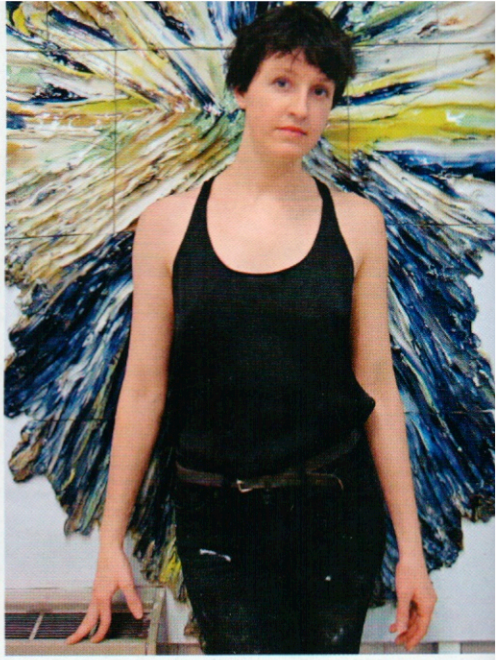
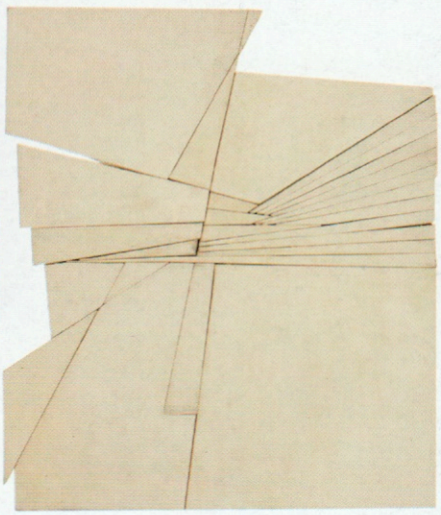
THE NEXT GENERATION

Some are more established, others are just emerging, but these 20 artists—selected by savvy collectors and advisers—are headed for even greater heights



Clockwise from left: An installation by Claudia Comte. Brie Ruais standing in front of her stained-ceramic piece *Unfolding (Liquid Color).* One of Wyatt Kahn's fragmented canvases, titled *Drifter.*

