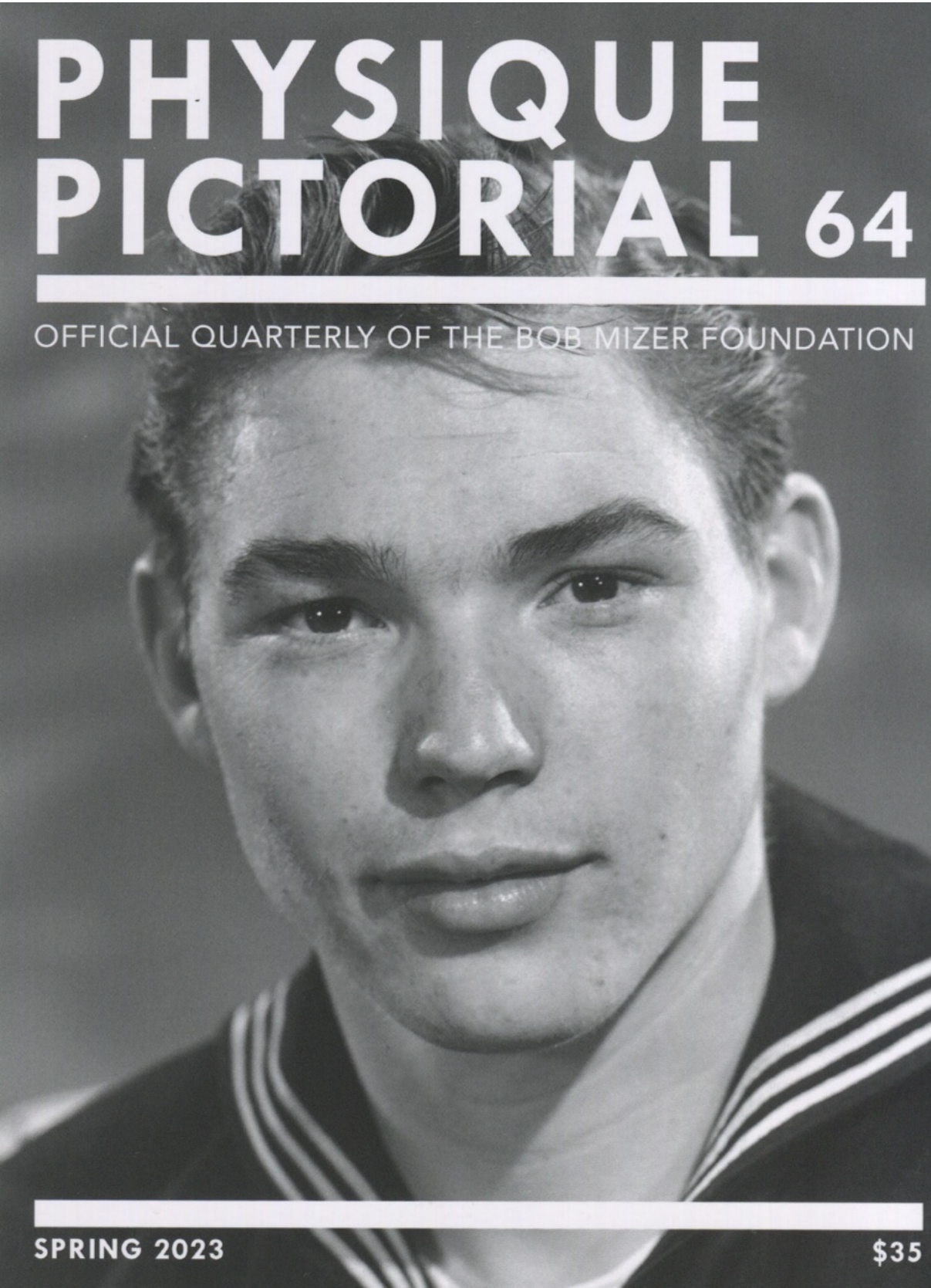


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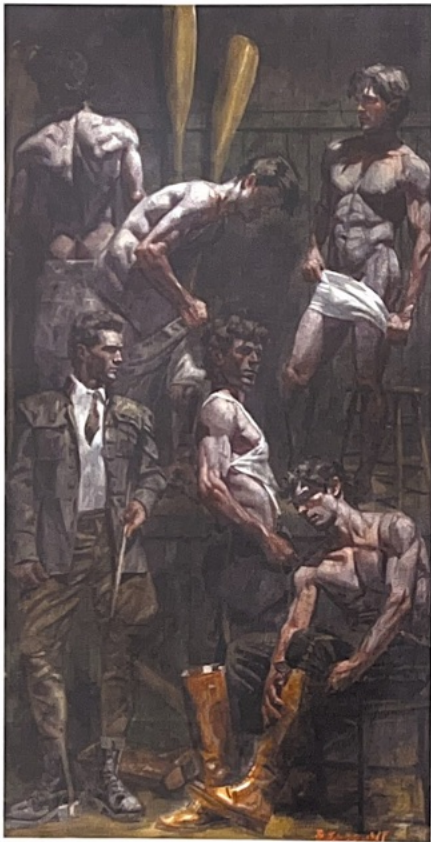
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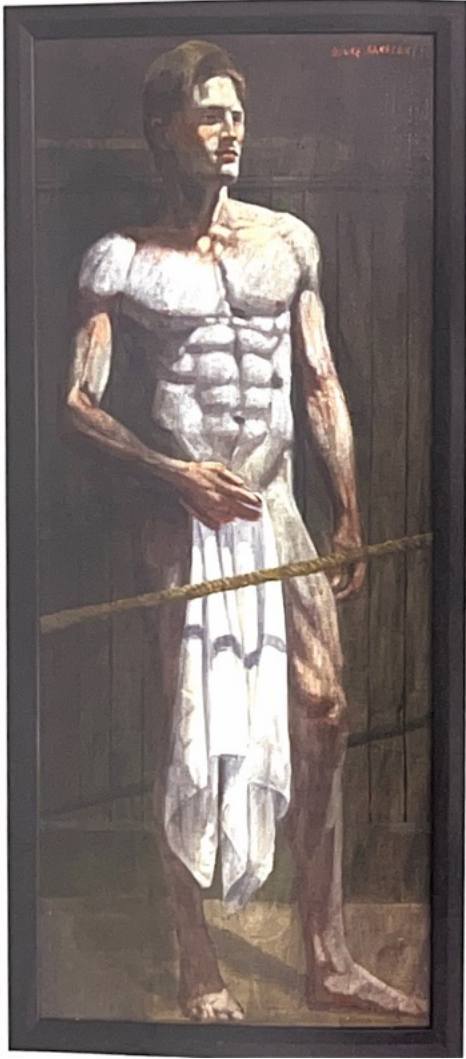
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MARK



BEARD







MARK BEARD is an artist accomplished in multiple media and whose alter ego Bruce Sargeant creates a convincingly vintage exploration of the male form. *Physique Pictorial* talked with Beard's gallerist, Brian Clamp of ClampArt NYC for this interview.

What can you tell us about how you discovered Mark's work?

I first saw Mark Beard's work in a gallery exhibition in New York City in the 1990s. I fell in love with a huge canvas portraying a team of hockey players. The paintings were credited to Bruce Sargeant. I was viewing the show with a professor friend, and we were both bowled over that neither of us ever had heard of this fantastic turn-of-the-century painter. However, once we started digging through Sargeant's elaborate biography at the gallery's front desk, we soon realized that Sargeant was a mythic figure.

There are so many gay erotic painters and illustrators and photographers. What do you see in Beard's paintings that rises above, that distinguishes his work?

First and foremost, Beard's draftsmanship really is of note. Beard draws from live nude models nearly every day, which helps keep him in top form. But he truly is gifted with an amazing eye and a wonderfully wild imagination.

Are there artists whose work is most comparable to Mark's?

J. C. Leyendecker is the first artist who comes to mind. However, that being said, Mark Beard's alter ego Bruce Sargeant takes from the style of many historic artists, including John Singer Sargent, Winslow Homer, Thomas Eakins, etc.

How did he come up with this alter ego?

Mark jokes that he wanted to invent a gay painter whose works would not need to be taken down when one's mother came to visit. Although that is a simplistic reduction of Bruce Sargeant, that is part of what sparked the initial idea.

