



# THE ART of BUYING

**Y**ou needn't travel to New York or London to uncover the world's most promising new artists. The gallery next door may well hold the next Jeff Wall, says *SHIRINE SAAD*. Here, our look at gallerists across Canada known for spotting star power early.



**WIL KUCEY,**  
TORONTO



**EMILY BARNETT,**  
CALGARY



**FRÉDÉRIC LOURY,**  
MONTREAL



**PAUL BUTLER,**  
WINNIPEG



**KINEKO IVIC,**  
TORONTO



**TRACEY LAWRENCE,**  
VANCOUVER

PHOTOGRAPHY: GALLERY BY JAN WILLEM SCHOLTEN





**FIRST FIND: KARINE GIBOULO** "She's a young artist who's invited everywhere. Right now, she's working on *The Interiors*, a series of 3-D miniature buildings made of wood and glass that reveal many levels of analysis." The smallest goes for about \$5,000. Meanwhile, the boho mysticism of Loury's biggest hit, local artist Carlito Dalceggio, a favourite of *Cirque du Soleil* founder Guy Laliberté, among others, sees the large-scale works earning \$10,000 to \$30,000. USINE, MIXED MEDIA, 2007-2008

**ART HISTORY** Having arrived in Montreal in 1994 to work at the publishing house Hachette, armed with a master's in administration, Loury may not be your typical gallerist. But driven to share his passion for art with connoisseurs and non-experts alike, in 2002 he opened his gallery in the Belgo building, where the city's best art spaces are found. From T-shirt design competitions to a large-scale photo project portraying 1,000 Quebec luminaries, the charismatic Loury, 34, has captured the city's art crowd with his enthusiasm and roster of exciting artists. "I wanted to reach different people," he says. "So I needed to have a non-traditional vision."

MONTREAL  
**FRÉDÉRIC LOURY**  
Galerie SAS

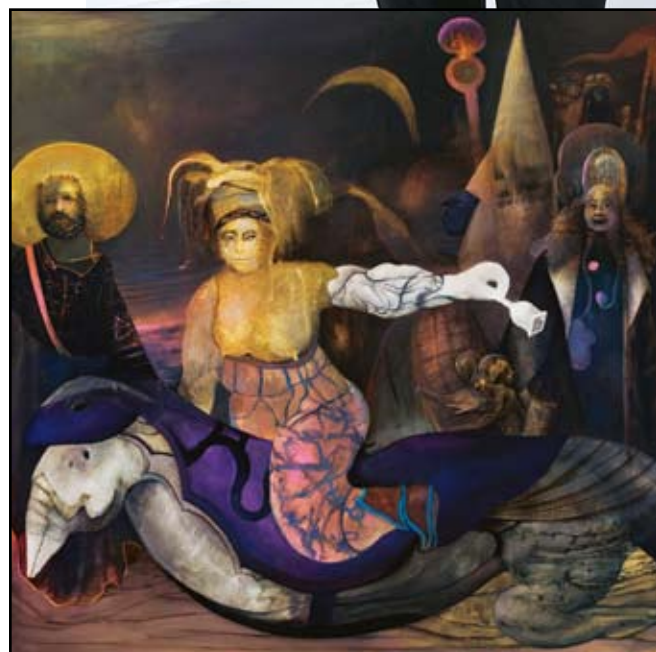
372 STE-CATHERINE ST. W.,  
SUITE 416, 514-878-3409,  
GALERIESAS.COM



**HOT INTERNATIONAL ARTIST: ANSELM KIEFER** "I like that he explores the great themes of humanity, like cruelty. He makes painting so much more modern."

**BEST BONUS** "One day, a woman walked in and started asking me about the works on display. I showed her a work I loved, *Universal Key*, a small painting by Carlito Dalceggio. I said I'd buy it if nobody else did. She took it. Six months later, my friends gave it to me as a present for my birthday." Loury's friends had hired the woman, an actress, to suss out his favourite work.

