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IN THIS ISSUE

AMERICAN
art
COLLECTOR



Provoking beauty



1



2

1

Odile Richer, *Les Aiguilles du Temps qui Passe*, oil on canvas, 36 x 24"

2

Jennifer Gennari, *Succession*, oil on linen, 56 x 32"

3

Adrienne Stein, *The Dinner Party*, oil on canvas, 60 x 72"

4

Odile Richer, *Toi ma beauté baroque*, oil on canvas, 38 x 18"

In RJD Gallery's new group exhibition, *The Princess and The Provocateur*, female figures maintain positions of great power amid audiences that include ominously masked guests, a stack of porcelain teacups, and a bed of gleaming forks and spoons. The feminine forms are graceful, but also strong and dominating. Their eyes—at once seductive and alluring, and also emotionally vulnerable—often meet the viewer in an assertive acknowledgment, "I am here."

In *The Princess and The Provocateur* it's not only the subject matter that makes the proclamation, but the artists as well, including **Adrienne Stein, Jennifer Gennari, Odile Richer, and Alexander**

Klingspor, as well as other painters. The exhibition opens July 23 at the gallery in Sag Harbor, New York.

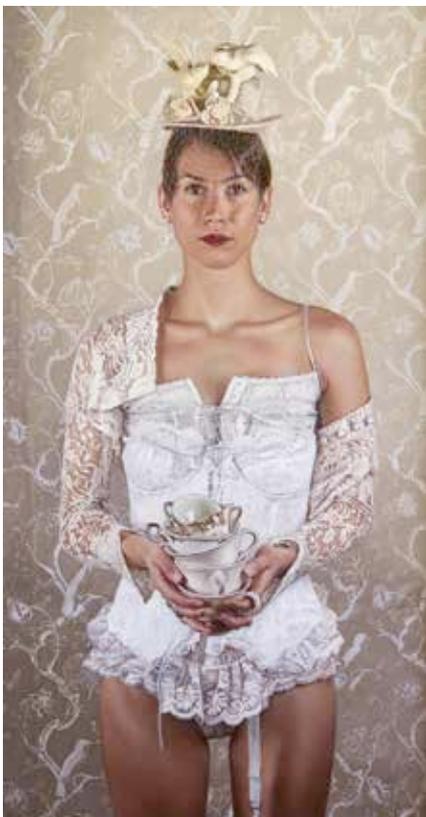
Included in the group show will be Stein's *The Dinner Party*, which depicts an arrangement of figures in masks as a young girl stares out of the paint with a determined look. "*The Dinner Party* is the largest and most complex painting I have ever undertaken in my studio. The composition was heavily inspired by [Diego] Velázquez's sensational masterpiece *Las Meninas* in which the most prominent figure is the young princess, the Infanta Margarita of Spain, who stares directly out at the viewer. She seems frozen in time. The flurry of courtiers and adults bustle around her.

I wanted to center my painting on a child as the voice of reason in a chaotic world," Stein says of the piece. "I have worked obsessively on *The Dinner Party* for most of the last four months and it has undergone many evolutions since the day I laid the first brushstroke. There are numerous paintings underneath the final image. I felt like a theater director, painting figures into and out of the composition, aggressively editing to conform to my inner vision. The painting became a stage for dynamic transformation as characters entered and exited the painting, performing their roles. The only figure who has remained constant is the little girl, which is fitting for the theme."

In Richer's *Les Aiguilles du Temps qui*



3



4

Passe, the artist paints a figure “plunged into an opulent field of silverware and satin.” Her dress, unbuttoned in the back, reveals a small arch of exposed skin, a warm reprieve within the cold metal. “I hadn’t seen my friend for a couple years, so I wanted to represent the passage of time, the meals we hadn’t shared, by way of the accumulation of utensils,” she says. “*Les Aiguilles du Temps qui Passe* (*The Hands of Time that Passes*) is the metallic clicking and pricking of the clock hands and of time itself as it passes the same way the utensils point, jab and collect like hours, days and months. I wanted there to be confusion and disorder in the picture because time makes you dizzy as it passes, it dazes you, and you cannot control it or hold it back. The dress, partially unbuttoned, bears witness to the intimacy inherent in friendship, its satin blanketing the chaos and metallic clinking of the surrounding utensils.”

The exhibition will include Gennari’s *Succession*, which depicts Morgan le Fay,

half sister of King Arthur, and her son Ywain. “At one point in the legend, Ywain battles Arthur and they both mortally wound one another. *Succession* is a portrait of Morgan le Fay and Ywain that illustrates Morgan’s immense power—both as a sorceress and manipulator—and her desire to kill her brother Arthur, so that she may assume the throne with the aid of her son. Originally, I intended to focus solely on Morgan, and paint her as one of the greatest sorceresses in literary history. But as the piece evolved, I felt introducing the narrative of her son would prove more compelling,” Genarri says. “My work is based almost entirely on old stories, legends, mythologies and other subject matter that is, in many respects, timeless. I can only hope that my interpretations can breathe new life into these occasionally forgotten characters, and ultimately perpetuate their stories.”

The Princess and The Provocateur is on view through August 15. ●