

CHICAGO—Industry veteran Arica Hilton has opened Arica Hilton Fine Arts and Salon, a 1,250-square-foot gallery on Michigan Avenue. Ms. Hilton has also established Arts Poetica, a book publishing company, and Golden Pearls, an interior design division. Golden Pearls International Ltd., an art publisher and parent company of all four entities, began 10 years ago under the name Golden Pearls Inc.



The gallery offers originals, limited editions, sculpture, and custom framing. Artwork retails for \$500 to \$10,000. The Salon is a space for artists, poets, philosophers, musicians, and dancers to meet and share their arts and ideas. Golden Pearls International Ltd., publishes the work of Catherine Yi-yu Cho Woo, and also represents her originals and prints in Japan. Shown is "Quiet Roar," an edition of 99, 22 by 44 inches, (\$3,500). Call (312) 235-1500, www.hiltongallery.com.

RENAISSANCE GALLERY MARKS 20th ANNIVERSARY

CARNEGIE, PA—Renaissance Gallery, formerly located in Pittsburgh and relocated to Carnegie in 2003, celebrates its twentieth anniversary. Owners Pat and Bill Jander bought the gallery from its founders Ann and Charles Wallace in 2002. Renaissance Gallery features originals, limited editions, sculpture, framing, and art jewelry retailing from \$100 to \$15,000. Phone (412) 279-0411, www.ren-art.com.

ART & DESIGN: ALL ABOUT RELATIONSHIPS

by Kileen Kaffan

Founded in 1997 by artist Andrei Protsouk, along with his wife Marika, and silent partner Roman Osadchuk, Art & Design is an art publisher, as well as a retail gallery, both located in Stroudsburg, PA.

Paintings by Protsouk are published as giclées and are sold in galleries across the U.S., as well as in the U.K. through Buckingham Fine Art in Winslow, Buckinghamshire, England. Art & Design's strategy is to make the business aspect of the customer and publisher relationship secondary, and focus on building a friendship first. This, coupled with the style of the artwork offered that features a modern take on love and relationships, has allowed the company to experience its growth in sales and in their dealer base.

"From the point of view that we have as publishers who also run a retail gallery and are also artists, we know that a lot of people are looking for something that is special and not just available anywhere. When we first started the company the art market was at a strange place because it seemed that people were looking for landscapes to put over their couch. Today, collectors do research, such as on the Internet, so the type of art that they want has changed and become more personalized to individual tastes."

The company is run by Protsouk, his wife and their son Dennis, who handles office management and sales. "In my travels I have found that being an

artist, allows me to look at the business aspect differently," says Protsouk. "I know exactly what goes into creating the art from its first stages to its last."



Andrei Protsouk.

of the art world. We learned the history of fine art and how to create it, but that was all."

With this personalized business strategy and some 38 galleries as customers, Art & Design is growing. With Buckingham Fine Art becoming the company's U.K. distributor, expansion into the overseas market currently accounts for half of the overall business. Much of Protsouk's artwork

between them is present. The couple travels from collection to collection. Even the images of just the female character seem to almost be snapshots taken by her lover, and not meant for anyone else's eyes. Over the past three years, the artist has moved beyond the canvas and created a hand-painted frame onto which the image extends. "Galleries with frameshops like to have the hand-painted design of the frames to offer to their customers."

Being a prolific artist, Protsouk tries to keep edition sizes low so that he can put out more fresh work. His oil paintings and etchings are an evolving story about love be-

freely without the selling aspect creeping in. "Mornings are for my art. I wake up and dedicate those hours to painting and drawing. The afternoon is when I try to deal with the business tasks."

"Galleries are always looking for ways to save money in this economy. I understand that and I try to work with them, and in return, they work with me. That has been one of the best perks. We both understand it's a business, but there is more honesty."

Providing marketing materials, such as press releases and postcards is an important aspect to keeping galleries up-to-date on new pieces. As is the lengthy conversation he has with each gallery about selling art. Every year, the Protsouks invite clients and gallery owners to their home located close by in Stroudsburg for a party.

"We're not just trying to make money. I'm looking more



"Breathtaking Moment" by Andrei Protsouk is an oil on linen measuring 50 by 48 inches, and retailing for \$40,000.

tween people, food, and life in general. "I'm not a salesman. I'm an artist at heart, so I look at the work with our galleries differently. Things do come up and sometimes they don't want to buy at wholesale but would rather get artwork on consignment. It works out much better for us, and for our customers, to deal with these issues on a case by case basis. We know what the economy is like for a retail gallery today so we can understand where they are coming from."

"A gallery may like the painting, but have a hard time selling it because the market is still a little soft." The artist makes an effort to support each gallery by doing four shows a year and he makes time to discuss his work with the owners and sales staff in advance. With a hands-on understanding of the art business, Protsouk makes sure that the artist in him can work

to make fine art that people will love. If you create two lines, one as an artist, one as a business person it's important that they're just crossing when you make a sale. The art is not effected by the business side, and vice versa," he says. "I decided early on in my career to paint only about love because in the world now it's the strongest emotion. People in love would never do harm to one another. When you think about all the people who do end up hurting others, they are often empty and have nothing to lose. Love makes you value things, like friendship, more."

Art & Design Publishing LLC publishes Andrei Protsouk's artwork as giclées on canvas in editions from 95 to 300 and retail from \$180 to \$1,200. Original oil paintings range from \$1,200 to \$40,000. Call (570) 476-4407, www.andreilart.com.



"Pearls of Love" is an oil on linen measuring 32 by 38 inches, and retailing for \$28,000.

centers around a couple and whether they're dancing, eating, or playing a sport together the existing relationship