

Meet the Young Collectors Calling the Shots at the Guggenheim, a Highly Placed Art Worlder's Anti-Woke Tweets, and More Art World Gossip

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May 25, 2023

Wet Paint

Plus, what artwork did Spike Lee buy this week? Which legacy art publication is rumored to be restructuring?

Annie Armstrong, May 25, 2023





The scene at the Guggenheim's Young Collector's Coalition party. Courtesy of BFA.

Every week, Artnet News brings you Wet Paint, a gossip column of original scoops. If you have a tip, email Annie Armstrong at aarmstrong@artnet.com.

MEET THE GUGGENHEIM'S YOUNG COLLECTORS COALITION

Am I correct for sensing that people seem a little bit... bummed out after last week? The fireworks of the May auction and fair season wasn't quite up to snuff this time around, and, from what I hear, a lot of folks in the art world are buckling up for a financially tricky time. I don't like to see my beloved wheelers-and-dealers down in the dumps, so to give us a little hope for the future, I'd like to turn your attention to some of the young collectors I met last night at **The Guggenheim's** dinner for their **Young Collector's Coalition** (YCC). All aged 30 and under, these guys are investing in the future of art, which according to them is pretty bright—no matter how tough times might seem now.

ADVERTISING

"I started collecting at a very young age just with my iPhone," **Neil Hamamoto**, a 30-year-old collector and founder of the residency program **Worthless Studios**, told me. Hamamoto started collecting when he bought a **Robert Moreland** piece at the **Hole** in 2013, when it clicked that, by acquiring daring art, he could support artists who work with ambitious and often expensive materials.

"When I look at my relationship to collecting, a lot of it is about how you can support artists at a young age, just at the start of a long career," he said. "I'm trying to collect and support artists that are working in mediums that are a little bit more materially expensive or labor expensive." His most recent acquisitions fit that bill exactly, as he purchased one of **Kennedy Yanko's** dramatic bent-metal sculptures and a piece by **Elaine Cameron-Weir**, whose mixed-media sculptures were a standout at last year's **Venice Biennale**.

What's impressive about a lot of younger collectors is the creative ways that they fund their practice. Twenty-eight-year-old PR-maven **Hannah Gottlieb-Graham** burst onto the collecting scene by trading public relations services for artworks, and now her collection boasts pieces by **Glenn Ligon**, **Jason Moran**, and such recent acquisitions as a **Tyler Mitchell** photograph from his **Gagosian** show in London last fall, a work on paper by **Theaster Gates**, a painting by **Kaveri Raina**, two sculptures by **Kay Hofmann**, and two works on paper by **Bethany Collins**.

"Being part of the YCC group has been a really exciting way to engage with other young folks building their careers and collections," she told me. "But, more importantly, I've valued getting involved in the acquisitions that the museum makes. We have a rare

opportunity to help guide decisions around the purchases, and I've been able to support the careers of many artist friends who are now entering the museum." Some of those recent acquisitions aided by the YCC include works by **Sheree Hovsepian**, **Baseera Khan**, **Steffani Jemison**, **Anthony Akinbola**, and **Sable Elyse Smith**, among many others.

Wednesday night, at the dinner for the coalition, the museum's director **Richard Armstrong** ("Hello, I'm the director. I still am!" he joked when he stood up) noted how important it is to both foster young collectors and look to them for guidance. "We are so indebted to their courage and generosity, and their taste for innovation," he said. "That is so important for the direction of the museum."

Among the *impressively* young collectors present that evening was 24-year-old **Alli Yoon**, who grew up between **Hong Kong**, **Seoul**, and **Los Angeles**, where her collecting parents brought her to museums as often as to a playground.

"I'm still shaping my collecting identity, and the group has been really helpful with that," she told me. "I want to focus on emerging art, and I've been doing that by going to some of the MFA shows." More specifically, she said she's focusing on collecting work by young Asian artists, and that an early work by **Anna Park** or a piece by **Ha Chong Hun** are dream gets.

Get those .pdfs ready, gallerists. These guys are all ears.

ART FAIR DIRECTORS SAY THE DARNDDEST THINGS



Managing Director of the TEFAF international art fair, Bart Drenth. (Photo by Marcel van Hoorn / ANP / AFP) / Netherlands OUT (Photo by MARCEL VAN HOORN/ANP/AFP via Getty Images)

I'm no fool—there are plenty of people who are high up in the art world whose personal views don't necessarily dovetail with the lefty/liberal positions art people often take pains to broadcast. Typically, though, those opinions come out behind closed doors and in hushed tones. However, we hear that at least one highly placed art-worlder is raising eyebrows with some very outspoken anti-woke hot takes. His name **Bart Drenth**, he was named global managing director of **TEFAF** just this December, and he posts his views straight to his personal **Twitter** account.

