

# BERTA WALKER GALLERY

*Presenting the History of American Art as seen through the eyes of Provincetown*

**July 11 - July 27, 2014**

Opening Friday, July 11, 7 - 9 pm

**Rob DuToit:** *paintings and pastels*  
and

**Studio Environments:** *mixed media installations*

Varujan Boghosian • Robert Henry • Penelope Jencks • Danielle Mailer • Erna Partoll •  
Selina Trieff

## Studio Environments

Varujan Boghosian • Robert Henry • Penelope Jencks • Danielle Mailer • Erna Partoll • Selina Trieff



## VARUJAN BOGHOSIAN

My Studio

**"Heaven, a combination of heaven and haven. It is my destination every day. It's what I look forward to and it's never boring."**

"Mr. Boghosian is a kind of cult figure...a highly regarded artist ardently treasured by those who have discovered his uncanny, provocative work." Wall Street Journal, May, 2014

Varujan Boghosian can take his art in more directions than a compass and one never knows where he is headed at any given moment. He does sculpture, assemblage and works on paper. His studio is filled with found objects, old toys, papers, musical instruments, cut out letters and ephemera. He has wry humor in his work and in his conversation and one feels he is a bit of a charming trickster in his day to day interactions.

When asked about the upcoming studio show Boghosian says the inspiration will come from the studio itself and that like the other artists involved, it will probably be what's on the wall. Then he talks about Bonnard's studio. Bonnard kept a Picasso print, bits of tinfoil and pieces of string among other things. And most artists keep a quote on the wall to think about, some words that give validity to the artist's work. Just as you suppose this is all a hint about what Boghosian will be exhibiting he quickly adds, "That's not what I'm putting in this show."



Day's Catch, 2012, 17 1/4 X 21 1/4 (framed)

He does have some 3D pieces he expects to include and has been working recently on new collage but stops short of a definitive statement. Like a magician he never tells you how the trick is done. When the time comes he just pulls another delightful rabbit out of the hat or saws that beautiful woman in half while leaving you amazed and her whole.

In writing in the Wall Street Journal about Boghosian's show at the Toledo Museum, Karen Wilkin's stated: "At the heart of Mr. Boghosian's artful combinations is Surrealism's belief that things gain in meaning when they are taken out of context and placed in unexpected relationships-as they often are in dreams... Mr. Boghosian's meticulously crafted, evocative images are wholly his own. He seamlessly joins things of different scales and different eras so that the parts are completely subsumed by the new whole, which seems independent of precedent. Unexpected ambiguous meanings entirely replace the original identities of the various elements, yet the visible evidence of their previous lives-rubs, tears, the aura of age-enriches Mr. Boghosian's works. The physical, material character of each of his diverse components contributes significantly to mood and meaning. Discarded and forgotten things are given new life.



Room with a View, 2012, collage, 20 3/4 x 16 3/4" framed



Heartfelt, 2005, mixed media, 10 x 8"



## ROBERT HENRY

My Studio

***"It is the place here I create, The work place, the place to struggle, the joy space. It is where I am happiest. If I don't get into the studio on a particular day, the day is not complete. I need to be in the studio to feel alive that day."***

Talking with Robert Henry about his art is like recalling the saying by the Greek philosopher Heraclitus - no man ever steps in the same river twice, for it's not the same river and he is not the

same man. And while there are recognizable elements in Henry's work he is always moving toward a new expression of a universal experience. It may be joy or sorrow, anger or resignation but it resonates with truth.

Art historian Eileen Kennedy called him an artist statesman and said that meeting him was like "meeting the gentlest of prizefighters" and that is an apt description. He is tall and lanky and moves around his studio with a fighter's grace as he steps in to engage with a drawing or painting.

"People don't understand paintings, they happen over time. The trick is to make it appear to come together at a particular time," he says.

"Every painting is different, every painting is new. There is no certainty. You do it and review it and ask if it was like you thought it would be. It never is."

Henry is also a jazz guitarist and likens jazz and painting in some ways. Both begin with a solid base of knowledge and technique and then embrace a willingness to leave the known behind.