**LAST WORDS** "Act with your heart. Don't get into the whole speculation game. The work has to touch you. Look at the artist's approach. Learn about the artist—his or her age, profile, exhibitions. Talk to the gallery owner. Put your name on the mailing list of the galleries you love, and hang out at openings."



**NEXT BIG THING: JABER LUTFI** "He's interested in Middle Ages and Renaissance painting. He has an atmosphere, a light and an attention to detail that comes from a style of painting inspired by Hieronymus Bosch and Andrea Mantegna. I like the fact that he mixes this with orientalism." You can pick up a Lutfi for just \$1,000. LE FOU SONNE LE GLAS, ACRYLIC ON CANVAS, 2007



PHOTOGRAPHY: LOURY BY STÉPHANE MILHOMME; GIBOULO BY ROBERT SEINNEER; BUTLER BY SARAH ANNE JOHNSON

**ART HISTORY** After attending the Alberta College of Art and Design, Butler hit the international art-fair circuit, launching his independent gallery in 2002. Choosing different artists depending on the project, the 35-year-old artist/gallerist has no one exhibit space—a maverick curatorial stance that allows him freedom rare in the field. "It's like a dinner party with many artists, a sanctuary from the pressures and responsibilities of being a professional artist," Butler says of his nomadic collage parties—a massive hit from the University of London's Goldsmiths college to the Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles. "It's like the '60s! Free love."

**HOT INTERNATIONAL ARTIST: ERICA EYRES** "An artist from Winnipeg, now Glasgow-based, she recently sold a large body of work to the Rubell family [major Miami collectors]. She walks the line between attraction and repulsion with her work, showing, for example, models whose eyes are burnt."

**STARRY EYED** "A couple of years ago, Selma Blair called looking to buy art by Adrian Williams, one of the original members of the Royal Art Lodge. We had this super-long conversation, but it was only after she sent her cheque that I realized who I was talking to. I thought I was talking to a 'Thelma' the whole time!"



WINNIPEG  
**PAUL BUTLER**  
The Other Gallery  
ITINERANT ART SPACE,  
204-947-3551,  
OTHERGALLERY.COM

**TRUE STORY** "One of my artists, Richard Williams, was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease 10 years ago, but his erotic drawings are really delicate despite his disease," says Butler, who regularly visits the 86-year-old artist at his care facility. The drawings, erotic with an activist bent, are around \$1,000.

**LAST WORDS** "Collect for your own pleasure, trust your instincts, and set thematic parameters to keep it manageable. Collecting is completely personal. Don't buy something that you don't 'get' but that everybody else is buying."



**FIRST FIND: SIMON HUGHES** "Simon takes Canadian stereotypes and plays with them," says Butler of the artist, whom he found in Winnipeg in the late '90s, when he was selling for \$250. "He uses humour to tackle issues like the environment, racism and identity." Hughes' pieces now range from \$900 for a work on paper to \$30,000 for an installation. FORTIFIED COFFEE SHOP, WATER-COLOUR, BALLPOINT AND STICKERS ON PAPER, 2006

**NEXT BIG THING: MICHAEL DUMONTIER** "He does these minimal collage paintings. He's a member of the Royal Art Lodge, which is getting a lot of attention right now." Dumontier's pieces range from \$800 to \$1,500. AMERICA'S FUNNIEST HOME VIDEOS, MIXED MEDIA, 2007





**NEXT BIG THING: DAVE AND JENN**  
*"I'd never seen something come out of a grad show so articulate, so unique and so well put together as Dave and Jenn," says Barnett of her initial coup de coeur for a couple of painters, whose works are the result of endless layers of paint, textile and materials. They range from \$5,000 to \$27,000. ASK ME AGAIN, IF THAT BEAR IS A ROCK, MIXED MEDIA, 2007*



CALGARY  
**EMILY BARNETT**  
 Skew Gallery  
 1615 10TH AVE. SW,  
 SUITE 101, 403-244-4445,  
 SKEWGALLERY.COM

**ART HISTORY** While curating a city-run gallery, Barnett noted a gap in Calgary's art scene: a focus on emerging talent. "We wanted to represent artists from across the country, showing new art to local audiences, and local art to national and international audiences." In 2004, she and her husband, artist Bart Habermiller, opened Skew, with Barnett, now 38, developing a global network by showing her strongest works to the right audiences at prestigious art fairs like Next in Chicago, Photo Miami and Art LA. "I'm on planes often. It's important for the world to see how great Canadian artists are."

