antiques to contemporary art, but also the opportunity to observe different facets of Tokyo's art scene. With the PROJECTS Artistic Committee, Art Fair Tokyo attempts to represent Asia as a whole. This will also support the building of a new network in the East Asian region.

(www.artfairtokyo.com)



Auction Calendar

Christie's:

March 10 - Post-War and Contemporary Art (New York, Rockefeller Center)

March 22 - Indian and Southeast Asian Art (New York, Rockefeller Center)

March 23 - South Asian Modern and Contemporary Art (New York, Rockefeller Center)
Japanese and Korean Art (New York, Rockefeller Center)

March 29 - Modern and Contemporary Prints (London, King Street)

April 19 - Modern and Contemporary Arab, Iranian and Turkish Art (Dubai)

April 20 - Post-War & Contemporary Art (London, South Kensington)

Bonham's:

March 2 - Chinese & other Asian Works of Art (Knightsbridge)

March 15 - Other Asian Works of Art (San Francisco)

March 24 - Asian Art (Edinburgh)

April 5 - Modern & Contemporary Turkish Art (London, New Bond Street)

April 13 - Post War and Contemporary Art and Design (London, New Bond Street)

Sotheby's:

March 9 - Contemporary Art (New York)

March 24 - Indian & Southeast Asian Works of Art (New York)

March 25 - Modern & Contemporary South Asian Art (New York)

April 4 - Modern and Contemporary Southeast Asian Paintings (Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre (New Wing))

Contemporary Asian Art (Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre (New Wing))

April 7 - Contemporary Art Turkish (London)

Current and Upcoming Exhibitions:

David LaChapelle: March 18 - May 15, 2011

Le Huy Hoang: May 20 - June 26, 2011

Got comments?
Queries? Ideas?
Write us and tell us
what you think.

See you in May!

The Editor

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