



Q & A

Chris Byrne Heads Up First Ever Dallas Art Fair

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Turtle Creek News

Established 1992 ★ Dallas Texas USA

Edition No. 822

Weekend Beginning January 9, 2009

TurtleCreekNews.net

Chris Byrne

QA

Intellectual art dealer will head up the first ever Dallas Art Fair next month.

This week's subject is a well respected art dealer who has a Fine Arts degree and a Four Year Painting Certificate from the University of Pennsylvania. He has worked with many celebrated artists, curating one-person exhibitions and organizing museum lectures for various fine artists. He has published fine-art editions and in 2002, wrote the book "The Original Print".

His current project is an exciting one...the first ever Dallas Art Fair to be held at the Fashion Industry Gallery in the Arts District February 5th through the 8th. Thirty prominent art dealers from 12 cities will exhibit paintings, sculptures, drawings prints and photographs. Go to dallasartfair.com.

One thing is evident...this is a highly educated, well read intellectual gentleman who could teach us a thing or two about music and literature, as well as art.

Where were you born and where did you grow up?

I was born in Philadelphia—the first capital of the United States.

What is something interesting about your birthplace or hometown?

The city is a repository for every idiosyncratic cultural niche — from the Mutter Museum to the Mummer Museum.

What were some fun times you recall with your parents?

I was enthusiastic about painting, so my parents would accompany me to exhibitions. As my interest grew, they continued to support my inquires — nothing was too vanguard for them.

What are some memorable things about your teenage years?

We played a lot of sports.

Tell a vivid memory of college life?

My best friend growing up went to medical school and invited me to visit one weekend — seeing the morgue left an indelible impression.

If you gave a commencement address to a senior class, what would the theme be?

Disregard all of my advice.

First job?

I was always had an entrepreneurial spirit, so I had a paper route when I was young.

What has been your proudest moment?

All of my work with the American Visionary Art Museum—the AVAM champions the unadulterated expression of self-taught artists.

What do you know for sure?

That there's no Archimedean point.

Do you have a favorite sport, as player or fan? What is your favorite sports team?

I played ice hockey in high school and college, but since moving to Dallas, my favorite sport has become football.

What is your wildest dream?

That the Dallas Art Fair exceeds the expectations of the participating exhibitors.

What are some inventions we take for granted?

Every one of them.

Who are some favorite performers?

John Lennon, John Lydon, and Jon Langford...the Three Johns.

Questions & Answers



"...As an art dealer, I try to collect collectors..."

What was your favorite concert so far?

Guided By Voices at the Irving Plaza in New York.

A mix tape you made would have to include these songs:

"Looking At You" by the MC5, "Starry Eyes" by Roky Ericson (a great underrated Austin songwriter), and "I'm So Green" by Can.

What do you think is just about the best song ever written?

"Hybrid Moments" by Glenn Danzig. I recently viewed almost every cover of this song on YouTube and it can withstand a wide range interpretations — from a garage band to a solo dulcimer rendition.

Who are some favorite authors?

Samuel Beckett, Wil Eisner, and Slavoj Zizek.

What are some movies you could watch over and over?

"Safe" by Todd Haynes, "King of Kong: A Fistful of Quarters" by Seth Gordon, and "Neel" by Andrew Neel.

What are some places you want to see before you die?

Tibet, Burma (Myanmar), and the Dallas Historical Society.

What is something that you wish you knew how to do?

When I was younger, I began to learn to sail and wish I had pursued it.

What are some beautiful places you have seen in this world?

I love Normandy—it's not postcard picturesque, but the importance of this region's history is undeniable—it's where Marcel Duchamp's birthplace meets the Allied Invasion.

At what store would you like to max out your credit card?

Forbidden Planet in New York—it has the most current and comprehension selection of graphic novels.

What have you seen that was breathtaking or makes you say "Wow"?

James Ensor's "The Entry of Christ into Brussels 1888" at the Getty Museum—it is the most remarkable and prophetic image ever created (or least that we know about).

What do you wish you had more of?

Like everyone, I wish I had more time.

What housekeeping chore do you most dislike to perform?

Cleaning up before the cleaning person arrives.

What do you splurge on?

Artists' monographs.

What is unfathomable to you?

Everything except Quantum Field Theory.

What do you avoid, if at all possible?

As I get older, I try to avoid excess.

Who are two or three people you would like to meet?

Laura Ingraham, Malcolm McLaurin, and Thomas Pynchon.

What was an unforgettable event you have attended?

I recently attended the artist Peter Saul's retrospective with my business partner Becky Bruder. I've known Peter for years and talk with him on an almost daily basis, but seeing the works together literally made my jaw drop. I can honestly say that it changed the way I look at painting.

If cost were not an object, what would you buy tomorrow?

If it were available, I'd buy Chenonceau Castle in the Loire Valley—it's an amazing Renaissance structure.

What made you say, "I'll never do that again!"?

Doing something one more time than I should have; it's a painful way to learn.

Do you collect anything?

As an art dealer, I try to collect collectors.

By: Sally Blanton