

ALEXANDRE

reviews: new york



Raymond Duchamp-Villon, *Torso of a Young Man*, 1910/68, bronze, 21½" high. Francis M. Naumann Fine Art.

Man (1910–1968), according to dealer Francis Naumann, was modeled on Marcel Duchamp. Raymond Duchamp-Villon died in World War I.

Marcel (1887–1968) was represented here through a diverse array of work, from drawings to ready-mades, including a torn-paper self-portrait in profile (1953). His output is summed up in his famous *Boîte-en-Valise* (1961), with its tiny reproductions of his work.

Suzanne (1889–1963) married painter Jean Crotti, and with him she made work that took Dada further into a movement called Tabu Dada. Her paintings here ranged stylistically from a Betty Boop-like self-portrait to a caricature of Marcel as a fox to lyrical watercolor landscapes and an intense abstract painting.

This exhibition, inspired by ones Marcel organized at the Rose Fried Gallery in New York, underscored the artistic interaction among the siblings, showing the many portraits they made of one another.

—Charles Ruas

printmaker whose engravings of Rouen filled their home. The eldest son, Gaston (1875–1963), abandoned law studies to take up art, renaming himself Jacques Villon after the medieval poet. The exhibition revealed his development from an illustrator, with a preparatory drawing for a print of a mulatto model, *Renée de Trois Quart* (1911), to a Cubist painter, with *Monsieur D. Lisant* (1913). Artists of the Cubist and Futurist generations hung out in his studio, and those currents are evident in Villon's oil painting *Le jardin de l'Évêché à Castre* (1954), a cubist rendering in gold, blue, and green of a formal garden seen from above.

The second brother, Raymond (1876–1918), who first studied medicine, assumed the name Raymond Duchamp-Villon. His sculptures are highly individualistic. *Portrait of Yvonne* (1909) is a classic bust, whereas *Les Amants* (1913) is a powerful wall relief, first sculpted in plaster and in 1966 cast in bronze. Another formidable bronze, *Torso of a Young*

Brett Bigbee and Neil Welliver

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Here were two very different exhibitions, Brett Bigbee's focusing on portraiture and interiors and Neil Welliver's immersed in nature and landscapes.



Neil Welliver, *Islands Allagash*, 1990, woodcut on Kizuki Nishinouchi, 31" x 32". Alexandre.

Bigbee paints with gentleness and an infinite attention to detail. In the two portraits here, *Joe (Self-Portrait)*, 1994–99, of the artist holding his infant son, and *Ann with Plant* (1990–91), of his wife depicted nude on a chair with a white cloth, the subjects gaze directly out from the canvas, their vulnerability palpable. Sitting on the edge of a table, shirtless, the artist holds his baby in one arm while his other arm rests on the table with an open hand. This reveals a great deal about the artist as a young father: his pride and perhaps concern. A window behind him with a view to the sea is reminiscent of 15th-century Italian portraits. A similarly quiet mood pervades his wife's portrait. Her pale skin is enhanced by the colors of the sofa. Bigbee's perspective allows his subjects to stand outside of time and remain fixed in memory.

In the front room, nature came alive in Neil Welliver's powerful works on paper and watercolors of the Maine landscape. Known for his enormous paintings of northern New England woods, the artist, who died in 2005, revealed himself equally accomplished in other mediums. *Islands Allagash* (1990), a woodcut on Kizuki Nishinouchi, is a marvelous depiction in shades of blue of lonely islands under a full moon and a sky filled with stars. The islands float in a white sea with pine trees sprouting from their rocky banks. With an almost childlike simplicity, the artist draws the waves as a series of continuous curves, broken only by the path of the moon on the water and the squiggly reflections of the pines.

Although all of Welliver's works here conveyed nature's rough beauty, the one that was most compelling was his modest graphite-on-paper sketch *Untitled (Night Sky)*, 1981. In this work, puffy clouds hang over rolling hills, and there is little foliage except for some pines. With few lines, he celebrates the rhythm of the clouds dancing above the quiet land.

—Valerie Gladstone

Robert Arneson

Allan Stone

Aptly titled "Playing Dirty," this bawdy exhibition of the late Robert Arneson's small early works provided ample evidence of the

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291 Grand Street, New York, New York 10002

25 East 73rd Street, 2nd Floor, New York, New York 10021 212.755.2828 alexandregallery.com

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