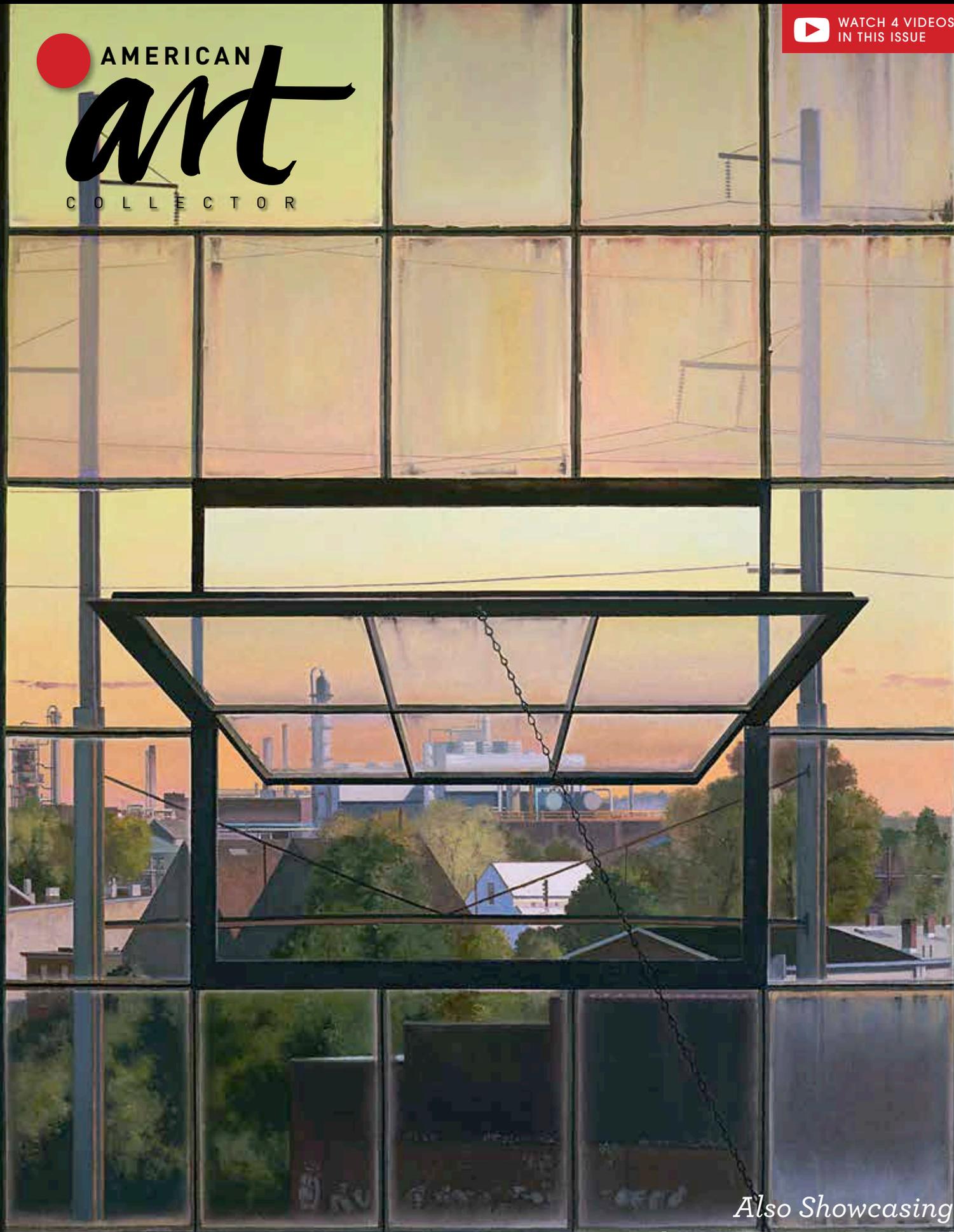


AMERICAN
art
COLLECTOR

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*Also Showcasing
Glass, Ceramics & Wood*

Beautiful compositions



1

For the past 10 years, Susan Powell Fine Art in Madison, Connecticut, has hosted a springtime invitational dedicated to among the top-tier artists painting still lifes and Trompe l'Oeils. The pieces range from the classic to the contemporary, highlighting all aspects of these time-honored genres. Of this year's show, gallery owner Susan Powell adds, "From realism and Trompe l'Oeil to the whimsical, 20 award-winning artists create visual narratives with unique subjects rich in atmosphere that will make you smile and marvel. It's so exciting to have so many accomplished artists at one time."

