

## INSIDE ART

Carol Vogel

Surrealist Art  
In Paris Sale

It is highly unusual, perhaps even unprecedented, for a group of Modern paintings and drawings from a New York collection to be sent to Paris for sale. It generally works the other way around: each season, auction giants like Sotheby's and Christie's fill their sales of Impressionist and Modern art with works from France, betting that they will appeal to the American nouveau riche.

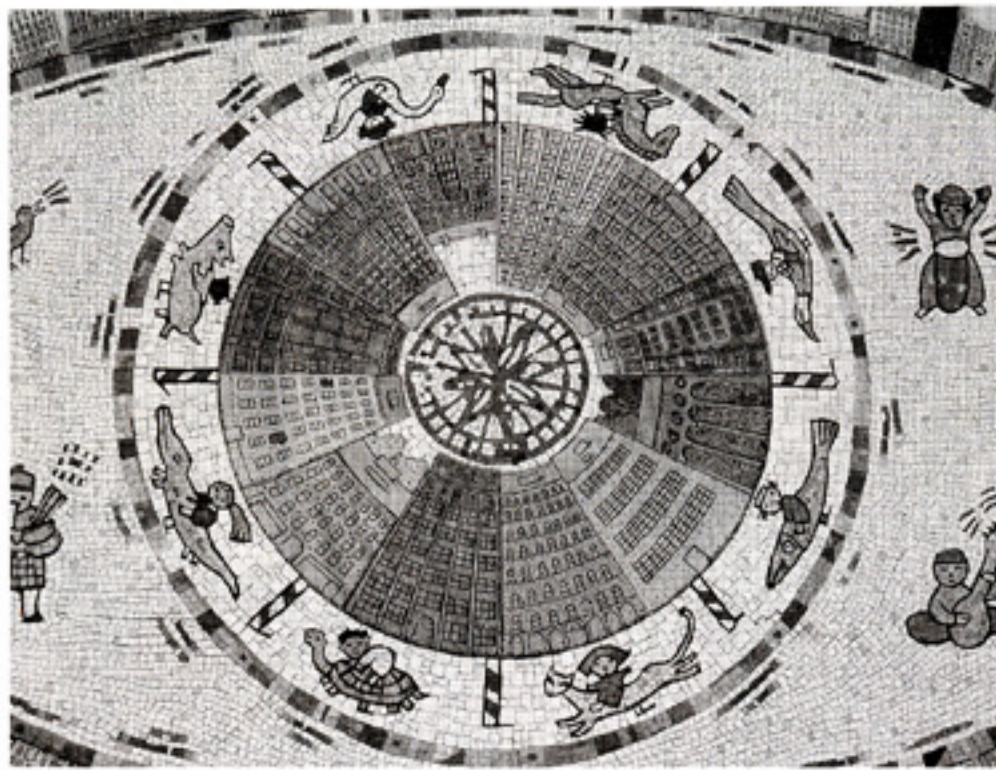
But Sotheby's, Christie's and Phillips, de Pury & Company recently refused to sell the collection of nearly 900 works from the estate of Jean Levy, the widow of Julien Levy, the Manhattan dealer known for bringing Surrealist artists to New York. So Ann Horton, an art consultant representing the estate, decided to sell it at Tajan, the French auction house at 37 rue des Mathurins in Paris.

"The French are honored that we are sending it back to France, a country whose art inspired him," Ms. Horton said, referring to Levy.

Sotheby's offered some works from Mr. Levy's estate in 1981. (He died that year, his widow last August.) Back then, however, the market was depressed, and Surrealism was not fashionable, so many offerings failed to sell. A few items in this auction, Oct. 5 to 7, will be inventory from Levy's gallery, and some will be works his widow lived with. Tajan estimates that the collection will bring \$6.8 million to \$8.1 million.

Among the highlights are two abstract paintings by Gorky, who was a close friend of the Levys. "Pirate I" (1942) is estimated at \$1.4 million to \$1.6 million, and "Pirate II" (1943) at \$1.1 million to \$1.3 million. Experts said they believed that French museums would try to buy them.

Also for sale are the largest group of works by Marcel Duchamp to come to auction. There are also many works on paper by Gorky, as well as by Noguchi, Tamayo, Tanguy, Matta, Ernst and Dalí, along with assemblages by Man Ray.



A large detail of "Happy City," a mosaic by Peter Sis for the Lexington Avenue subway.

Museumgoers may remember that besides being a dealer, Levy was one of the most important proponents of Modern art photography in this country. In 2001 his widow arranged a partial gift and partial purchase of 2,000 images to the Philadelphia Museum of Art, which explains why there are no photographs in the sale at Tajan.

## A Vocal Expression

It is always interesting to see how an artwork can take on different meanings at different times. Consider "Freedom of Expression National Monument" by the architect Laurie Hawkinson, the performer John Malpede and the visual artist Erika Rothenberg. The work, a giant red megaphone that visitors can talk into, set atop a flight of stairs, was originally installed 20 years ago as part of "Art on the Beach" on the landfill created by the construction of the World Trade Center before Battery Park City was built. At the time the work was meant to speak to issues like AIDS, homelessness, human rights, the economy and the environment.

Now, on the eve of the Republican

National Convention in Manhattan, "Freedom of Expression National Monument" is being installed once more. From Aug. 17 to Nov. 13 it will occupy Foley Square in Lower Manhattan, between the federal, state and city courthouses, so that visitors can shout about issues that particularly relate to today's world.

"The city has changed so much in 20 years, and the art world has changed so much," said Anne Pasternak, director of Creative Time, the nonprofit organization that commissioned the piece in 1984 and has installed it again. "The need for a soapbox is so important, especially now, during the conventions."

## Next Stop, the World

The underground universe of the New York City subways has been enlivened by artists for years now, largely because of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority's Arts for Transit Program, which has commissioned many different projects. One common thread, however, is that most of the works reflect something about their place.

The latest is being installed on the Lexington Avenue line's 86th Street

station. It is "Happy City" by Peter Sis, a Czechoslovak-born illustrator and children's book author who won a MacArthur genius award last year and has created a series of four murals.

"It's a celebration about the creation of 86th Street," Mr. Sis said in a telephone interview. "I've been here for 20 years now, and I hope we will all live together post-9/11."

In his thoroughly original, lighthearted style, Mr. Sis has used glass mosaic and precious stones from different countries to create a giant eye looking at the city. Around the eyeball are some of his meticulously rendered architectural details, in this case neighborhood landmarks. There are the museums, from the Metropolitan to the Guggenheim and the Cooper-Hewitt. There are also generic buildings representing the neighborhood.

Mr. Sis has also used the circular form as a carousel, with children playing and riding on whimsical animals. He has lifted some characters in the design from his books. "They are symbols of harmony," he said. "They are all children from different cultures and traveling musicians playing different instruments from different countries."

Installation is expected to be completed by Sunday.

## A New Showplace

When the American Folk Art Museum was unable to book its usual space, the Metropolitan Pavilion in Chelsea, for its fourth annual American Antiques Show from Jan. 20 to 23, 2005, it was forced to look elsewhere. The Seventh Regiment Armory at Park Avenue and 67th Street was already booked, as was the 69th Regiment Armory on Lexington Avenue at 26th Street.

The museum had to think of something original. The solution: the north tower of the new Time Warner Center at Columbus Circle.

"The building has developed a following," said Barry Briskin, the show's executive chairman. "We think it's hot property."