

Paintings by Eddie Martinez, Ben Enwonwu will lead Bruneau & Co.'s inaugural Modern & Contemporary Art Auction, Nov. 30

The auction will begin at 6 pm Eastern time and will be held live in the Bruneau & Co. gallery located at 63 Fourth Avenue in Cranston, R.I., as well as online

CRANSTON, RI, UNITED STATES, November 19, 2020 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Bruneau & Co. Auctioneers will hold its first-ever Modern & Contemporary Art auction on Monday, November 30th, with 76 curated lots headlined by a very large, untitled double-stack Blockhead painting by [Eddie Martinez](#) (Conn./N.Y., b. 1977) and a portrait oil on canvas rendering by [Ben Enwonwu](#) (Nigerian, 1917-1994). Both should sell in the six figures.

Also offered will be a collaborative artwork by Josh Sperling and Sam Friedman (both born in New York in 1984); multiple offerings by [Paul Insect](#) (U.K., b. 1971); a Sensationalist painting by Wes Lang (N.J., b. 1972); a geometric abstract silkscreen by Josef Albers (German/American, 1888-1976); a pencil on woven paper by Ryan Travis Christian (Calif./Ill., b. 1983); a selection of sculptures, plushes and accessories by KAWS (American, b. 1974); and Case Studyo releases.

The auction will begin promptly at 6 pm Eastern time and will be held live in the Bruneau & Co. gallery, located at 63 Fourth Avenue in Cranston, as well as online, via LiveAuctioneers.com, Invaluable.com, Bidsquare.com, www. Auctionzip.com and www.BidLive.Bruneauandco.com. Phone and absentee bids will be taken. COVID protocols will be in place and masks are required.

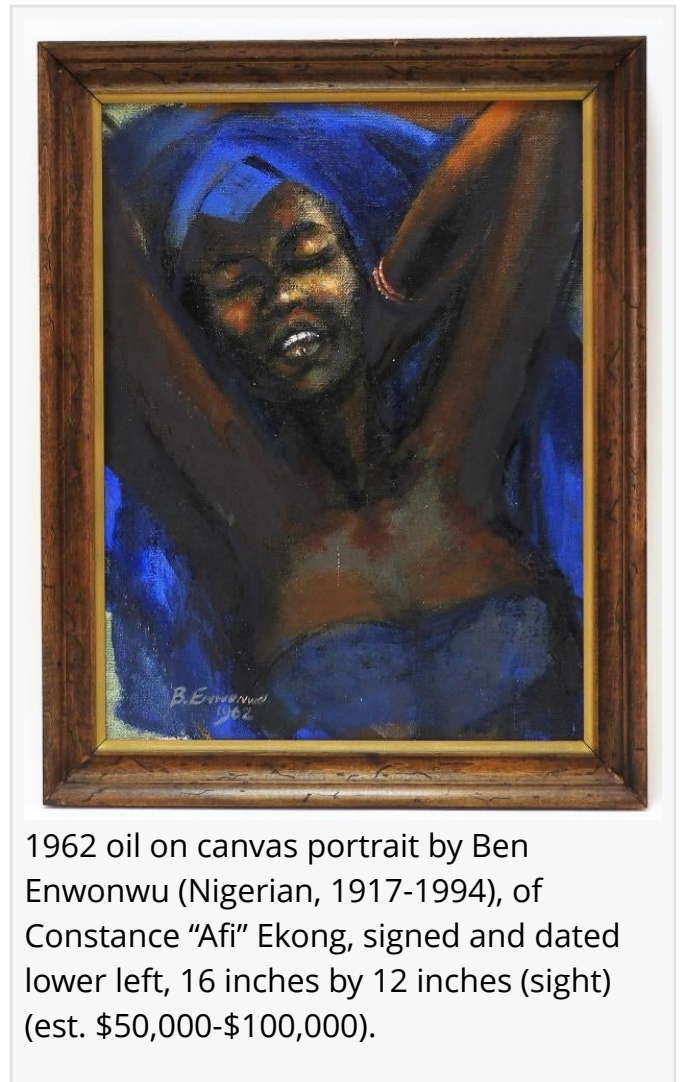


Large, untitled double-stack Blockhead painting by Eddie Martinez (Conn., N.Y., b. 1977), 72 inches by 60 inches, done using oil paint, spray paint and enamel (est. \$150,000-\$250,000).