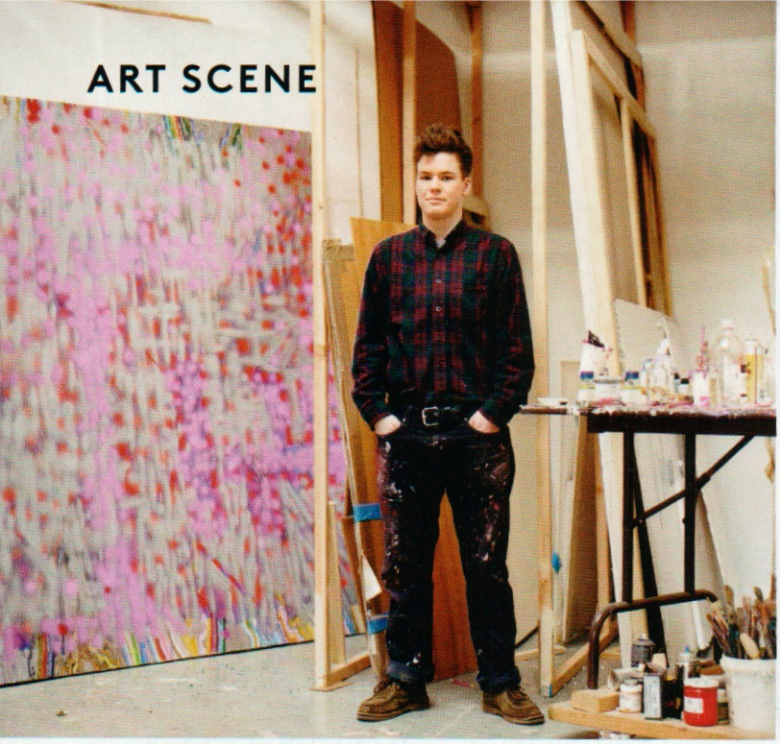


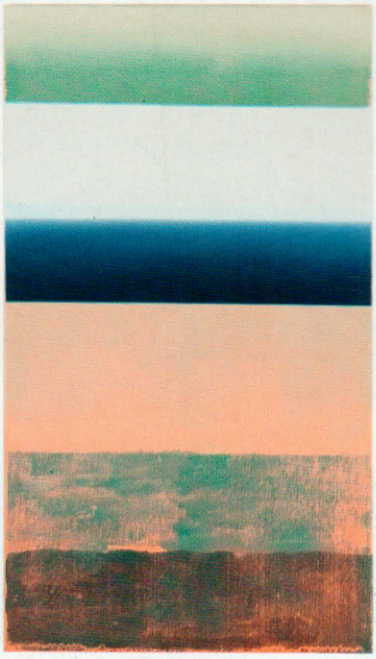
The scale of contemporary art continues to grow in every direction. Not only is art larger and more expensive but every season it seems to get more diverse in subject matter, media, even authorship. Bigger doesn't mean better, however. Supersize, shiny blue-chip items, like the Jeff Koons balloon-dog sculpture estimated to bring more than $35 million at Christie's this season, may be the ultimate quarry in the global art safari. But the truth is, to get a Koons all you need is money. It's like going lion hunting at the zoo, a poker game where you can buy four aces.

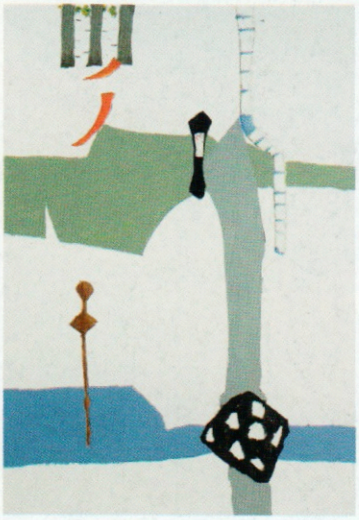
Collecting daredevils know the real adventure is in tracking talents before they become household names. It demands more dedication, more discernment, more confidence in one's own taste. It's no walk in the park—it can mean trekking through dozens of white-cube galleries, even occasionally bushwhacking through uncharted art spaces on urban fringes. But the benefits are worth it: You gain the satisfaction of getting behind an artist still on the rise and never have to worry that you came late to the party and paid the price. Of course, a little guidance from the people out there on the ground every day certainly helps, so we asked some of the art world's sharpest eyes, both advisers and collectors, who they're looking at now—and betting on for the future.

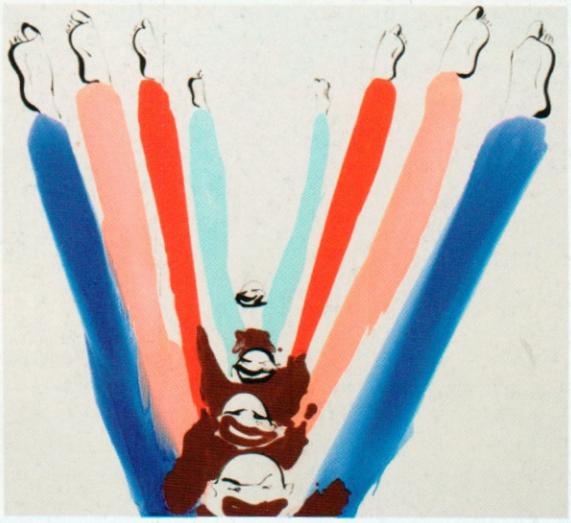
LISA SCHIFF, ADVISER

Some might find it hard to define what qualities they look for in an artwork. Not Schiff. "It has to have historical relevance," she says. "Otherwise it's a flash in the pan." Plus, Schiff adds, "The work has to be visually compelling." One young star hitting both marks is **Wyatt Kahn,** a New York artist who marries painting and sculpture in a way that evokes 3-D painters like Frank Stella and Ben Nicholson, only more raw-edged. Kahn's recent monochromatic wall pieces look as if a canvas has been shattered like a mirror and then creatively reassembled—but, in fact, each fragment was crafted individually. Schiff tabs two other artists also tinkering at the intersection of painting and sculpture: Berlin-based **Claudia Comte,** who devises modernist-winking installations where organic wood forms inhabit spaces wrapped in playful takes on geometric abstraction (think Isamu Noguchi meets Sol LeWitt), and **Andrew Dadson,** a Vancouver painter known for his slathered









