

Calendar of Events

A. G. Rizzoli Show

**Ted Gordon and
Martin Saldana**

Memory Jars

Barry Simons

News & Notes

C O N T E N T S

No. 22

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Bonnie Grossman



Gallery Notes

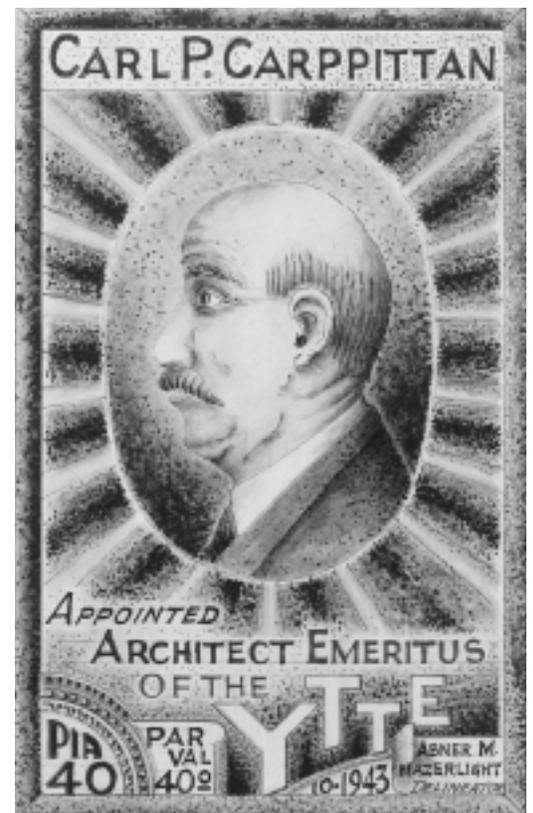
Please note on our calendar the Rizzoli show at the Museo Italo Americano in San Francisco. It is the most extensive show of A.G.'s work yet, and it includes a great many of his personal papers, photographs, and memorabilia. I'll be happy to arrange to conduct group tours.

You'll notice our streamlined calendar. We've finally made the move to cut back our participation in art and antique shows; we'll go from 13 per year to only 3. We do plan to visit friends and shop, but won't put ourselves through the tremendous amount of work involved in having a booth. Sy hopes to continue providing music for some of these show's opening-night festivities even though we are no longer exhibitors.

What will remain on our calendar are the Los Angeles Antiques Show, the San Francisco Fall Antiques Show, and the Outsider Art Fair in January in New York. This makes us all the more eager to see you at the upcoming LA Antiques Show in the Barker Hangar at the end of April.

We haven't made much of the Gallery's 35th anniversary, but we want you to know how deeply we appreciate your faithful patronage over these years.

Bonnie
Bonnie Grossman



A. G. Rizzoli, AGR/P-40, Carl P. Carppittan, 1943.
Ink on Rag Paper, 8 x 5"



Barry Simons, BS986, Untitled, 2005, Mixed Media on Paper, 15 x 21.5"



Mixed Messages: Paintings and Drawings by Barry Simons

In our present show, we have mounted five large paintings, done in thickly applied oil paint, an unusual medium for Barry Simons. Each of the surfaces is deeply textured, with mounds of viscous paint applied and shaped by hand. The canvases are early pieces, but they remain good examples of the themes that repeat in Simons' work.

There is a stream-of-consciousness element in his drawing. It seems informed by the lyrical riffs of a jazz musician, or of a spoken-word improvisational poet, which are other of Simons' callings . . . he often performs extemporaneously at clubs, singing the blues or reciting his poetry.

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Barry Simons, BSL004, Untitled, 1998, 36 x 37"

On Display

Continued from Page 1

Like the blues that he loves, Simons' palette can be dark and moody, with sudden explosions of color. The color is serendipitous, depending on his paint supply at a given moment, but it is always rich and deep. He displays a felicitous genius for accidental events: a coffee spill can be incorporated into a work on paper, a collage can be made with the used paper cup or a cigarette butt. Collages also include pieces of past drawings, ripped and fitted into the work of the moment. Certain images become familiar... a head with a corona, a hanging lamp with



Barry Simons, BS985, Sigmund Freud... , 2005, Mixed Media on Paper, 24 x 18"



Barry Simons, BSL006, Untitled, 1998, Oil on Canvas, 48.5 x 31"

bare bulb, a face with an elephant-like nose... the meaning of these are unknown, adding to the mystery of the pieces.

