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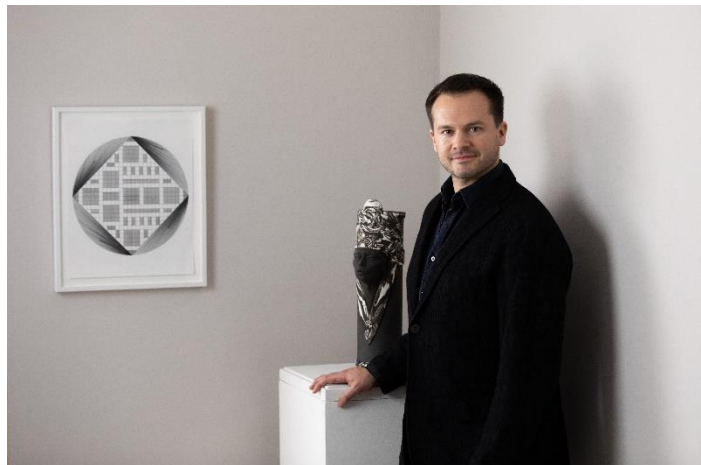
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Five minutes with Daniel Malarkey, curator of the exhibition *Courage Exists In Us* at Dickinson London

How did you originally get interested in art?

During my early teens I would close the door to my room and spend hours upon hours working on pencil drawings, pastels and paintings; it was perhaps a therapeutic way to deal with being queer in a very religious family. I even won the book award for art in my last year in high school – one award was given for each subject to a graduating senior. The moment that really blew me away was seeing [Edvard] Munch's *Love and Pain* at the Met. I had seen the artwork in text books and the experience of interacting with it in person was a completely transcendent one. From that moment I was hooked and over time my career moved into working with living artists.



What is your favourite museum or art gallery (and why)?



My favourite museum is the Barnes Collection in Philadelphia. The collection is so cohesive and beautiful with works by Matisse, Renoir, Cézanne, Mary Cassatt, and some great Soutines, amongst others. At the time these were all living artists. Firstly it is hard to find any artwork I would not love to look at daily, and secondly it is the story of a single owner collection with the layout exactly as he had them at his home, even after they moved the museum. Barnes also worked with an artist who would travel to

Europe to buy art for him; so even he worked with an art advisor. So even the story itself is something that I connect to in terms of my work today.

What do you have in your collection at home?

Do Ho Suh, Celia Paul, Didier William, Tom Schneider, Carroll Dunham, Caroline Walker, Michele Oka Doner, Barnaby Barford....

What piece (including artworks in museums) would you most love to own?

Gladys Nilsson's *Dipped Dick: Adam and Eve After Cranach* (1971)



What artists have you discovered recently whom you're really excited about?

Enorê, she just graduated from Goldsmiths

If you weren't doing the job you do, what career would you have?

Filmmaker

Any advice for someone who is looking to collect but isn't sure where to begin – with so much information out there?

Have an advisor show you the connectivity between Old Masters up to Contemporary Art, so you have a grounding in understanding how images and themes connect through history, and also what was revolutionary at the time. It is important to understand when a Contemporary artist's work is really just derivative from

something in history, and when it is in fact building on top of something else that makes us enjoy both the historic reference and the contemporary reference at the same time. I am amazed at how many people think that buying art is just an instinct. Yes it is an instinct for me now in a lot of ways, but behind that is a knowledge of how the system works. It also means having an eye out for artists who have the power to create strong work outside of the hegemonies of gallery and museum power. Lastly, don't just buy names, buy great pieces. Auction results are often misleading so you need someone to work through them before you make assumptions about the worth of a piece. Many great collectors have 'overpaid' for a piece which is then worth double or triple a few years later. Never be afraid to pay too much for a masterpiece, and don't buy works just because you get a great price. Masterpieces can cost £100 or £100,000,000. Lastly, before buying a work, close your eyes, meditate on five years passing, and then open them again and ask yourself: do I want to look at this picture. More people should do that before marriage too!



Your exhibition *Courage Exists In Us* pairs works by Contemporary artists with pieces from Dickinson's inventory in dialogue. Talk us through the rationale behind one of your juxtapositions, and how you see the pieces relating to one another.

Courage in the human reaches its apex when we are faced with death. Klee's painting [*Mann mit fisch*] dates from 1940, just months before he passed away. The man and the fish intersect with each other thereby creating a symbol. In Tom Schneider's work we also see a connection to cosmic symbols related to water, creatures of the sea, and the feelings of survival and death. In Klee's work, the man 'rides' a fish, and in Schneider's *Krakatoa*, the figure straddles a crocodile to escape a volcanic eruption. We see that time has stopped for a moment in both pictures and the colours and painterly styles are far outside realism.

Schneider tells us that the man survives as he painted the work after hearing the survivor's story from an unnamed source – but how do we know it is true? The painting stops visitors in their tracks and gives them an uneasy, excited feeling. It can be read as triumph over adversary or as the last hurrah of a man destined for doom.

In comparing *Mann mit Fish* to the *Wave of Krakatoa*, I do not see any obvious stylistic connection between the artists, who hail from different periods, but I have curated this exhibition because I would like to see a collector purchase both pieces, and love them for different reasons. I think the pairing gives a sophisticated juxtaposition of thoughts and concepts related to courage.