For instance:

“Just as with the Iranian revolution in 1978, left-wing do-gooders stand hand in hand with jihadists. Not knowing that after the success of the revolution they will die first,” he wrote on August 14th of last year (I translated these Tweets from Dutch, as Drenth is **Amsterdam**-based).

On his page, [@bardrenth](#) (which he made private after I reached out to him for comment), he has litanies of tweets that take issue with the teachings of the Quran, conflate “woke” culture with fascism. (I would have never had any reason to assume someone employed by buttoned-up TEFAF is an avid **Red Scare** listener, but now I do.)

Other choice tweets include: “Speculating about the transition of the population is only a problem when you are not a Muslim,” “Woke is the new Westboro: Hyper-Calvinistic hagglers,” “Really, your L+ rights are best protected if you are waving around Palestinian flags on the pride parade,” “Where are you really from?’ is of course racist. And ‘We want apologies from a white person’ of course is not,” and, just this month, “Normaliseer kritiek op de koran en de profheet,” which translates to “Normalize criticism of the Quran and the Prophet.”

What does this all amount to? The statements are certainly provocative, more so than you typically expect from an art-world exec. I wrote to Drenth to see if he could clarify for me that maybe Google Translate was glitching, or maybe he was hacked? “My Twitter feed expresses my personal opinions and I separate this from my work at TEFAF,” he replied when I asked if he'd like to give any context to these sentiments. “So I will not comment on that.”

I mean, hey, I believe in the right to voice your own opinion as much as the next guy. I just also believe in my own right to note those opinions in my widely-circulated gossip column.

WE HEAR

The Pense Media Effect <https://t.co/26cSJhxgbE>

— Kyle Chayka (@chaykak) [May 23, 2023](#)

Rachel Wetzler has left *Art in America* amid “restructuring” (perhaps an extension of this strange survey?)... **Hollis Taggart** have added South Korean multimedia artist **Hayoon Jay Lee** and painter **Osamu Kobayashi** to their roster... The **Hirshhorn Museum** has acquired a work by **Monsieur Zohore**... **The Keith Haring Foundation** is out with their latest and greatest licensing venture: Keith Haring ice cream!... **Lisson** director **Alex Logsdail**’s Twitter account is reportedly [worth \\$769.25](#)... **Michelle Hellman**’s [Artist Plate Project](#) was so popular at **Frieze** that one advisor angrily screamed “Do you know who I am? I am an art advisor!” when she couldn’t secure a **KAWS** plate (let’s recall these were sold to benefit the homeless)...

SPOTTED

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◀ Messages



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eileen ✨



Sophia Cohen appears to have hosted a peculiarly themed party that I'm guessing had something to do with **Salvador Dalí**, as **Eileen Kelly** and **Anna Weyant** both showed up to cut a melting clock-shaped cake in costume *** **Patrick McMullan** was back at it to photograph the **Gordon Parks Foundation's** annual gala at **Cipriani 42nd Street**, where **Angela Davis** and **Renee Cox** sat to enjoy their trademark pasta dish alongside **Joey Badass**, who lost out on a bidding war over a photo, while **Spike Lee** was more successful, making off with two pieces by the late, great photographer *** On the topic of charity auctions, **Pace** hosted a benefit for the **Nina Simone Childhood Home** by auctioning works by **Rashid Johnson**, **Anicka Yi**, and **Cecily Brown**, and before the sale went live **Marc Glimcher** joked to **Sotheby's** CEO **Charles F. Stewart**, "Sorry Charles, I know you had a rough week. It's because all the good work is here!" *** Gala season traveled upstate this weekend, with **Dia: Beacon** hosting **Joan Jonas**, **Lauren Santo Domingo**, **Glenn Ligon**, and **Roe Ethridge** at its party while **Ugo Rondinone** and **Adam Weinberg** braved the rain to visit **Storm King's** celebration ***

★ ? ★ CASTING CALL! ★ ? ?

Well, this new section sure has been a runaway success. So much so that I'm starting to run a little low on my inventory of Wet Paint hats—gasp! I'm putting a temporary hold on the casting call, while I devise an even more insidious game for you all to play to win a hat. See you next week.

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