Do you think he'd continue doing other, similar throwback series from different eras since he

has done several already?

Bruce Sargeant is just one of many of Mark's alter egos. Others include Bruce Sargeant's mentor, Hippolyte-Alexandre Michallon; Bruce Sargeant's best friend, Edith Thayer Cromwell; and Bruce Sargeant's archenemy, Brechtoldt Streeruwitz; all of whom paint in very different styles. Mark Beard is constantly inventing new imaginary artists, and recent ones have included Buggereau and Beard Beard.

Is the market still strong for paintings? Has digital art had any impact on the original art market?

The market for figurative painting is stronger than ever. Digital art has not had a negative impact.

What do you tell collectors about which pieces to buy when they find an artist like this and there are several or many different works available?

First and foremost, they should trust their gut. Your first reaction is usually the right one. Nonetheless, ask as many questions as possible.

Do Beard's paintings fit right in next to vintage works, of which you have sold many?

Yes, Mark Beard's paintings work well with historical works, and I know many collectors who have a mix of both in their collections.

Is there one work by Mark in the Sargeant series that you think is the masterpiece?

Mark has been painting for so many years, he has many masterpieces! I can go back through his nine solo exhibitions at the gallery and identify at least one iconic canvas from each and every show.

You can follow Brian Clamp and ClampArt NYC on his IG @clampartnyc. Or visit his gallery online at www.clampart.com



All images © Mark Beard [Bruce Sargeant (1898-1938)] and Courtesy of the artist and CLAMP, New York.

- Pages 76-77: "Three Men Bathing," n.d.; 38 x 96.25 inches.
- Page 78: "Six Rowers Changing Clothes," n.d.; 96 x 50 inches.
- Page 79: "Eight Rowers Changing Clothes," n.d.; 96 x 84 inches.
- Page 80: "Nude Male with Towel," n.d.; 81.875 x 34.25 inches.
- Page 81: "Hunter and Man Undressing," n.d.; 84 x 36 inches.
- Pages 82-83: "Two Men Throwing, One Running," n.d.; 35.75 x 59 inches.
- Page 85: "Seven Rowers," n.d.; 96 x 84 inches.