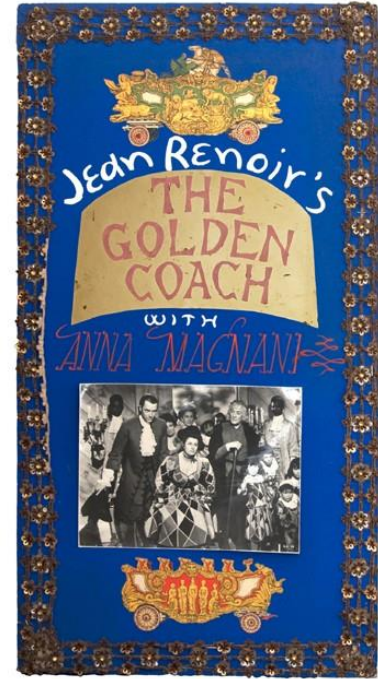


Jess Movie Posters and Selected Works

February 4 – March 19, 2016

The Tibor de Nagy Gallery is pleased to present its fifth exhibition of works by the celebrated painter and collage artist Jess (Collins), a leading light of the 1950s Bay Area renaissance of artists and poets, and one of the most original American artists of the second half of the 20th century. The exhibition will include collages, paintings and a group of movie posters that he made for the New Yorker film critic Pauline Kael, who was his close friend. Many of them are being exhibited for the first time ever. The exhibition will present a range of works from the 1950s to the 1990s, including major paintings (Translations), and collages (Paste-ups).

In 1951 a two screen art house opened called the Cinema Guild and Studio on Telegraph Avenue in Berkeley, just south of the university campus. Kael's imaginative, unexpected pairing of films, along with her booking of many unfamiliar European titles, soon attracted devoted and enthusiastic audiences. She designed and had painted a program guide featuring her lively and informative comments on the upcoming films. In the fall of 1956, Jess began helping at the theaters. Seventeen of Jess's hand-lettered and painted posters have survived. He created a new fresh lettering for every movie, and each was done in the style of the film featured, even if he hadn't seen it. Fourteen of his posters are included in the exhibition



Jean Renoir's The Golden Coach, n.d., mixed media on board, 28 ¼ x 15 inches

Jess is best known for his paste-ups and paintings that he referred to as his “salvages,” “translations,” and “romantic paintings.” His paste-ups are complicated Surrealist collages assembled using magazines, photographs, and any other material at hand. The “translations,” which comprise thirty-two paintings completed over thirty years, borrow images from a range of sources, including scientific illustrations, childhood photographs, and postcards. He used the term “salvages” for those works he created on paintings he found at thrift stores, or unfinished canvases of his own.



Untitled (Girl with Geese), 1955, collage, 13 ¾ x 9 ¾ inches

Born Burgess Collins in Long Beach, California, he initially studied chemistry at the California Institute of Technology. He spent three years in the army at the Atomic Energy Laboratory, and had a small part in the Manhattan Project developing the first atom bomb. While working on an atomic energy project, he became disillusioned with science after having a nightmare about the world destroying itself, and instead turned to art.

Jess studied painting at the California School of Fine Arts (now the San Francisco Art Institute). His teachers included some of the most influential West Coast painters of the period, including David Park, Elmer Bischoff, and Clyfford Still. During this time, Jess met poet Robert Duncan, who would become his lifelong partner and frequent collaborator. They were an influential force in the San Francisco artistic community, who brought together painters and poets and organized exhibitions and readings.

For further information and visuals please contact 212.262.5050 or info@tibordenagy.com.

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