

ARTnews

www.artnewsonline.com

SUMMER 2001

The World's Top 200 Collectors

**Best Buys
Great Values in
Today's Market**

**The Venice Biennale
Hits and Misses**

**Gabriel Orozco
Thinking Outside
The Box**

**The Vatican
Museums
Behind the
Scenes**



**Stephan Balkenhol,
*Man with a Fish***





Man with Sword, 1644-46, a reputed Rembrandt, made its U.S. debut in downtown Manhattan this spring.

COURTESY PAMELA AUCHINCLOSS

Van Rijn On the Hudson

Gerrit Schulz-Bennewitz, a Hamburg businessman who is launching the art portal templeflower.com, had for years admired painter **Ken Aptekar's** work, which appropriates images from historical paintings. At the Victoria & Albert's "Give and Take" group exhibition earlier this year, standing near Aptekar's reinterpretation of a **Gainsborough**, the two began to discuss a masterpiece Schulz-Bennewitz had stored in New York. One thing led to another, and a show at **Pamela Auchincloss's** Chelsea space was set up: for two weeks this spring she would host a series of new paintings by Aptekar alongside a painting, last seen in public at the Louvre in 1868, by one **Rembrandt van Rijn**.

Or at least, probably by Rembrandt. *Man with Sword*, dated 1644-46, "is definitely from Rembrandt's studio," says Auchincloss. "It's had all the chemical analysis; deter-

mining the hand that painted it is where any questions come in." Aptekar had five weeks to complete what look like six carefully executed paintings that riff on the reputed Rembrandt. The three pairs are "companions" both to *Man with Sword* and to each other, and each is covered in Plexiglas with text on top. The first pair, *Mine. Not Yours*, were inspired by a Christie's auction Aptekar attended, where a painting was being fought over by two bidders. "One was at \$3.5 million, and the other bidder was stalled. So **Christopher Burge** [honorary chairman of Christie's in America] says the painting is the man on the left's and, pointing at the stalled bidder, says, 'not yours.'" The paintings get at issues of "ownership and authenticity," says Aptekar, referring to the shaky art of attributing Rembrandts, as well as to the originality of his appropriations. As for ownership of *Man with Sword*, Schulz-Bennewitz says it is "family-related" but "not mine."

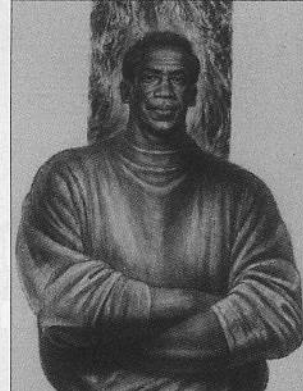
—Carly Berwick

Rats Take Manhattan

Artist **Nayland Blake** used to DJ there on Friday nights. At a next-door restaurant, **Limbo**, **Kathy Brew**, now director of Thundergulch, the new-media-arts initiative of the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council, cooked Kathy's Kurry, while curator **Lawrence Rinder** and artist **Tony Labat** each took a turn on the grill. Bay Area artists, from **James Lee Byars** to photographer **David Ireland**, would stop in to say hi. This San Francisco social hub, open since 1986, was **Anne MacDonald's** Artspace, where, Brew recalls, "the rats—the nickname for the regulars—would come hang out." Now Artspace has shut its doors at Ninth and Folsom, packed up archives of its experimental magazine, *SHIFT*, and moved east to New York. Will the migration to TriBeCa loft offices alter the organization's outsider, outré image? Unlikely, say its collaborators. Speaking of a current book project but alluding to a point more philosophic in nature, artist **Izhar Patkin** says, "The great thing about working with Artspace is there's no deadline." —Carly Berwick



At a party for the new book Artspace Is/Was, designer Elisa Jimenez hugs artist Izhar Patkin.



Charles White's Bill, 1968, in The Other Side of Color.

COURTESY POMEGRANATE COMMUNICATIONS

Cosby on Collecting

Full-time funnyman and longtime collector **Bill Cosby** offers a strong statement on art and politics in the recent book *The Other Side of Color: African American Art in the Collection of Camille O. and William H. Cosby, Jr.* (Pomegranate Communications). Featuring some 300 works from the couple's collection, by artists such as **Henry Ossawa Tanner**, **Beauford Delaney**, **Robert Colescott**, and their daughter **Erika Ranee Cosby**, the book is written by **David C. Driskell**, painter, scholar, collector, and the family's cultural adviser for 24 years. In his introductory essay, Cosby reveals his philosophy on collecting, including his disapproval of buying **Horace Pippin** for "the notion that his art is 'primitive'"—an idea, he writes, that allows for "benevolent racism."

"Bill has said that he feels some museums would purchase Pippin before, say, **Jacob Lawrence** or **Elizabeth Catlett**," comments Driskell, who thinks there is "some validity" to the opinion of his client, who was unavailable for comment. "There seems to be a rage for Outsider art," Driskell adds. "Self-taught artists like **Thornton Dial** might be good, but isn't there something also to be said for academically trained African Americans, such as **Eldzier Cortor**, who have the credentials to be part of the mainstream? That's what I think Bill is saying."

—Deidre Stein Greben