**HOT INTERNATIONAL ARTIST: TERRANCE HOULE** "At the moment, I am very excited by the work of Aboriginal artist Terrance Houle, who's dynamic and fluid between photography, film, painting and performance art."

**FIRST IMPRESSIONS** "We'd just opened, and a 24-year-old came in with his skateboard under his arm. We were surprised at how quickly word had spread! We struck up a conversation, and he was quite articulate," recalls Barnett of a local nightclub entrepreneur who is now among Skew's best clients.

**LAST WORDS** "In this industry, context is very important. Have conversations with dealers and ask questions: Has this artist been collected? Where do they show? What curated exhibitions have they had? Who else is interested in their work? How much work does the artist make? Where is the artist in his or her career?"

TORONTO  
**KINEKO IVIC**  
 Greener Pastures  
 Contemporary Art  
 1188 QUEEN ST. W.,  
 416-535-7100, GREENERPASTURES  
 GALLERY.COM



**ART HISTORY** "I wanted one place where I'd be able to see good shows every month—so I opened up my own gallery," recalls 33-year-old Ivic, a painter who dropped out of the Ontario College of Art & Design (OCAD) and opened his gallery in 2002. "One thing that had always been lacking for young Canadian artists was international exposure," says Ivic, whose gallery showcases serious art against a sonic backdrop that ranges from Lee Perry to Kraftwerk to classical music. "I play everything. I always need to have music."

**HOT INTERNATIONAL ARTIST: MICKALENE THOMAS** "New York-based artist Mickalene Thomas is making some incredible work. I saw her paintings at Miami's Scope Art Fair in December 2006, and I was impressed. It exudes an exquisite elegance, confidence and beauty."

**LAST WORDS** "Start looking at a lot of art. Don't feel the pressure to buy right away. That's the hard thing. But you know what? There are no rules. You should enjoy it. If you can't, what's the point?"

**NEXT BIG THING: HUMA BHABHA** "She's a sculptor and really interesting. Born in Pakistan, she studied in New York and got her master's of fine arts at Columbia University. Charles Saatchi has bought several pieces." Bhabha's sculptures, mixing scavenged materials with surreal characters, already sell for \$25,000 to \$175,000. MAIN PLAYER, CLAY, WIRE, WOOD, DISCO BALL, METAL AND STYROFOAM, 2007, FROM THE COLLECTION OF ARLENE GOLDMAN AND GEORGE HARTMAN, TORONTO



**FIRST FIND: ANDRÉ ETHIER**  
*"The first time I saw André's work, in 2003, I was super-excited and bought two paintings immediately for around \$100." Today, the Toronto artist's uncanny mythological works run \$4,000 to \$6,000 apiece. UNTITLED, OIL ON BOARD, 2007, FROM THE COLLECTION OF STAVROS MERJOS AND HONOR FRASER, LOS ANGELES*



PHOTOGRAPHY: BARNETT BY COLIN WAY; IVIC BY FRANCES JURLIANSZ





**FIRST FIND: NICHOLAS DI GENOVA** “His first show—about 100 pieces—sold out,” says Kucey, who discovered Di Genova at university. The Toronto artist’s strikingly intricate illustrations, reminiscent of anime and animal compendiums, were soon being represented in New York at the Fredericks & Freiser gallery, and in 2006 the Whitney Museum of American Art purchased a painting. “When we heard they were going to buy his work, Nick came to my basement apartment, and we played Xbox all night and drank beer to celebrate.” His works now range from \$750 (drawings) to \$4,500 (paintings). *EXAMPLE OF A BIRD/INVERTEBRATE HYBRID, INK AND ANIMATION PAINT ON MYLAR, 2007*



