

**Andy Kane, The David Leonardis Gallery. Chicago, IL 2007**

The David Leonardis  
Gallery  
Andy Kane

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Intense and bold, Chicago based artist Andy Kane's paintings address a variety of topics ranging from current events to apocalyptic visions of futuristic landscapes. At times Kane appropriates biblical or spiritual themes to explore questions of mortality and identity. Kane's style is characterized by brazen colors and bold forms reminiscent of the brash compositions of expressionist painters Chaim Soutine, Arthur Dove and Wassily Kandinsky while Kane's recurrent use of poetic and haunting imagery recalls the dreamy landscapes of American Symbolist painter Albert Ryder. Recently Kane has appropriated the encaustic technique. Dating from the 2<sup>nd</sup> Century BCE in Egypt, the encaustic technique uses wax as a binder for paint pigments and results in art works which have a glowing luminosity.

Kane is the founder of the Yellow Rider movement, an artistic association Kane defines as a "loose idea of an optimistic tendency in painting towards a hopeful re-emergence of painting in what can be considered a vulgar age."<sup>1</sup> Elaborating on his role as founder of the Yellow Rider Movement, Kane notes "I've tried to model a fusion of some of the inspirations, techniques, and materials of the past with contemporary or futuristic subject" and "model a "positivity" in outlook; a point-of-view which is neither nihilistic or vulgar."<sup>2</sup> In name and nature, Yellow Rider recalls the bold coloring and emotional charge favored by artists of the German Expressionist group, Der Blaue Reiter.

Founded in 1911 and headed by Wassily Kandinsky and Franz Marc, Der Blaue Reiter (or The Blue Rider) believed colors held symbolic meanings and art practices be intuitive and spontaneous. Yellow Rider artists, namely Kane, similarly infuse color and bold mark making with symbolic meaning, specifically the optimism and heroism characteristic of a new art, reemergence and rebirth.



Andy. Kane. *Ker Gelbe Reiter*. The Yellow Rider.

While Kane may associate his work with German Expressionism, the artist's contemporaries describe Kane as an "outsider" or "folk" artist, meaning an artist without formal artistic training. Kane has been included in various "Folk" publications and themed art shows. In 1992, the Rockland Center for the Arts in NY curated a "Folk-themed" show entitled "Contemporary American Folk Art" in which Kane exhibited *Noah's Used Car Ark*, a vibrant painting overwrought with sprightly figures poised in an unwieldy all-encompassing composition. The buoyant quality of works like *Noah's Ark* is comparable to the whimsical scenes by folk artist Harry Lieberman, a Polish immigrant best known for his capricious depictions of Jewish country life in Poland. Lieberman also showed at the Rockland's 1992 Folk exhibition.

Kane's work is on display at the Museum of American Folk Art in NYC, the Smithsonian Institution, the Milwaukee Art Museum, the New York Historical Society and the American Museum in Bath, England. The artist regularly shows new work at The David Leonardis Gallery in Chicago, IL.

<sup>1</sup> Kane, Andy. <http://www.andykaneart.com/about/>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.andykaneart.com/about/>