Clockwise from top left: Keltie Ferris in her Brooklyn studio. An untitled painting by Svenja Deininger. Dave Cole's sculpture *Trophy Wife #9.* Tala Madani's painting *Morris Men with Brown Stain.* A work by Richard Aldrich made using oil, wax, and charcoal on linen.

and thickly impastoed canvases—not to mention his painted plants and patches of lawn—which push the medium beyond its conventional parameters.

JENNIFER AND JAMES CACIOPPO, COLLECTORS

When the Cacioppos began collecting a few years ago, the New York couple dove straight into the deep (that is, the emerging) end of the art pool, bypassing the name-brand shallows. "We like discovering artists ourselves," James says. "Plus, it's nice to know you're supporting an artist who needs the money." Among those he and Jennifer have collected who are gaining prominence are **Tala Madani,** an Iranian-born Los Angeles painter whose almost childlike imagery slyly tweaks notions of masculinity in Middle Eastern cultures, and Brooklyn painter **Jim Lee,** whose abstract deconstructed canvases—wall objects, really—breathe new life into modernist traditions.

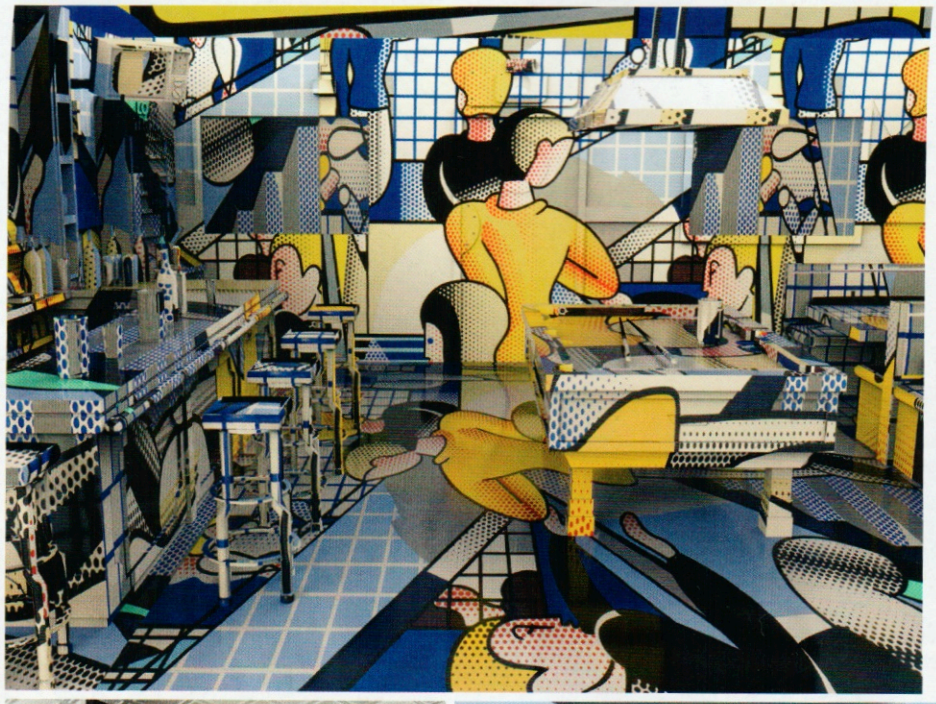
CANDACE WORTH, ADVISER

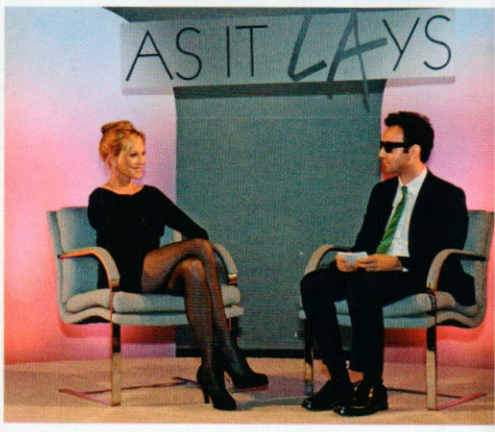
Livability is key, says Worth. "When I look at a piece I think, Will this be in storage five years from now?" That doesn't mean she goes for safe art. "I look for work that's historically aware but not just derivative—work that shows a distinctive voice," she explains. One artist she's currently following is New York–based **Brie Ruais,** who brings a fresh, almost explosive plasticity to ceramics with her dynamic sculptural creations. Another is **Svenja Deininger,** a painter living in Vienna and Brussels whose small-scale minimalist abstractions have a seductive quietude, like whispers in a world of shouting. Then there's **Richard Aldrich,** an admired Brooklyn artist whose spartan, mercurial paintings have a loose and engaging can't-be-pinned-down spirit, veering between abstraction and representation while referencing just about every art movement from the past 150 years.

ZOË AND JOEL DICTROW, COLLECTORS

E-mail and the Internet may facilitate a lot of art sales these days, but not for the Dictrows. "We look at art the old-fashioned way—we go to galleries," says Zoë with a chuckle. "That's the best way to see a body of work. When we started, over 30 years ago, we gravitated toward emerging artists, and we never left that." One fast riser they've been following is Brooklyn-based **Keltie Ferris,** whose abstract