TORONTO  
**WIL KUCEY**  
 LE Gallery  
 1183 DUNDAS ST. W.,  
 416-532-8467, LE-GALLERY.CA

**ART HISTORY** At 18, Kucey ran away from his hometown of Port Hope, Ontario, and enrolled at OCAD. “I was going to be a great painter, but after the first semester I realized this wasn’t the right spot for me.” After switching to critical and curatorial practice, Kucey launched his first gallery in his third academic year. He was 21. Four years later, his Dundas Street West address is an essential reference for emerging contemporary Canadian art.

**HOTTEST SALE** “I was at the Toronto Alternative Art Fair International, showing in a hotel room. A couple was looking at a work they really liked by Benjamin Oakley. They went into the bathroom, made out, then said, ‘We’re done!’ and bought it.”

**HOT INTERNATIONAL ARTIST:**  
**DALEK** “He’s been able to transition his signature space monkey character into a new fragmented abstract space. His shows in New York, L.A., England, Paris and Japan always draw major crowds, and he’s already an icon to many character-based artists.”

**LAST WORDS** “Get out and figure out what your city has. Works at LE start at \$50. Start looking. The emerging market is a very good place to begin.”



**NEXT BIG THING:**  
**KATIE PRETTI** *This is the kind of work I’d always imagined I’d be showing,” says Kucey of this Toronto artist’s abstract paintings and drawings, in which frenetic lines sometimes evoke sexual organs and the female form. Just starting to take off, Pretti’s works, at \$300 to \$2,000, are an excellent buy. WEIGHT 4, OIL STICK, GRAPHITE AND CHARCOAL ON PAPER, 2007*



**FIRST FIND:**

**TIM LEE**

*"I picked him up right after his graduation in 2002, when the Vancouver-based artist was selling for \$1,200 to \$6,000. He does photographs of performances, in which he makes pop culture and art history references." Lee, now represented by galleries in New York and London, currently sells for \$20,000 to \$40,000.*

*UNTITLED (STEVE MARTIN 1972), LIGHT JET PRINT, 2005*



VANCOUVER  
**TRACEY  
 LAWRENCE**  
 Tracey Lawrence Gallery  
 1531 W. FOURTH AVE.,  
 604-730-2875, TRACEYLAW-  
 RENCEGALLERY.COM



**NEXT BIG THING:**

**JASON MCLEAN**

*"He's shown at galleries in London, Italy and L.A. He's building slowly, and what's interesting is that he's getting a lot of curatorial interest. I was at the Aqua Art Miami fair, and a curator from San Francisco's Museum of Modern Art was interested." His free-form drawings, photo paintings and customized objects are currently priced at \$3,000 to \$10,000.*

*STRATHCONA HEIGHTS, ACRYLIC INK ON FOUND PHOTOGRAPH, 2007*

**ART HISTORY** A trip to the Tate Gallery's Rothko room kicked off Lawrence's fascination with art. Just 22, she went back to London, studied at Sotheby's Institute of Art and got a job in the prestigious Nicola Jacobs Gallery. In 1998, she debuted her own space, where she showcases international work. At 44, Lawrence is a key source for the handful of Canadian collectors interested in video art, photography and avant-garde painting.

**HOT INTERNATIONAL ARTIST: IAIN FORSYTH AND JANE POLLARD**

"They reference earlier periods in art history but make them contemporary," says Lawrence, who discovered the London duo's provocative video art at the Liste fair in Basel.

**LAST WORDS** "It's great to collect video. It's easy to keep at home and show on your large-screen TV. But there's no need to rush into anything. People should look around and get to know dealers. Don't be intimidated!"

PHOTOGRAPHY: LAWRENCE BY SHANNON MENDES