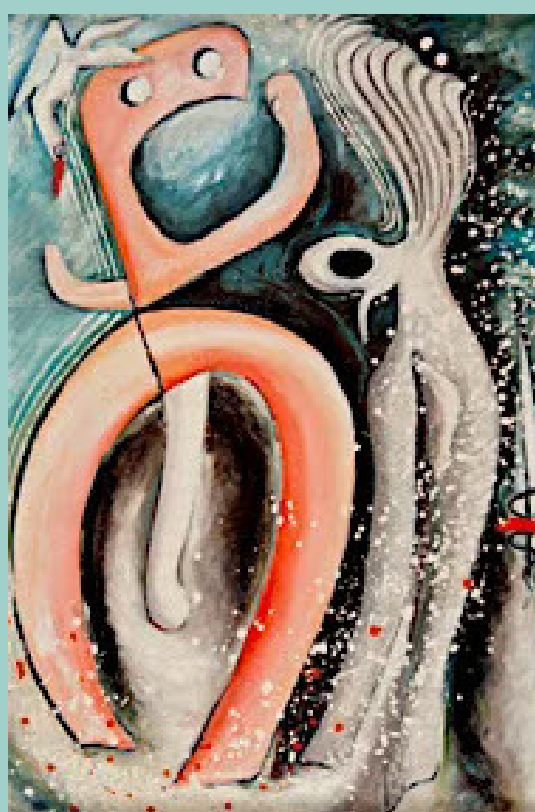




| | |
|---------------|---|
| WHAT: | Dusti Bongé, The Whimsical Pigeon, oil on canvas, 30”x 20”, c. 1950 |
| WHERE: | Hollis Taggart Gallery, New York, NY |
| SOLD: | \$85,500 |
| SIZE: | 30 x 20 in. (76.2 x 50.8 cm) |



See it

When I head out to New York art galleries on my monthly visits, I am always on the lookout for art that catches my eye both personally and professionally. Occasionally, I discover a historical artist completely unknown to me, and my curiosity is piqued.

Hollis Taggart Gallery represents the estate of the artist Dusti Bongé (1903-1993) and their exhibit “Portal and Passages, Surrealist Works from the 1940s to 1950s” this past February was an eye-opening introduction to this under-recognized talent.

Born in 1903, Dusti Bongé grew up among the natural beauty of the Southern coastal city of Biloxi. After graduating from Blue Mountain College in Mississippi in 1922, she moved to Chicago to pursue a career as an actress, before developing her painting practice in the 1950s. Bongé became an important point of connection between the New York and New Orleans artistic communities and was one of the pioneering women artists represented by the Betty Parsons Gallery.

The Whimsical Pigeon conveys her abstract expressionist style that brings together aspects of cubist structure, surrealist imagery, and subtle references to the shapes, light, and flora and fauna of Biloxi and New Orleans. It also showcases a signature element of Bongé’s visual vocabulary: “keyhole” people—figures defined by elongated forms and facial voids or portals that evoke passageways into other worlds.

Collect it

Although Surrealism has always been one of my favorite art movements, collectors have only recently started to embrace the aesthetic with enthusiasm. Begun by André Breton in Paris with the publishing of the Surrealist Manifesto in 1924, the movement soon gained a global following. Artists like Salvador Dali and René Magritte are among the most popular names associated with the movement, but the record prices paid for Surrealist Women artists in the past few years reflects more curatorial and collector engagement with the wide world of Surrealist practices. Reinvigorated market interest in the Chicago Surrealist Gertrude Abercrombie reveals support for undervalued artistic talent, and artists working away from the nexus of the New York art world with distinct visual language. Dusti Bongé could benefit from this wave of interest as collectors are hungry to acquire a more complete picture of American art history.

Care for it

Paintings of oil on canvas age well in the appropriate humidity and temperature environments. Collectors may consider framing the item in glass for the best protection. Be sure to schedule the item on your art insurance policy, and let the gallery know to inform you if there are changes in the value of the artwork over the years. If the artist has a well-publicized museum exhibit, for example, this could stimulate market interest in the artist and higher demand, and potentially drive up sale prices.



Berkley One®

| a Berkley Company