paintings, pulsating with variegated color, suggest the blurs and pixelation of low-res digital imagery. Another is **Dave Cole,** a Providence, Rhode Island, artist whose widely exhibited work toys ambiguously with themes of nostalgia, patriotism, and industry. Take the American flags he's made out of sheets of lead, sewn together with metal thread—a nod to steelmaking and the complex symbolism of the Stars and Stripes. →

Clockwise from below: Brooklyn artist Julia Dault in her studio. *Lichtenstein Pub*, a digitally hybridized image by Jon Rafman. A still from Alex Israel's video performance/interview with actor Melanie Griffith. *Seated Woman*, a sculpture by Ruby Sky Stiler.





LAURA SOLOMON, ADVISER

Witty and well-versed, Solomon has three adjectives for the art she likes: "beautiful, challenging, and a bit twisted." Artists she feels meet these criteria? Brooklyn sculptor **Ruby Sky Stiler,** for one, whose arresting constructions mash up elements of male and female bodies, of ancient and modern sculpture, referencing the fluid nature of identity. While the pieces look massively heavy and archaic, they're actually made of lightweight foam and fiberglass collaged with paper that she "ages" with a faux patina. Solomon is also a fan of **Julia Dault,** another Brooklyn visionary, who makes lively abstract paintings as well as tenuous, gorgeous assemblages of colored Formica and Plexiglas sheets curled and tied together like free-verse gift-wrapping bows that bring to mind Koons's high-polish balloon animals.

PETER REMES, COLLECTOR

One might assume that Remes, a Minneapolis developer who repurposes old industrial buildings, would be fixated on the past. But his penchant for up-and-coming talents stems from how their work anticipates what lies ahead. "I feel like contemporary art is reaching into the future and bringing it back to us," he says. "I really like how disruptive young artists' ideas are to the status quo." Among those he's following closely is Montreal-based **Jon Rafman,** who mines today's Internet lingua franca—low-res photos, choppy videos, and DIY computer animation—to create his darkly humorous photographic works. Another favorite is **Alex Israel,** an L.A. artist known for the awkward deadpan interviews he conducts with willing celebrities like Rachel Zoe and Melanie Griffith. The captivating, at times absurd Warholian videos (available on YouTube) have gained him one substantial following, while his dreamy-as-a-sunset pastel paintings—which he uses as backdrops for the conversations—have gained him another.

