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AMERICAN

# art COLLECTOR

PREVIEWS OF MAINSTREAM ARTISTS'  
UPCOMING SHOWS COAST TO COAST

SEPTEMBER 2006

*Our Sneak Preview of the International Guild of Realism  
Annual Showcase in Santa Fe.*

## Reality Bites.

SPLENDOR IN THE GLASS, OIL ON CANVAS, 40 X 30", BY CAMILLE ENGEL



### UPCOMING SHOW

*Up to 60 works on show*  
September 15 thru 30, 2006  
Manitou Galleries  
123 West Palace Avenue  
Santa Fe, NM 87501  
(800) 283-0440



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## Reality Bites.

From almost abstracted close up of ocean stones to traditional still life and trompe l'oeil painting, the International Guild of Realism's (IGOR) annual juried exhibition at the Manitou Gallery in Santa Fe will provide an inside look at a variety of trends at work in contemporary realist art.

"Nothing challenges an artist more than the ability to compose a creative scene and then capture it absolutely realistically," says Manitou Gallery director Kathrine Erickson. "You don't have to be a rarefied art expert to judge quality in this art form because your eyes don't lie."

Entries into the exhibition were first juried by members of the Guild and then by Erickson. Artists range from emerging talents to established painters and prices for the work range from \$2,000 to \$60,000. On display will be over 60 paintings by 46 artists including Stephen Stavast, Donna Surprenant, Bob Luby, Vala Ola, Don Clapper and Lorena Kloosterboer.

Don Clapper, IGOR charter member and trompe l'oeil painter, says the importance of this exhibition is that it reinforces that Realist painting is once again a force to be reckoned with in the contemporary art market, it presents the different ways in which realistic painting is being treated today and it introduces many new artists whom collectors may never have encountered before.

"We wanted to create a vehicle for showcasing a wide variety of subjects all in the Realism style," says Clapper. "The best way to demonstrate how far and how fast Realism has grown is to put all the leading-edge artists in one gallery. The immediate impact for most collectors is 'Wow, I had no idea this many artists were doing work at such a high level.'"

Vala Ola, who started as a portrait artist and now creates Renaissance-inspired figurative works and sculpture says, "The beauty of realism is the tradition of it. How it lives on from generation to generation and even though it's had a hard time in this last century—getting little respect for a while—I'm happy to see it making a strong comeback."

Ola is inspired by the work of several old master painters, including Caravaggio and Rembrandt.

"The figure is my main interest," says Ola. "I love anatomy and I start with observing the figure and playing around with light in order to get the inner emotion coming through so that I can express that through the lighting and the lighting of the body."

Dutch artist Lorena Kloosterboer, favors tightly rendered still lifes that play with the effects of light and reflection on the mainly glass objects found in the composition.

"It wasn't so much a conscious decision for my art to be in a realistic style, as it was and continues to be an instinctive attraction and fascination with this art form," says Kloosterboer. "When I'm in a museum or gallery, my eyes are always pulled towards Realism first."

Tom Cardamone started out as a landscape painter but got frustrated by comments he would hear from people about his work.

"People always told me that they looked liked photographs, and most artists would consider that a compliment," says Cardamone. "But, I didn't want them to look like photographs, I wanted them to look like the real thing. So, I switched to trompe l'oeil."

Cardamone also wants his trompe l'oeil images to look a little out of the ordinary as well.

"I try to stay away from what most people do by concentrating on still life, with no photos," says Cardamone. "I also simulate the backgrounds to look like recognizable material like corkboard and chipboard and I simulate the frames as well."

No matter the style, the IGOR members are part of the resurgence in interest in Realist art that is underway today.

"There's no question Realism is on the rise," says Gary Babb. "Savvy collectors have come to expect closely observed works expertly rendered. Today's collectors are better educated—as are artists—and this is creating a vibrant market for Realism paintings." ●

For a direct link to the exhibiting gallery go to



[www.americanartcollector.com](http://www.americanartcollector.com)