Taking place April 8 to May 7, with a reception on opening night from 5 to 8 p.m., the show will include work from **Kathy Anderson, Carol Arnold, Patt Baldino, Stephanie Birdsall, Kelly Birkenruth, Dan Brown, Grace DeVito, Vincent Giarrano, Timothy Jahn, Susan Jositas, Sarah Lamb, Michael Naples, Cora Ogden, Cindy Prociuous, Carlo Russo, Claudia Seymour, Elizabeth Strazzulla, and George Van Hook.**

In *Olives and Silver Cup*, Lamb depicts

two of her favorite subjects to paint: olives and silver. "I always like the lineup of the little olives on a light background. It looks like a cocktail party," she says. "I added the silver cup so you can see the reflection of the olives and lemon slice in it."

Another work that features reflective surfaces is DeVito's *Antique Glass Bottles and Leaded Glass Window*, which the artist explains was inspired by "a longstanding interest in the way glass bends light and abstracts shapes. I have a growing collection of old glass bottles and have been looking for an excuse to paint some of them when I came across the old leaded glass window. I thought they would all fit together nicely and set about painting them."

Comical Clementines by Birkenruth also will be on display in the show. The whimsical painting combines two unrelated but recognized items in a bright, visual scene. "With so much darkness and uncertainty in the world, I felt a need to return to the innocence of my youth, and reading the comics was always a happy memory for me," the artist says. "It took me



2

1
Sarah Lamb, *Olives and Silver Cup*, oil on linen, 8 x 18"

2
Timothy Jahn, *Headless Horseman*, oil on panel, 7 x 5"

3
Grace DeVito, *Antique Glass Bottles and Leaded Glass Window*, oil on linen, 26 x 32"

4
Kelly Birkenruth, *Comical Celementines*, oil on panel, 12 x 16"

5
Dan Brown, *Six Fives*, oil on panel, 13 x 18"



3



4



5

days to set up the folds in the paper so my favorite comics could enjoy top billing in the painting. It was a challenge to stay true to the representation of the comic characters, which we've all known since childhood. I added some fruit to juxtapose the fragility of the paper, anchor the composition and add an interesting textural element to the overall design."

The background of Brown's painting *Six Fives* shows stretcher bars and an aged colored canvas from the verso of a 19th-century Italian painting. This element itself was what inspired Brown to paint the composition. "I looked at the canvas and stretcher bars for many months, arranging

flat objects on it. At one point I had a grouping of vintage postcards radiating out from the lower right corner, akin to Haberle's *A Bachelor's Drawer*. In the end I chose to build this piece around the 1864 Confederate five dollar bill. Once I placed the distressed 1934 five with the portrait of Lincoln over the Confederate bill the die was cast," he says. "When the five of hearts was added, and there then appeared three dramatic yet distinctive shadows, I realized I was going in the right direction."

The work also features three other items—a roll of nickels tied with a red ribbon, a gold tack with the number five, and an 1863 "half dime" in the lower right—

thus *Six Fives*.

Since he was a child, Jahn has been fascinated with chess, and much of his time outside the studio is spent playing the game. In *Headless Horseman*, the chessboard comes to life with a new narrative. "This painting is a continuation of a series of chess still lifes and also part of a series of paintings based on literary subject matter," he says. "The knight in chess is a powerful piece much like the Headless Horseman from *Sleepy Hollow*. Just like the Hessian soldier from the Revolutionary War who inspired the Headless Horseman, the knight in chess is simply a pawn to the king's wishes." ●