When the drawings are viewed on their own, it is easy to think that Simons' work is effortless, or quickly done. Actually, much thought goes into each work. The juxtaposition of the drawings and collages with the seldom seen oils lets us look at Simon's work in a new way, showing by the repetition of common images how much thought and feeling goes into even the most casual seeming piece. ■

amesgallery.com

Do You E-mail?

From time to time, it occurs to us to ask how many of you would like to be on an e-mail list for shows, sales, and other pertinent announcements that might occur in between the publication and mailing of our

newsletters. If you'd like periodic e-mail updates, please send your name and address (snail or e) to us at info@amesgallery.com.

We can't promise when these mailings will occur, but we would like to see who is interested. Of course, our list will be given to no one...your confidentiality is assured. ■

Ted Gordon and Martin Saldaña

Two artists have been added to our inventory—one undoubtedly more familiar to you than the other. The penetrating stares of Ted Gordon's portraits are well known in the collector community. Martin Saldaña has had a more limited audience; we have acquired just a few of his paintings.

Saldaña was born in San Luis Potosi, Mexico, in 1874, and moved to Denver, Colorado, in 1912. He started painting at the age of 70 and continued up to the time of his death at 91. His images often draw on the memory of his home in Mexico, most containing whimsical depictions of people, animals, ranch life, cowboys, and landscapes. Each of the pieces we are offering features a woman with blond corkscrew curls. Saldaña had a great love of animals, often painting bullfight scenes that were sympathetic to the bull. His work has been described as having the feel of Mexican tapestries.

Martin Saldaña has not gone unrecognized. His paintings are in the collections of the Museum of International Folk Art, Santa Fe, New Mexico, and The Taylor Museum at Colorado Springs Fine Art Center.

Ted Gordon was employed as a hospital worker for most of his life. While there, he salvaged the cardboard dividers from x-ray film boxes. This found material proved responsive to the deeply pressed fine lines that define Gordon's portraits. With ballpoint pen, Gordon obsessively draws and redraws his lines, then highlights the images with colored markers. Whether large or small, Ted Gordon's drawings of male faces are thought by some to be self-portraits.

Born in Kentucky in 1924, Gordon moved with his family to New York where he attended high school. After graduating from San Francisco State College, he married and, until his retirement in 1987, was employed at hospitals in both Northern and Southern California.

His work has been shown extensively in the United States and Europe and is included in many collections, such as Le Musée de l'Art Brut, the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of American Art, the Museum of American Folk Art, the American Visionary Art Museum, the High Museum of Art, and the Milwaukee Art Museum. In 2000, the Folk Art Society of America honored him with its Award of Distinction for a Folk Artist.



Ted Gordon, TG107, *Bee Keeper*, 1998, Mixed Media on Paper, 17 x 14"



Martin Saldaña, MS02, *Girl and Bees with Hummingbirds*, 29 x 19"

**THE
AMES
GALLERY**



2661 Cedar Street
(at La Loma)
Berkeley, CA 94708

The gallery is open by appointment and chance. Our small staff is present most weekdays from 10:30 am to 3:30 pm, and it is easy to arrange an appointment for an evening or a weekend.

A call ahead is always advised:
510-845-4949.



