

RENTAL

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Don't panic! I'm selling my collection

JULY 9 – AUGUST 15, 2009

@ RENTAL, NEW YORK, NY

RECEPTION: THURSDAY JULY 7-9PM

RENTAL is proud to present *Don't panic! I'm selling my collection*, a group show of works drawn from the private collections of a number of leading art collectors. The exhibition features work by: Nobuyoshi Araki, Hope Atherton, Ingrid Calame, George Condo, Barnaby Furnas, Jack Goldstein, Mr., Ryan McGinness, Marilyn Minter, Takashi Murakami, Elisabeth Peyton, Richard Prince, David Salle, Andy Warhol, Marnie Weber, John Wesley and others.

Great quotes are like great paintings; the best ones are unforgettable. Clement Greenberg once said "All profoundly original art looks ugly at first." Leo Steinberg said "Modern Art...is always born into anxiety." And likely somewhere, someone has acknowledged that good artworks are never neutral. Art should pull you in but make you squirm.

Some might call this contemporary era the Diaspora; Hirst interchangeable for Nebuchadnezzar, MOCA likened to the destruction of the Temple. During the boom, the chic commingled with the new and a habit formed of mistaking hipness for genius. Today however, if someone were to give us another shark in a tank, we might not bite. If you give us a chrome balloon, we may not play. The era of bottomless pockets, of trends and of hoarding are numbered. But in all honesty, the art world needed the excitement of the market, otherwise, that world known for its pizzazz, would have been utterly dull.

Collectors, who once imagined they'd inscribe themselves into art history by spending exorbitantly, now realize what's really important. What art is asking for is an active and critical looker. This exhibition is a collaborative curatorial display of work that collectors, at this extremely crucial moment in the art-world, have chosen to detach themselves from for multiple reasons. It is imperative to realize the multitude of features that present, and acknowledge the context in which the works are being shown. And lets celebrate the power and importance of the attenuated viewers and their patience in simply performing the labor of looking. As the great Henry Geldzahler would say, "Words can point...but they can never be the substitutes for looking at works of art." [1]

Lastly, as we said before, this show is not a landfill, not a graveyard; each piece is present for individual reasons. Whether it be a financial victim burdened to choose which prized work to part with, over-zealous pistons who bought too much too fast or gullible greeners who acted on impulse, viewers will now have to be active, skeptical and aware when looking at each mysterious piece. Don't Panic! is anonymous, in that no collector's name is exposed. We are withholding information from the viewer. But do not panic, focus on why the piece is here: if it makes you "anxious", if it makes you squirm, and if it's truly "ugly," then hell, it might just be great.

[1] Geldzahler, Henry. *Making it New* (A Harvest Book: New York, 1994) 21.

-Claire Distenfeld

For more information please contact RENTAL at 212-608-6002 or info@rental-gallery.com. RENTAL is open from Wednesday through Saturday from 12 – 6PM.

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