MARK HUGHES, ADVISER

After more than a decade in the New York gallery world, Hughes recently moved back to his native Australia, taking his global outlook with him. But he's keen on a few of his countrymen, including **Tomislav Nikolic,** a Melbourne painter whose candy-hued color-field canvases Hughes describes as "Rothko on Ecstasy, with a Baroque twist." Another favorite is Sydney- and Melbourne-based **Lillian O'Neil,** whose kaleidoscopic collages have a heavenly Tintoretto-like grandeur. Because she sources imagery from books from the past century, Hughes says, "you end up with all these different textures that give you an interesting perspective on the printed image in the digital age." →

BETH DEWOODY, COLLECTOR

One of the world's most curious and eager supporters of young artists, DeWoody is open to works of all kinds but says that pure visual punch is often what wins her over. "I'll see something, and if it can hold my interest, I'm in," she says. "With something more conceptual, you hear the backstory, and that's what makes it—but even then, it comes down to my eye. It's got to be visually exciting." While reluctant to single out only a few names, DeWoody says she admires the **Still House Group,** a free-spirited Brooklyn artists' collective that nurtures the individual visions of its members and collaborates on installations at its gallery space and elsewhere. And she's especially keen on **Alex Da Corte,** a Philadelphia artist who did a residency with the group. Using the visual vocabulary of commercial store displays, he makes colorful, boisterously Dadaist paintings, sculptures, and photographs.

SIMA FAMILANT, ADVISER

Having been in London for the '90s Young British Artists craze, Familant has been looking for a scene with a similar excitement ever since. The closest right now? Los Angeles. "All these great artists teaching at the art schools there has created this incredible community," she says. Familant has a particular fondness for L.A. artists exploring the tense beauty in collisions between man and nature. Among them is **Matthew Brandt,** who puts landscape photographs through chemical processes that render them vibrantly stained and scarred. She also points to **Sam Falls,** whose diverse conceptual-art practice frequently involves enlisting the forces of Mother Nature, as seen in the paintings and sculptures he leaves outside to be distressed and altered by the sun and, occasionally, rain—it is California after all.

—DAVID COLMAN

From top: Matthew Brandt's *Rainbow Lake WY G1,* a grid of photographs soaked in lake water. *Jungle Fever,* a collage by Lillian O'Neil.

WHERE TO FIND THE WORK

Richard Aldrich Bortolami Gallery, New York, bortolamigallery.com.

Matthew Brandt Yossi Milo Gallery, New York, yossimilo.com; and M+B, Los Angeles, mbart.com.

Dave Cole Dodge Gallery, New York, dodge-gallery.com.

Claudia Comte BolteLang, Zurich, boltelang.com.

Alex Da Corte Joe Sheftel Gallery, New York, joesheftelgallery.com.

Andrew Dadson David Kordansky Gallery, Los Angeles, davidkordanskygallery.com.

Julia Dault Marianne Boesky Gallery, New York, marianneboeskygallery.com; and International Art Objects Galleries, Los Angeles, international.la.

Svenja Deininger Marianne Boesky Gallery, New York, marianneboeskygallery.com.

Sam Falls American Contemporary, New York, americancontemporary-.biz; and M+B, Los Angeles, mbart.com.

Keltie Ferris Mitchell-Innes & Nash, New York, miandn.com.

Alex Israel Reena Spaulings Fine Art, New York, reenaspaulings.com.

Wyatt Kahn T293, Rome and Naples, t293.it.

Jim Lee Nicelle Beauchene Gallery, New York, nicellebeauchene.com.

Tala Madani Pilar Corrias, London, pilarcorrias.com.

Tomislav Nikolic Jensen Gallery, Sydney, jensengallery.com.

Lillian O'Neil The Commercial, Sydney, thecommercialgallery.com.

Jon Rafman Zach Feuer Gallery, New York, zachfeuer.com.

Brie Ruais Nicole Klagsbrun, New York, nicoleklagsbrun.com.

Ruby Sky Stiler Nicelle Beauchene Gallery, New York, nicellebeauchene.com.

Still House Group Brooklyn, enterstillhouse.com.