

Standing the Test of Time

An Interview with James Borynack, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, FINDLAY Galleries

EDITORS' NOTE Eighteen years before acquiring FINDLAY Galleries International, Inc., in 1998, James Borynack purchased FINDLAY Galleries in New York, having already been its Director and Senior Vice President. His relationship with the company began in 1972 when he was hired as a salesman after having served as a partner at De Noyer, a boutique specializing in European high-fashion imports. He has also been associated with various government-related positions, including Cultural Attaché and Ambassador for Republicans Abroad International. In addition, he served as North American President of the auction house Phillips Son & Neale. He is an alumnus of New York's Parsons New School for Design.



James Borynack

COMPANY BRIEF As art dealers serving individuals, institutions and corporate collectors, FINDLAY Galleries International, Inc. (findlaygalleries.com), was founded in 1870 in Kansas City, Missouri. With galleries in New York and affiliates in London and Paris in addition to its flagship premises in Palm Beach, Florida, FINDLAY Galleries specializes in impressionism, European Modernism, l'École de Rouen, l'École de Paris, and 20th Century American Art. The gallery currently represents more than 40 contemporary artists worldwide creating more than 50 exhibitions annually within their gallery network.

FINDLAY Galleries just celebrated its 150-year anniversary. What have been the keys to FINDLAY Galleries success and has allowed the business to stand the test of time?

The key to our Galleries' continued success over the past 150 years is integrity, quality, service, knowledge, timing and, most importantly, a dedicated and informed team. Staying the course has allowed us to "stand the test of time." Challenges are the norm in the art business, demanding that we learn to understand and move through our mistakes and improve our understanding for the future.

What are the key factors that FINDLAY Galleries looks for when deciding whether to work with an artist?

When choosing artists for representation, we require a chronicle of solid exhibition



The entrance to FINDLAY Galleries new gallery at 32 East 57th Street

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experience and genuine and honest growth of the artist’s development. As we don’t often represent emerging artists, our focus is on established and critically recognized artists.

How has FINDLAY Galleries adapted its business during this unprecedented time as the world battles the global pandemic?

We have followed all government requirements for retail businesses in our respective locations. Knowing we had to persevere, we immediately assumed remote operations, including accelerated exhibition programming curated for our online presence. Our in-house marketing department created exhibitions that complemented planned programming designed specifically for our Virtual Viewing Rooms. To reinforce this new visibility, we increased our media presence and budget increasing our visibility in more regions than usual for this time of the year. In short, we jumped the line.

FINDLAY Galleries is in the people business and has built deep relationships with its clients. Have you continued to interact with your clients online and with virtual exhibitions during this time?

We are grateful for our generational clientele. We continue to assist the children, grandchildren and now great-grandchildren of our esteemed collectors. The most important part of our business is to be in touch with our clients and potential buyers. We have always known to keep their interest on track. As explained earlier, our virtual exhibitions are at their fingertips.

Our calculated efforts are proving to be financially successful, especially with our international clientele.

FINDLAY Galleries recently moved to a renowned gallery space in New York City. Will you highlight the new space and how it will help the business continue to grow in New York?

Our new gallery space is indeed in a renowned location. The Pace Gallery had operated in our new second-floor space for over 30 years. Our presence on East 57th Street began in 1964, which celebrates FINDLAY Galleries’ 56 years in New York City as the oldest continuously operating gallery on East 57th Street. It is an honor for us to occupy this gallery space that former tenant Pace Gallery utilized to launch and foster many of the great abstract painters of our time. Moving from our previous New York location on 5th Avenue has been an advantageous occurrence which has highlighted our new programming of exhibitions to concentrate more on abstract, representational and contemporary art.

There is much concern about New York’s recovery and future. What is your outlook for New York and are you optimistic about New York City’s future?

New York is ‘optimistic.’ It is built on possibilities. The future will have its new adapted captains of industry, financial barons and social icons, creating favorable circumstances for future entrepreneurs. “Money never disappears;

it only changes hands.” However, this recovery will hurt a lot longer, due to the City’s careless management and policies and the greed of many others overextending at other people’s expense. However, be assured that banks are not in business to take the fall, and New York’s future will reinvent itself. As an art gallery with a history of surviving 12 international wars, untold financial meltdowns, disastrous artistic movements, unscrupulous art dealers and mavens, we stand by our beliefs and proven reputation for providing value and integrity in the art we sell. Considering there are 35,000 active art museums in the United States today, we are exceedingly honored that from the Metropolitan Museum to the White House, there are works of art in most of their collections which have a FINDLAY Galleries label on the back.

What advice do you offer young artists beginning their careers during this challenging and uncertain time?

Be sure you first know how to draw correctly. Be sure you expect to wait until you have developed what you are proud of and can stand by. Know it will take more than you know to understand the art business. Be prepared to be disappointed when you think it’s the top. Never assume anything, get the facts and take the extra steps. Never wait for tomorrow, and never stop dreaming. Find your confidence in yourself and keep it quiet and secure, for it will be your grace for all your life. When ready, give us a call to see if we fit. ●

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