"Paintings are all improvisations based on the theme," he says. The painting, like a piece of music starts in one place and no one knows how far it can go or will go. "I do know that it is going to change. I want it to change."



When he is asked what he was thinking of when he painted a particular canvas he can only reply that painting and thinking don't go together.



His process involves working in stages. Every day this past winter Henry did black and white drawings based on or inspired by El Greco's "The Burial of Count Orgaz." That painting is divided into the earthly and heavenly planes with the dead count on the bottom half attended by family and priests and behind him a row of gentlemen in dark coats and white frilled collars

whose presence forms a wall between life and death. Above the heads of the men is a heavenly scene filled with angels and saints and icons of deliverance.

Henry pulled sections of the painting out and repopulated them with contemporary figures and they began to assume a life of their own. He then over worked some of the drawings with gouache, turning them into paintings. From there he has created a series of oils that could be considered inspired by the El Greco though they bear no resemblance to the original painting. They have become more abstract and flowing, and the myriad emotions that are hinted at in small ways becomes fully realized.

As a series it is as powerful as any Henry has done and though there is no central theme that is obvious, they are cohesive and striking.



## PENELOPE JENCKS

My Studio

*(The meaning of the studio to me) is either a very complicated question or a very simple one. I have a studio in Wellfleet and one in Newton. I had one in Italy when I was there. It's where I work and I feel strongly about work."*

Penelope Jencks splits her time spent making art between commissioned, large-scale sculpture and "studio" sculpture. She is known for her large figurative pieces and has several well-known monumental sculptures among her commissioned works. She did a bronze sculpture of

Eleanor Roosevelt for New York's Riverside Park, the original plaster of which is now in the collection of the Cape Museum of Art, Dennis, MA., and one in granite of Robert Frost for Amherst College. Currently her commissions include a series of busts for Tanglewood including Aaron Copland, Serge Koussevitsky and Leonard Bernstein.



The upcoming show will include the drawings she uses to fine tune the sculptures in progress, as well as smaller work in the plaster stage and then completed bronzes and terra cottas. As she works she often takes photos of the piece and then uses oil stick or pencils to draw over the photo to determine what changes she wants to make. She has a series

of plaster reliefs in the studio that she is working on, some painted some remaining in white, but says she doesn't know how soon they will be at the stage to be shown. "I don't like to put them out for public viewing until I'm sure what I'm doing. When I'm still hesitant, when I'm not sure, I don't want other people's thoughts and comments in my head."

She works on the models in her studio that are later cast in bronze or carved in stone. When works are to be completed in carved granite, like the Robert Frost piece, she sends the initial work done in the studio to Italy to be carved. She prefers to send a full size prototype but hasn't always been able to do that. In the case of the Frost sculpture her completed model was six feet tall but the finished carving was to be eight feet tall. Scaling up or down always has complications and she likes to work full size to avoid those when possible.



She moves back and forth between her two studios and says she carries all her important tools with her. Basics, things she can pick up at the hardware store, she leaves in each place but some of her sculpturing tools are hard to get, others impossible to replace. These days, she splits her time between commissioned and personal work. At this point it's about 50/50. She says the two kinds of work have grown closer to each other in execution over the years. "I think the commissions have been very helpful in pushing my own work in a direction it might not have gone. And the commissioned work is informed by my own work that I've done. I don't feel (at this point) that they are so different. Since the '80s I haven't done anything I didn't want to do."

## ERNA PARTOLL

My Studio

***"My studio is a place of my own where I can work. I use this space only for my painting and drawing but sometimes I like to sit and think or read about art. I am lucky to have a large space I can use exclusively to do what I most love to do: draw and paint and have my own thoughts. I have a modest house. It's a luxury to have this space all to myself."***