The newly formed Modern & Contemporary Art department is being overseen by Travis Landry, a Bruneau & Co. auctioneer who is also the firm's Director of Pop Culture. "I am an avid collector of contemporary art," Landry said, "and so I'm bringing my passion to the workplace. The department is run by myself and our new specialist, John Parkins of Baltimore, Maryland."

Landry added, "I can't remember the last time I've been this excited for an auction. In today's market, Eddie Martinez is one of the most coveted artists, and this Blockhead is the first of its kind to come to market. Per his records, no Blockhead this size has ever crossed the block, and it's one of his most iconic images. It will be very interesting to see where the final result lands."

With a robust pre-sale estimate of \$150,000-\$250,000, the Blockhead painting by Martinez is the auction's expected top lot. Measuring 72 inches by 60 inches, the oil paint, spray paint and enamel on canvas is a superb example of Martinez's career, capturing the iconic Blockhead with vivid color and white-out outline against a green background and gestural strokes of a marker.



1962 oil on canvas portrait by Ben Enwonwu (Nigerian, 1917-1994), of Constance "Afi" Ekong, signed and dated lower left, 16 inches by 12 inches (sight) (est. \$50,000-\$100,000).

Brooklyn based artist Eddie Martinez has developed a unique style that strives to make a large painting feel like a drawing, as if the viewer was sitting on the couch with a sharpie and pad. The early imagery of his career consisted primarily of still life, animal, and humanoid figures utilizing an aggressive use of color and texture with various mediums.

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This auction is the definition of a small yet mighty and powerful catalog -- 76 curated lots, all of them high quality. The great part is, it offers a range of items for all levels of collectors.”

Kevin Bruneau

It was during this time that the iconic Blockhead began to appear throughout his work. In 2012-13, as his career progressed, it was at this point he broke away from the collector's expected subject to abstraction. Today, Martinez's career has earned him multiple solo museum

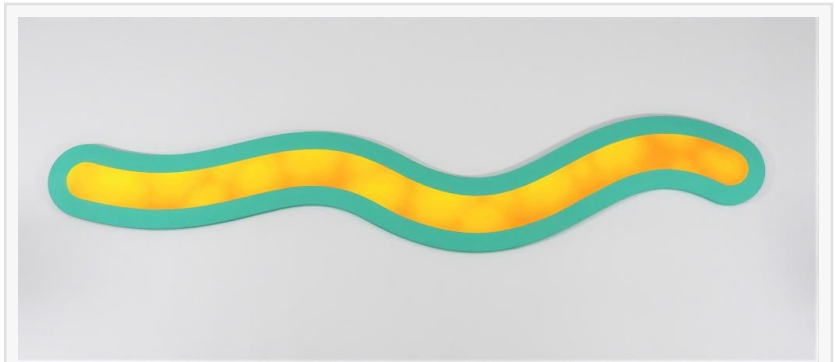
exhibitions worldwide. The painting being sold is signed and dated by the artist.

