



A 1996 tintype by Jayne Hines Bidaut.

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Is L.A. Ready for the 19th Century?

LOS ANGELES—When you hear word of a new gallery opening its doors in L.A., there is reason to think *contemporary*. Anderson Galleries is an exception. While the city's market is defined by modern and contemporary art, with a growing interest in 19th- or early 20th-century American, dealer Kevin Z. Anderson is bucking that trend by opening a gallery mostly devoted to 19th-century European painting.

His 3,000-square-foot gallery is located at 354 North Bedford Drive, next to Sotheby's in Beverly Hills's so-called Golden Triangle. It opened on November 6 with "19th-Century and Impressionist Masters," which continues through December 3. The inaugural show includes Impressionist works such as Auguste Renoir's 1886 *Jeune fille blonde* and Alfred Sisley's 1884 painting of the Seine and Loire rivers, *Péniches sur le Loing à Saint-Mammès*.

Another highlight, the 1865–70 painting *Canal at St. Quinton* by Camille Corot reflects Anderson's commitment to the less popular, often darker-hued Barbizon School, which anticipated Impressionism in its open-air painting. Upcoming shows include works by Gregory Frank Harris, who paints in the Impressionist vein, from December 10 through January 15, 1999. After that, a group show will feature 19th-century European salon paintings on the subject of women.

"I generally feel that L.A. is ready for a 19th-century gallery. But there is an educational aspect to being a dealer here. My challenge is to make the 19th-century fashionable," Anderson says. His hope for the 19th-century market depends in part on the changing tastes for architecture. "There is a trend here in favor of architecture that is very traditional, and people are trying to put together residences that reflect the character and art of the late 19th century. I plan to work with people to tailor the art to the home."

Anderson, 38, studied art history at the State University of New York at Purchase before joining the trade. He worked first for six years at the Hammer Galleries in New York, which specializes in 19th- and 20th-century American and European art, as well as contemporary realism. His next five years were at

also an art journalist who writes frequently for *Art & Auction*.) A few months later, Hunt became the gallery's director of photography.

"We're very fortunate to work with Bill," Ricco says. "He has a great eye for photography and knows everyone in the field." Hunt shares Ricco and Maresca's preference for peculiar art: Hunt's over 600-piece photography collection consists exclusively of pictures of people in which the subject's eyes are not visible.

Assisted by Sarah Hasted, formerly of New York's Howard Greenberg Gallery and now Ricco/Maresca's gallery director, Hunt has attracted a stable of fascinating photographers. Along with frenetically surreal works by Slota (\$3,500–4,500) and meticulously fashioned tintypes of nudes and insects by Jayne Hinds Bidaut (\$800–2,500), high-

lights include photos by such true American eccentrics as Von Bruenchenhein (\$1,800–2,800) and Morton Bartlett, who, from 1935 to 1965, constructed, dressed and photographed anatomically correct models of preadolescent girls and boys (\$1,800 for his photos; the models sell for \$35,000). Other works available at the gallery are 19th-century painted photographs, 20th-century circus photographs and vintage photographs of nuclear explosions.

According to Ricco, the gallery's venture into photography is just beginning to show a profit. And, he notes, he and Maresca foresee a time when Hunt and Hasted might form their own separate department in the gallery. "I wouldn't work in another gallery," Hunt says. "Frank and Roger give me the latitude and license to be myself." **STEVEN VINCENT**



Kevin Z. Anderson: "There is an educational aspect to being a dealer here."

Galerie Michael on Rodeo Drive in Beverly Hills, which stretches as far back as the 17th century, with a focus on 19th-century European art and Rembrandt prints. Along with this expertise, Anderson also brings some well-heeled and celebrity backers to his new venture, including his own grandfather, TV personality Art Linkletter.

George Stern, whose eponymous West Hollywood gallery specializes in early California Impressionism, also sees signs of health in the 19th-century market. "In the 1970s, everybody became Impressionist-crazy, which took the focus off traditional European salon style or Old Master painting," Stern says, recalling the work of his father, one of the few successful dealers in pre-20th-century European art in Los Angeles between the '50s and the '70s. "Now I think there is a resurgence of interest in traditional 19th-century art. Kevin's gallery might create a place for people in L.A. who are interested in that kind of art, so they don't have to go to London or New York to buy."

Jerome Adamson of Adamson-Duvannes Galleries is less sanguine. As director of one of L.A.'s most established galleries, which has offered pre-20th-century American and European art since 1938, Adamson knows the city's collectors well. He says, "The market is not growing. It's staying about the same and it's very thin. There are not too many serious collectors."

Kevin Anderson, who furnished his gallery with paneling and traditional English-style furniture, insists, however: "It's a cliché that L.A. collectors are only interested in light, bright pictures," he says. "People are ready for something more serious than that."

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