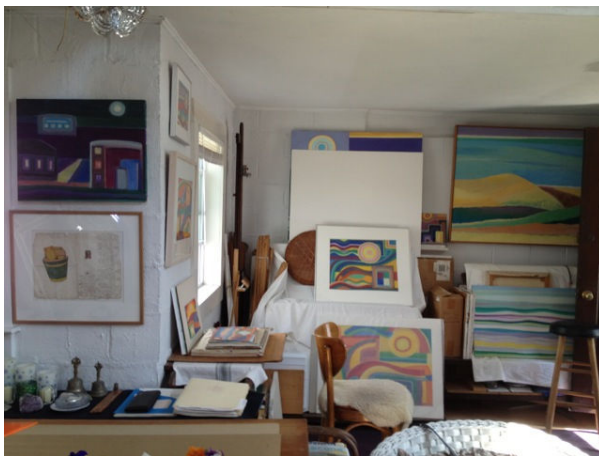
Partoll's studio takes up more than half of her downstairs. It is the entry to her house and is where the living room would be. The studio is her living room.



The walls are filled with her trademark colorful abstract drawings and paintings mixed in with dynamic black and white drawings. Her work is rhythmic, emotional and layered with nuance. Sometimes there is a surprising touch of humor, too. But underlying all of that is a brave sense of humanity facing each day anew.

Her colors range through the deep jewel tones. Her imagery uses bold lines, sometimes parallel, sometimes coming at angles, a series of flowing waves and almost always a rectangular shape she calls "the portal" which can be thought of as a door leading to some unseen plane. And there is at the emotional core a circle with concentric rings

spreading away or perhaps moving inward toward the circle.



She prefers not to speak too explicitly about the relationship or meanings of her shapes and lines and wants them to speak for themselves but acknowledges that the circles are the usual starting point. "We are all circles in the landscape," she says, perhaps a reference to the way our feelings and perceptions shift the reality of what surrounds us. She calls her works landscapes but they are the land of emotional call and response and it's true that it is easy to feel peace from one drawing and angst from another based on the relationship of those lines and spaces. "The shapes do have meaning but also there is just the dynamic of how the shapes relate to one another. When you put one line next to another they start to sing," she says. In her

decades of refining her oeuvre she has become a maestro in leading the singing lines.

And whether a finished piece utilizes that deep color resonance or the drama of black and white, each begins in a similar way. "It starts with a feeling flowing out," she says. "You don't need words or a thought. The relationship of the lines and shapes just takes you to that place."



## SELINA TRIEFF



My Studio

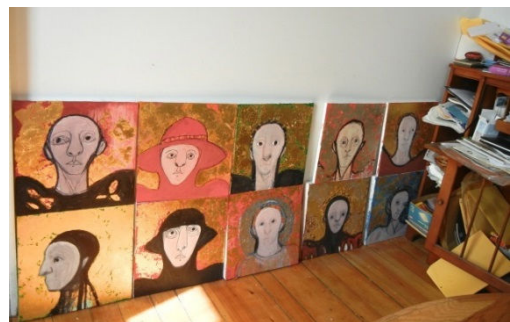
***"It's my sanctuary, my home, I am here most of the day. I draw four or five or six hours a day and paint but I don't get as much time to paint as I used to."***

Selina Trieff has painted daily for most of her eighty years. Called "an American original" by New York Times art critic John Russell, Trieff's somewhat autobiographical classical gold-leaf and oil portraits of human figures read like characters on a modern stage.

Trieff's portraits are allegories for our time, or any other. Art historian and art critic Eileen Kennedy wrote insightfully: "If Shakespeare had had a sister, she would probably have been Selina Trieff." One never tires of Trieff's figures. Over the years, they have been portrayed alone or in groups and each one always has an instant relationship to the person looking at the canvas. It can be an intense connection that some people are uncomfortable with while others find the figure's gaze riveting or even comforting.

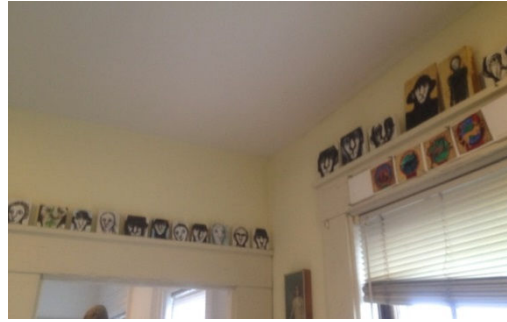
Over the centuries, great painters have succeeded through portraiture in reflecting more than a particular face, but rather the face of the human condition. Selina Trieff's paintings of faces belie a profound understanding of what remains true for humans over time in a manner that can be both whimsical and mysterious.

