

North Dakota Museum of Art

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Conversations: Artist and Collector The Collection of James Cottrell and Joseph Lovett

North Dakota Museum of Art
May 19 – July 29, 2007

Opening: Saturday, May 19, 4 - 6 pm
Informal Gallery Talk: Jim Cottrell and Joe Lovett and Artists, 5 pm

Jim Cottrell and Joe Lovett, who live and work in New York City, have been collecting art since 1976. They began by forging personal relationships with artists, which, in turn, evolved into long-term commitments to their work. The aesthetic of the collection is overridingly in favor of painting—usually abstractions with a built-up surface of paint. Some of the finer works in this category include paintings by Donald Baechler, Jean Michel Basquiat, Keith Haring, Deborah Kass, Jonathan Lasker, Suzanne McClelland, and Malcolm Morley. The collection offers an in-depth look at many of the artists, often through three or more examples of their work. The focus of the collection includes artists working in the United States, Spain, and France, and includes Miguel Barceló, Roland Flexner, David Hockney, Barton Lidice Benes, and Edouard Prulhiere.

Jim Cottrell is an internationally active, academic neuroanesthesiologist, researcher, author, and former President of the American Society of Anesthesiologists. His book *Under the Mask: A Guide to Feeling Secure and Comfortable During Anesthesia and Surgery* (Rutgers University Press) is his first book for the lay public. Joe Lovett is an award-winning documentary filmmaker specializing in public health and social issues. His recent film, *Gay Sex in the '70s*, had its world premiere at the Tribeca Film Festival in 2005. Cottrell and Joe Lovett were listed among *Art & Antiques* Top 100 Collectors in 2001. In 2004 the Orlando Museum of Art originated a traveling exhibition of their collection titled *Co-Conspirators: Artist and Collector*.

Some of the finest pieces in their collection - examples by Jean Michel Basquiat, for instance - were purchased before the artist had achieved recognition. In reflecting on how the collection began, Joe Lovett notes, "The work I originally collected was given to me by friends. I never had a desire to own grand or expensive works. I am just as happy to see it in a museum as on my own walls. But one day, Jim said to me, 'If we don't buy it, how will the artist survive?'"

The collection of James Cottrell and Joseph Lovett will open at the North Dakota Museum of Art in celebration of the beginning of a national fund drive to endow a Barton Lidice Benes Study Center in the Museum. Ultimately, the contents of Benes's Westbeth apartment in New York City will become the North Dakota Museum of Art's first period room: a twenty-first century artist's studio. Amongst Benes's own art works are the endless embodiments of the spirits of both the living and the

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dead, including collections of African and Egyptian art, textiles and carvings from four continents, trades with artist friends, hoards of relics and fragments, a voodoo altar, skulls and stuffed animals, and on and on. According to the artist, "My apartment has become a huge reliquarium—something I now realize I've modeled after the Egyptian rooms of the American Museum of Natural History in New York that I visited so often as a child." Long time friends, Cottrell and Lovett have supported Benes's artistic life for years. Benes, who designed the Museum's Donor Wall, Gift Shop and donation box, will join James Cottrell and Joseph Lovett plus several other artists with work in the collection for an informal gallery talk at 5 pm.

Complete list of artists in exhibition:

Jean- Michel Alberol
Donald Baechler
Miguel Barcelo
Jean-Michel Basquiat
Barton Benes
Jean Charles Blais
Robert Brady
James Brown
Robert Combas
Roy de Forest
Noel Dolla
Susan Eatkin
Dominique Figarella
Roland Flexner
Adam Fuss
Keith Haring
David Hockney
Tom Holland
Rachel Howard
Sofia Huidobro
Ignacio Iturria
Deborah Kass
Jonathan Lasker
Glenn Ligon
O. Winston Link
Robert Longo
Robert Mapplethorpe
Philippe Mayaux
Suzanne McClelland
Tom McGrath
Malcom Morley
Todd Murphy
Manuel Neri
Edouard Prulhiere
Jorge Queiroz
Robert Rauschenberg
Rupert Record

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Alexis Rockman
Dana Schutz
Andres Serrano
Amy Sillman
Laurie Simmons
Ray Smith
Gregory Thompson
Kara Walker
Andy Warhol
Makhi Xenakis

The North Dakota Museum of Art is located on Centennial Drive, Grand Forks. For more information call 701-777-495 or visit www.ndmoa.com. M-F 9-5 pm, Saturday and Sunday 1-5 pm.