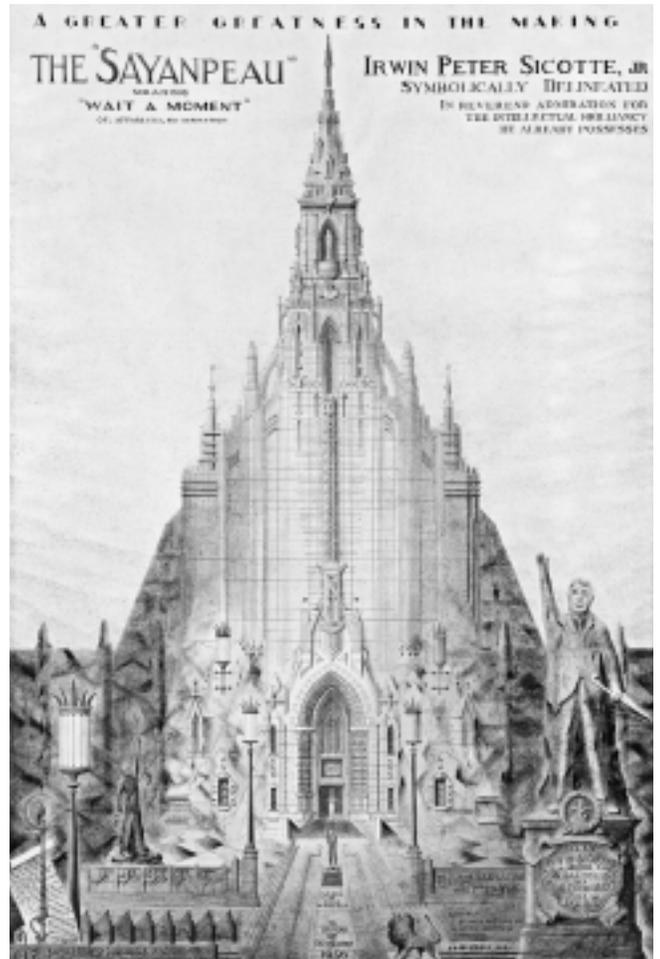
At the Gallery

March 31 — June 11

Mixed Messages: Paintings and Drawings by Barry Simons

The artist's large and dynamic oil paintings are exhibited for the first time, along with a selection of his colorful collages and works on paper.

Ames Gallery
www.amesgallery.com/artists/simons.html



A. G. Rizzoli, AGR/S-05 Irwin Peter Sicotte, Jr. *Symbolically Delineated*, 1936, Ink on Rag Paper, 36 x 24"



Barry Simons, BS288, *Untitled*, 1996, mixed media and collage, 18 x 17"

Out & About

Through May 8

A.G. Rizzoli: Architect of Magnificent Visions

Museo Italo Americano
Fort Mason Center, Building C
San Francisco, CA
Wednesday–Sunday
noon to 4 pm
415-673-2200

www.museoitaloamericano.org

For the first time, the entire body of this classic outsider artist's work is on view in the Bay Area. Presented along with his utopian images are his personal memorabilia, including sketches, books, photographs and letters.

March 10—July 11

Le Chante des Sirenes: l'automatisme dans l'art brut

Collection ABCD
12 rue Voltaire
93100 Montreuil, France

www.abcd-artbrut.org

Bruno Decharme and Barbara Safarova have put together an outstanding, international collection which features the work of very highly regarded Art Brut, outsider, and visionary artists.

We are honored that they have looked to The Ames Gallery for some of their choices. Works by Attilio Crescenti and Dwight Mackintosh are among those featured in their collection.

When you are in Paris, don't miss Collection ABCD.

April 2—May 2

Private Drama: Portraiture from a Collection of Artists

Obsolete
222 Main Street
Venice, CA
310-399-0024

www.obsoleteinc.com

Figurative paintings and objects from the 19th and 20th Century.

April 28—May 1

Los Angeles Antique Show

Barker Hanger at the Santa
Monica Air Center
Santa Monica, CA

www.caskeylees.com

Along with a number of exceptional tramp art pieces, we'll be offering an array of newly acquired articulated figures and memory jars. The Sy Grossman Quartet, featuring Sam Most, will play at the preview gala.



October 11, 2005—January 2006

Was Up Man? Selections from the Joseph M. and Janet D. Shein Collection of Self-Taught Art

Palmer Museum of Art
The Pennsylvania
State University
University Park, PA
814-865-7672

This exhibition will include several pieces by one of the Gallery's most popular artists, Barry Simons.