In recent years, she has had serious health issues so her studio has been moved from the ground floor to the second floor adjacent to the living areas. There are narrow shelves around the top of the room over doors and windows and on them are dozens of the enigmatic heads for which Trieff is known. Larger, 16" x 16" heads w/ gold leaf are stacked along the walls; the room is filled with canvases, pads, and paints. And she has books and books filled with drawings.



Trieff uses a wheelchair and a walker but her reduced mobility does not reflect in a reduction in studio time, it just means the studio has been retooled to allow her to work comfortably.

Her work has shifted slightly in the past few years. There are fewer full bodies and more heads on their own. The heads continue to be held erect and still, facing the viewer, not unlike a deer suddenly startled in a meadow that picks its head up to regard the person across the clearing. But their visage has changed. They are not always looking directly toward the viewer, some are looking to the side or slightly up as if some



interior thought has momentarily captured their attention.



The change may be in response to the physical pain that is a daily part of Trieff's life. "I have always been involved with pain in my work," she says. "I do capture a sense of the pain I feel." She remains focused on the heads as a path to the next step in her artistic evolution. "I'll keep working with the heads," she says. "I am looking for the next step and will keep doing it until it comes."

"I feel it's still in there, that spark," she says. "At least I hope it is." "Indeed," says Walker, "Trieff's exquisite drawing ability continues to shine through. She is right, "it" is very much still there and regardless of how painful it is, she proves it in her art every day!"

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### Gallery Hours

July to September 15: Daily 11 to 6

Receptions: 7 to 9, day of opening

Other seasons, please call. And always by chance and by appointment

AMPLE PARKING

SKY POWER, Director

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## Upcoming Exhibitions

### August 1 - August 17

\*Paul Resika: Colors & Forms of Provincetown

\*Sky Power & Murray Zimiles: Mysteries in Color

### August 22 - September 14

Provincetown Masters: Byron Browne, Oliver Chaffee, Edwin Dickinson, Marsden Hartley, Hans Hofmann, Charles Heinz, Karl Knaths, Herman Maril, Ross Moffett, Blanche Lazzell, Vollian Rann, Abe Walkowitz, Agnes Weinrich

*Benefit Exhibition in support of PAAM's 100th Anniversary*

**September 19 -October 12**

Photography and Photographic Installations:

Jay Critchley, David Kaplan, Susumu Kishihara, Dana McCannel, Blair Resika, Jane Rosett,  
John Thomas

Download 2014 exhibition schedule [HERE](#)

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*"The Berta Walker Gallery has been highlighting the rich cultural heritage of Provincetown's 100-year old art colony for 25 years, and is known for showing a wide variety of important Provincetown-affiliated art and artists."*

Andre Van der Wende, Cape Cod Times

Representing Varujan Boghosian, Romolo Del Deo, Salvatore Del Deo, Robert DuToit, Ed Giobbi, \*Dimitri Hadzi, Elspeth Halvorsen, Robert Henry, Brenda Horowitz, Penelope Jencks, David Kaplan, Judyth Katz, John Kearney, Anne MacAdam, Danielle Mailer, \*Herman Maril, Erna Partoll, Sky Power, Paul Resika, Selina Trieff, Peter Watts, \*Nancy Whorf, Murray Zimiles \*Estates

Photography: Susumu Kishihara, Dana McCannel, Blair Resika, John Thomas

**Provincetown Masters:** Byron Browne, Oliver Chaffee, Marsden Hartley, Charles W. Hawthorne, Hans Hofmann, Edward Hopper, Karl Knaths, Blanche Lazzell, Ross Moffett, Agnes Weinrich.

Provincetown Folk Art and Ancient African Carvings and Bronzes



**Berta Walker**  
GALLERY

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