

# DAVID NOLAN GALLERY

## **THE COLLECTOR AND THE ART DEALER**

### ***Jack Shear and David Nolan, A 20 Year Adventure with Drawings***

David Nolan Gallery is pleased to announce its upcoming exhibition, *The Collector and the Art Dealer: Jack Shear and David Nolan, A 20 Year Adventure with Drawings*, on view from January 13 - February 11, 2023. The show will feature a selection from the works that artist, curator, and President of the Ellsworth Kelly Foundation Jack Shear acquired in collaboration with gallerist David Nolan in building his extraordinary drawing collection. Formed mostly over a twenty-year period, Shear's collection consists in over seven hundred drawings dating from the 16<sup>th</sup> century to the present. A significant part of the collection is the result of Shear's personal and professional relationship with David Nolan. Over the past two decades, Nolan's eye and expertise have helped forge innovative connections among existing and subsequent acquisitions.

"My gallery opened in the late 1980s to raise the consciousness of works on paper without any restrictions. This exhibition demonstrates the unlimited possibilities in putting together a collection of drawings today. Jack Shear's is arguably one of the great collections of drawings in private hands that has such challenging breath. and is still a very personal collection.

I met Jack originally in Manhattan in the 1990s. He stood out from the crowd with his insatiable enthusiasm for art. His generosity, warmth and unabashed quick-witted humor was, and remains, infectious. It was clear to me that he was attracted to rigorous art, particularly works on paper. Later I learnt of his parallel passion for photography (both his own and that of others), which I have always felt informed his eye.

The first works I sold to Jack, in 2002, were graphite drawings by American artist Jim Nutt (b. 1938), whom I have represented since the 1990s; a pencil and watercolor landscape by Swiss artist Friedrich Salathé (1793-1858); a red chalk drawing by Austrian artist Otto Greiner, *Reclining Female Nude* (1896); and a large sheet by Donald Judd, *Plywood Boxes #280* (1976), revealing how sophisticated and eclectic Jack's eye was since the early days. Without realizing it, he and I embarked on a collaboration of works on paper that kept pushing the boundaries of art making over five hundred years. Not just masterpieces but investigative drawings that, in the words of Walter Bareiss (whose collection of drawings my gallery exhibited in the 1990s), give the spirit and essence of art making. In many cases, the collection showcases a number of examples by the same artist, telling a rich story. It has been a learning and exciting adventure as there are no parameter rules.

Over the past 6 years, with Jack's concentration becoming more intense, the collection has gained dramatic focus and momentum. After purchasing a great drawing by Marcel Duchamp, *2 nus: un fort et un vite* (1912), we were offered a rare work from Richard Hamilton's formative years, *Somersault* (1952), that only improved when juxtaposed with the Duchamp drawing. When given the opportunity of acquiring an early large-scale double portrait by Kehinde Wiley from the artist's 2001 residency at the Studio Museum in Harlem, Jack immediately understood its power. Within a few weeks, he acquired the magnificent red chalk *Portrait of a Youth* by Giovanni Battista Tiepolo (1696-1770), that compares with any museum example in the world by the Venetian artist.

From Jack's collection multiple exhibitions could be mounted to demonstrate a rich and varied examination of art history through works on paper. In 2021, Shear himself curated *Drawn: From the Collection of Jack Shear*, at the Blanton Museum of Art, Austin, TX, a show where not only the juxtapositions were unorthodox but also the topography of the installation forced a refreshing way to look at the drawings. In 2021-22, the Drawing Center in New York City mounted *Ways of Seeing: Three Takes on the Jack Shear Drawing Collection*, a three-part exhibition and an experiment in connoisseurship and exhibition-making, where artist Arlene Shechet, critic and curator Jarett Earnest, and Shear himself each presented an installation curated from Shear's holdings.

The exhibition at David Nolan Gallery will differ from the previous presentations in that it will highlight selected works that the Collector and the Dealer chose in unison. The show will be a collaborative installation between the two partners in this long adventure, tracing the chronology of and the reasoning behind Jack Shear's acquisition process." –David Nolan