Beyond Town & Country

The Mario Ravagnan Gallery

and

The Philippe Staib Gallery

are exhibiting
a selection of artists from

The Bachelier-Cardonsky Gallery

The Paris-New York-Kent Gallery

Kent, Connecticut

In the 1940's, 50's, 60's and even in the beginning of the 70's, New York City became the world center for contemporary art.

Prior to World War II American painters and sculptors thought they had to travel and live in Europe to study and be recognized. With the arrival of European artists such as Leger and Mondrian in New York, they finally realized the vigor, the creativity, even the genius of American contemporary art; and New York, their center, flourished.

Many new galleries opened and gave exhibitions to these relatively or even totally unknown artists. The fascinating part of the process is that the majority of these new adventurous galleries were not established as a way to make money. They were not real businesses per se. They were started by art lovers, people fully engaged by their taste, their passion, and their friendship, to help, discover, and show the best of American contemporary art. To cite a few examples, Sydney Janis; Martha Jackson; Betty Parsons; the Kootz Gallery, the Willard Gallery, to name only a few, became art dealers out of love.

The incredible success of the School of New York coincided with the arrival of the decade of hype and greed, when showing and collecting art became big time business. Many people stopped collecting and started investing; nouveaux nouveau-riches could acquire instant cultural social status by showing off their new acquisitions and at the same time watching the price of their art increase ridiculously. Most true collectors slowed down their buying. It became impossible to discover new interesting and talented artists. Their prices would be too low for the overhead of the New York Galleries. Soho was originally an attempt to find larger exhibition space for galleries without increasing their overhead. Paula Cooper started it, and obviously . . . the overhead is not so low any more!! The East village was the most recent venture where young artists could be exhibited at affordable prices. *Sic transit gloria mundi....*

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By accident though a new movement started. An older New York art collector opened a gallery in Kent, Connecticut in 1984 in a caboose located in the railroad station. Obviously, Kent being two hours from Manhattan in a sleepy Litchfield County town, such a venture did not require a very large monetary investment. Jacques Kaplan, the collector turned art dealer, decided that he would exhibit solely unknown or relatively unknown artists of his liking and at the same time would mount major shows from his own collection and from the friends he had made since he started collecting in the late 1940's. The railroad car was called appropriately the Paris-New York-Kent Gallery.

Some three years later another gallery opened, this time in a magnificent location, the former Masonic lodge which in the 19th century was the town meeting hall. The gallery owners were his wife, Violaine Bachelier, a French psychologist involved like Kaplan in the world of art up to the neck, and her very close friend and partner Darby Cardonsky. Darby's background is nearly encyclopedic, personal assistant to Lee Krasner and for 19 years assistant to Spencer Samuels, the well known old master dealer. Add to that years of working with the Forum Gallery and with the Pollock-Krasner Foundation and there you have a formidable team!

To make the story short: Kent is now called the art center of Connecticut. At last count there were eight galleries. The Bachelier Cardonsky and the Paris-New York-Kent have mounted quite incredible exhibitions such as Pollock and Krasner, Tobey, Max Ernst, Klee, and the three French brothers Duchamp, Villon, and Duchamp-Villon, as well as the two friends Man-Ray and CPLY that included over 15 works of Man Ray never shown before.

But above all, the Kent galleries have been exhibiting new and older artists who were their discoveries or their rediscoveries. Many of these artists were shown for the first time. In many cases, their careers took off from Kent and they gained exhibitions from California to Paris.

In some way the Kent galleries are trying to find the Susan Rothenbergs or the Nevelsons of tomorrow! The exhibitions at the Ravagnan and the Staib Galleries hopefully will show that they have succeeded.

The Paris-New York-Kent and the Bachelier Cardonsky Galleries are grateful to their friends, Mario Ravagnan and Philippe Staib to have invited them to show their favorite artists in new York. Most probably among them will be some of the big successes of the 90's and 2000's.

We have included a selection of articles on the Kent Galleries from the International Herald Tribune to the New York Times, from the Hartford Courant to the local press. Maybe Kent--where the overhead is still extremely reasonable, where the work of the artists sell extremely well (even in this poor economic climate)--is the wave of the future.

Art for collectors and for adventurous collectors, no hype, no fads, no big names! Art that the gallery owners love, and that the gallery collectors love, because it is art, good art and sometimes great art.

PHILIPPE
STAIB
GALLERY

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For immediate release Art Exhibit

The Philippe Staib Gallery

A Selection of Artists from

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Kent, Connecticut

Joy Brown--American raised in Japan--apprenticed to the greatest Japanese and Korean potters. Her people sculptures are unique and unforgettable. She sold out her 1991 show at our Kent Gallery.

John Carey--Every gallery has a special protege. John Carey is ours. In his early 30's, he has shown in many East Village Galleries, in California, and of course with us in Kent. He won the Pollock-Krasner grant and we think he will go very far.

Kirill Doron--Every gallery these days must have its Russian artist. Ours, though, was a professor of art at the University of Moscow, lives in Connecticut and is at once, great and modest--a master of the unusual still life.

Jessica Gandolf--works in small format--impeccable rendition of the true American--kids, baseball players, blacks, whites--paintings that are jewels.

Clemance Gregory--An American surrealist who worked and showed in Paris after World War II. A quiet, knowledgeable, profound artist; his new mouse traps are nearly Boschean.

Irene Hardwicke--We showed her in October and nearly sold out her show. Obsessed by beetles--by love--by life-- so sane and yet incredibly mad. Nothing will stop her--she is a must see.

Louise Nevelson--Just to prove our point, it was possible until the early 1960's to buy a Nevelson at Martha Jackson for nearly nothing! She is an example of the quality of art that our gallery is showing in Kent.

James Rauchman--our New Jersey eternal kid--the Philip Roth of painting--enthusiastic--profound--humorous--bold and so full of talent.

Katherine Spitzhoff--Her egg tempera paintings are small in size, huge in content, aesthetically admirable. We predict an extraordinary career.

Paul Suttman--If the art scene were a battlefield, Paul would be our most decorated artist--a great, great classical sculptor who is represented in museums all over the world.

Joy Taylor--She too could have lived on Utopia Parkway, but Joy is different--unique in her medium--the box--where the old master seems to have said everything, except for what Joy has to say.

Peter Woytuk--had his first show in Kent. Without a doubt, the young sculptor with the greatest potential. With a fascination for animals, his sculptures of sheep, goats, dogs, and birds are poetic and classical forms in bronze or concrete.

For further information please call 212-941-5977.

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