

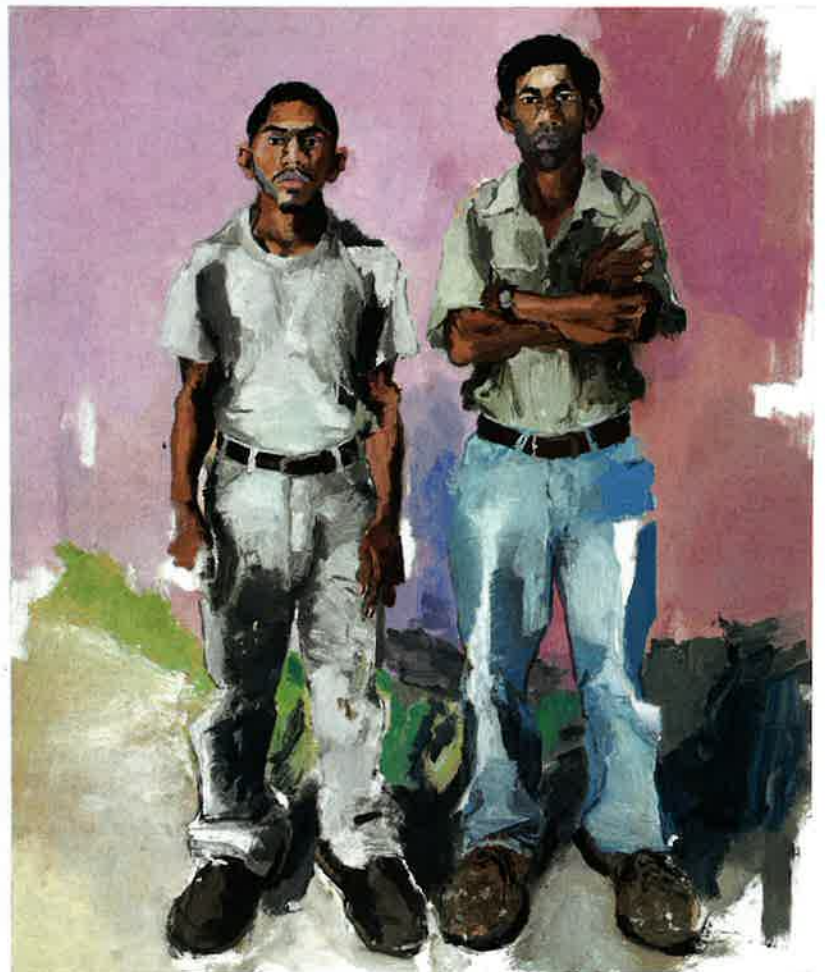
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ANTIQUES



Yesterday and Today:



Art and Design (Part I)

By Joseph Cunningham

Serious collectors of both fine and decorative art have been rare in the past century. I posed this paradox to an audience at a Chipstone Foundation conference well over a decade ago and find myself thinking about it again as the *The Magazine ANTIQUES* turns one hundred. My focus back then was the challenge of hanging major paintings in the context of rigorous and thoroughgoing interiors of architectural or design significance—for example, the notion of hanging a Manet portrait in a Prairie style room by Frank Lloyd Wright. Yet,

tions of art and design where clear vision, consummate discernment, and ultimate quality are achieved within the minds and hearts of single collectors. Ironically, it may be the disinterest in making pleasing interiors that informs one type of collector. He or she has the boldness to collect art and design at the highest level without regard to immediately discernable harmony between the two.

The collection of art and design with which my husband and I live, I believe, offers lessons in ways that art and objects can come together with resonance

An art historian muses on affinities he discerns between works of contemporary art and early modern decorative arts in the collection he shares with his husband

even when masterpieces of art and design are chronologically or stylistically matched, there can often be a fundamental disagreement between great works from the two categories.

I am not thinking of cases like a collector of French or British paintings who decorates with related furnishings, or of collectors who simply match their Andy Warhols and Agnes Martins to the chic modern aesthetics of designers such as Zaha Hadid and Mark Newson, nor of assemblages of period harmony. What I analyze here are differentiated collec-

and provocation. Our home is a superb Mellor and Meigs Norman-Tudor masterpiece with circa 1900 furniture, lighting, metalwork, and ceramics that this publication has called “unparalleled.” We welcome carefully selected works as early as a canvas by Paul Cézanne and as recent as works made in the past five years. The point here is to interrogate the mindset of gathering these works of art and design and the often-unexpected relationships and cross-fertilizations that occur when vision widens to accommodate rigorous collecting of art and design.

Fig. 1. *Tit Heaven #14*, by Lisa Yuskavage (1962–), 1991–1993. Watercolor on paper, 22 by 15 inches. © Lisa Yuskavage, courtesy the artist and David Zwirner. All works are in the collection of Joseph Cunningham and Bruce Barnes.

Fig. 2. Vase with poppy decoration by Harriet E. Wilcox (1869–1943), Rookwood Pottery, Cincinnati, 1902. Impressed “RP [in monogram]” in flames (pottery mark), “3D” (model), and “Z” (matte glaze finish); painted “HEW” (artist’s mark). Unless noted, all ceramic works are made of glazed earthenware and marked on the underside. Height 6 ¾ inches.

Fig. 3. Dependency vase, design no. 70, by Artus Van Briggles (1869–1904), Van Briggles Pottery, Colorado Springs, 1902. Carved with conjoined As (for Anne and Artus Van Briggles), “Van Briggles,” “1902,” and “III” (clay type). Height 14 ¼ inches.

Fig. 4. *Jose and Enrique* by John Sonsini (1950–), 2006. Signed and dated “John Sonsini, October 16, 2006” on the reverse and again on the overlap. Oil on canvas, 72 by 60 inches. Courtesy of the artist and Miles McNery Gallery, New York.