Kevin Bruneau, president of Bruneau & Co. Auctioneers, described the auction as “the definition

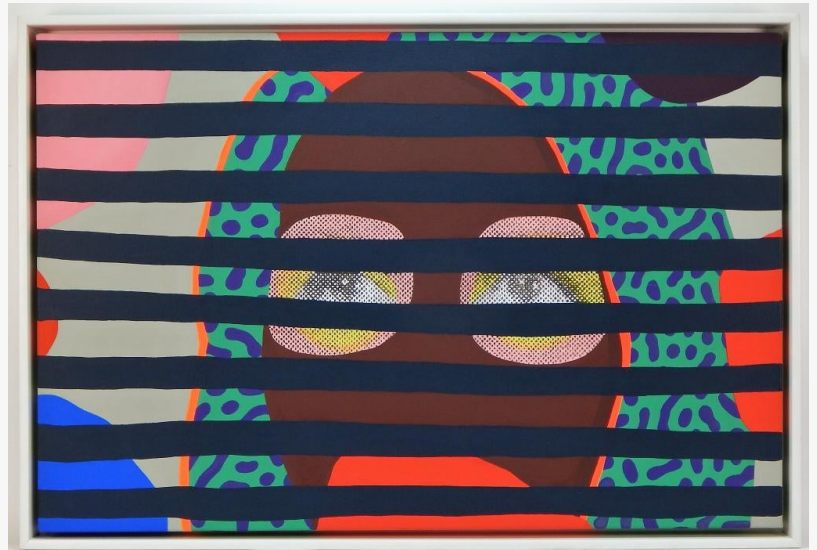
of a small yet mighty and powerful catalog. The great part is, it offers a range of items for all levels of collectors. But as to who will steal the show, I feel the Ben Enwonwu is a real treasure. Paintings by the artist rarely pop up for sale, especially ones with provenance like this.”

The 1962 oil on canvas portrait by Ben Enwonwu – of Constance “Afi” Ekong, a close friend of Enwonwu’s, an accomplished artist and a major cultural advocate of Nigeria, as well as the wife of Prince Abdul Azizi Attah (1920-1972) – is signed and dated lower left. It’s 16 inches by 12 inches (sight) and was acquired directly by the seller from the artist (est. \$50,000-\$100,000).

Ben Enwonwu was born into a royal Nigerian family, his father a noted sculptor. He studied art in Nigeria and the United Kingdom and in 1949 was declared “Africa’s Greatest Artist” by TIME magazine. The following year he did a highly successful exhibition tour through the U.S. In 1959, he created a sculpture of Queen Elizabeth II, who became one of his biggest collectors.



Acrylic on shaped canvas painting by Josh Sperling and Sam Friedman (both born in New York in 1984), 86 inches by 16 inches, signed by each artist and annotated (est. \$20,000-\$30,000).



Two paintings by Paul Insect (U.K., b. 1971) include Blind Views (2014), signed and dated on verso and measuring 24 inches by 36 inches (sight, less the frame) (est. \$10,000-\$15,000).

The acrylic on shaped canvas painting co-created by Josh Sperling and Sam Friedman is aptly titled Squiggle (2018) and is signed by each artist and annotated (“Part 20/32 2018”) on verso. The 86 inch by 16 inch work has an estimate of \$20,000-\$30,000. The ink and pencil on found book cover Sensationalist painting by Wes Lang is titled Bad Medicine (2005). The cover is about 7 ½ inches by 5 ¼ inches and is signed, titled and dated on verso (est. \$10,000-\$15,000).

The two paintings by Paul Insect consist of an acrylic on canvas titled Blind Views (2014), signed and dated on verso and measuring 24 inches by 36 inches (sight, less the frame) (est. \$10,000-\$15,000); and an acrylic on paper titled Chap (2011), signed lower left and 27 ¼ inches by 19 ½ inches (sight) (est. \$7,000-\$10,000). Insect has worked alongside Banksy (b. 1973) at The Can Festival (2008) and had an entire exhibition purchased by Damien Hirst (b. 1965).

The limited-edition geometric abstract silkscreen in colors on a card by Josef Albers, titled Ek Id (1970), is signed lower right and editioned "EK Id 98/125" lower left. The card, less the frame, measures 21 ½ inches square (est. \$4,000-\$6,000). Ryan Travis Christian's pencil on woven paper titled Death Stare (2019), is signed, dated and titled on verso (est. \$3,000-\$5,000). Christian draws influence from iconic pop culture cartoon imagery infused with messages.