On exhibit at Obsolete (see April 2—May 2 listing):
30/2404, Cypress Knot Jewelry Box,
c. 1920, Wood, 15.5 x 9.5 x 4"

Other Venues

A.G. Rizzoli: An extensive Bay Area show



In 1998 SFMOMA hosted the traveling exhibition of the work of

A.G. Rizzoli. Architecture curator Aaron Betsky's installation of this San Francisco visionary's drawing focused on Rizzoli's fantasy world, his YTTE, and his "heavenly homes." As rich as that show was, it did not include the entire body of Rizzoli's work. Currently, at the Museo Italo Americano in Fort Mason, we have mounted the most extensive show to date of AGR's work and personal papers. Included in the show are many pieces of memorabilia, as well as photos of the real people for whom the architectural portraits were done. The exhibition is organized chronologically, starting with the earliest influences on this artist's amazing life and going through to the breathtaking color drawings and densely penciled sheets. A.G. Rizzoli and his fantastic imagery have been embraced by viewers and critics; he has been described as "unique" and "magnificent."

We invite you to delve into the background and history of this local artist who has



A. G. Rizzoli, S10, *Alfredo Capobianco and Family Symbolically Sketched*, 24 9/16 x 38 5/10"

become an international phenomenon. (For more information, see the *Calendar* page 5.)

Obsolete

If you are in or around Southern California, we direct you to our favorite shop, Obsolete at 222 Main Street in Venice.

Ray Azoulay has created an extraordinary space that is filled with eye-opening objects. Whether it's life-sized crash dummies, vintage light fixtures, a 12 foot long storage bin, or assemblages of found objects, Azoulay's presentation is consistently creative and exciting. For now, we draw your attention to his current show, "Private Drama: Portraiture from a Collection of Artists." We're pleased that he's chosen to include a number of works from The Ames Gallery. (*Calendar*, page 5.)



A. G. Rizzoli, AGR/P-13, *The Ornament*, 1936, Ink on Rag Paper, 17 7/8 x 8 7/8"

Memory Jars as “Fragments”

We are very pleased that curator and gallery owner Thomas Murray of Asiatica-Ethnographica in Mill Valley chose several of our memory jars for the featured exhibit in the entry court at the recent Tribal and Textiles Show at Fort Mason in San Francisco. The exhibit was elegantly displayed, and created quite a buzz among the gathered crowd.

The “Fragments” theme encompassed a wide variety of objects (quilts, remnants of ancient textiles, figural pieces whose beauty survived their loss of limbs). Memory jars, with their bits and pieces of personal history, fit well within the fragment motif.

Always fascinating, both for their intrinsic beauty and for their historical value, memory vessels retain an air of mystery. Often compared to or confused with the better known shard pots, memory ware features a wide range of objects from buttons to thimbles to tools and toys; the shard piece, or pique-assiette as it is known in France, is composed exclusively of broken china.

In a time when more and more of our everyday objects are mass produced, these very personal pieces hold great intrigue: they might have been intended as memorials or grave markers, or as a way of honoring family or friend, but whatever the purpose, these fascinating pieces link past to present as poignant narratives. Each of these vessels is encrusted with favorite bits that are too interesting to throw away but are too personal to reveal their meaning. What tale can be told by a vessel encrusted with a pipe, a toy deer, miniature china dishes, a glass doll, beads, walnuts, and upholstery tacks? Did it honor the memory of a

dead relative, celebrate the living, or simply make use of attractive found objects?

Could it be that making memory ware was a common handicraft of the day, with no sentiments attached? In past years, memory pieces could be found and bought for little money. As collectors have focused attention on these vessels, the prices have soared. The market now features jugs and jars that are priced in the thousands. We continue to search for interesting and unusual pieces at reasonable prices to bring to your attention. We hope you enjoy their beauty and mystery as much as we do.



Above: 02J/51104, Memory Vase with Pipe, 9.5" tall

Far left: 02J/8203, Memory Jug with Fossilized Stone Stopper, Ceramic Jug with Putty, 11.5 x 6" diameter

Left: 02J/3003, Memory Jug with Square Glass Top, Ceramic Jug with Putty, 11 x 6" diameter