Previews will be held on Monday thru Wednesday, November 23rd-25th, from 9-4 Eastern time and on Monday, November 30th, the day of sale, when doors open at 9 am sharp. Previews are by appointment only. To schedule an appointment, please call 401-533-9980. Masks are required.

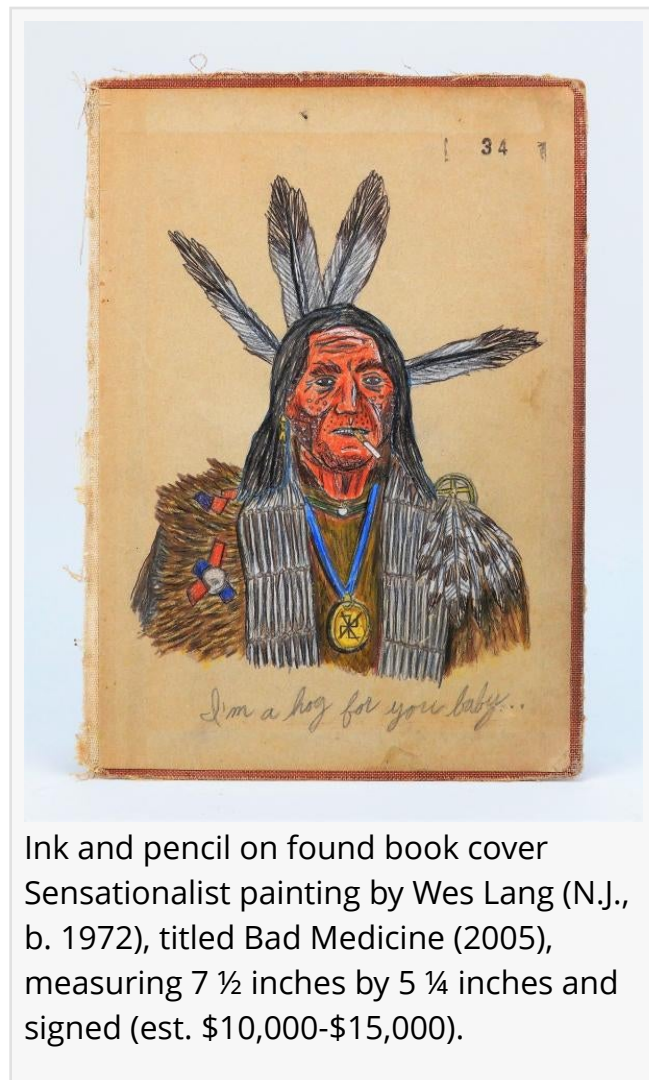
Moving forward, Bruneau & Co. Auctioneers plans on holding two Modern & Contemporary Art auctions per year, with the next one slated for spring 2021. Consignments are being accepted. Anyone with a piece or a collection looking to consign may get in touch with Travis Landry or John Parkins (who is working remotely for now), both via email, at info@bruneauandco.com.

Bruneau & Co. Auctioneers is always accepting quality consignments for future auctions, with commissions as low as zero percent. Now would be a perfect time to clean out your attic. To contact Bruneau & Co. Auctioneers about consigning a single piece or an entire collection, you may send an e-mail to info@bruneauandco.com. Or, you can phone them at 401-533-9980.

To learn more about Bruneau & Co. Auctioneers and the inaugural live and online Modern & Contemporary Art auction, Nov. 30th, visit www.bruneauandco.com. Updates are posted often.

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Ink and pencil on found book cover
Sensationalist painting by Wes Lang (N.J., b. 1972), titled Bad Medicine (2005), measuring 7 ½ inches by 5 ¼ inches and signed (est. \$10,000-\$15,000).

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