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AMERICAN

# art

PREVIEWS OF WORKS FOR SALE AT  
UPCOMING SHOWS COAST TO COAST

NOVEMBER 2008

# COLLECTOR





## UPCOMING SHOW

*Up to 20 works on show*  
Nov. 11-Dec. 20, 2008  
George Billis Gallery  
511 West 25th Street  
New York, NY 10001  
(212) 645-2621

• SHOW LOCATION NEW YORK, NY

# KENNY HARRIS

## The art of the roadtrip

When a European reality television show needed an American artist for the subject of a new show, they turned to Kenny Harris, whose diverse, all-encompassing style and independent spirit made him a perfect candidate for the show.

"The idea of the show was to find an artist and see if you can make your way across the country and survive only on selling your art," says Harris. "It was a 40-day trip, from New York to Los Angeles, and I had to trade or sell the art for everything, from room and board to transportation. I'm not sure why I did it, I'll figure that out later, but it had something to do with just wanting to try it and finding an intense way to see the country, the small towns, and have interesting experiences along the way."

Harris spent the time selling drawings and sketches on the road and using others to trade for things like restaurant meals and a hot air balloon ride and a 119-mile motorized rafting trip from Moab, Utah, to Lake Powell.

The television show, which will air later in the fall, will culminate in this art exhibition that will include all the work—from drawings and sketches to fully realized oil paintings—that Harris completed while on the road. The body of work is interesting as it shows Harris' ability to capture random moments of beauty and simplicity as well as an innate understanding of composition, be it a landscape or a cityscape.

"The work in the show is really a mixture of things," says Harris. "Some landscapes, some interiors, some of the floors I slept on, the couches



WATERTOWER, WINDSOR, MO, OIL ON CANVAS, 12 X 8"



*The Gallery Says . . .*

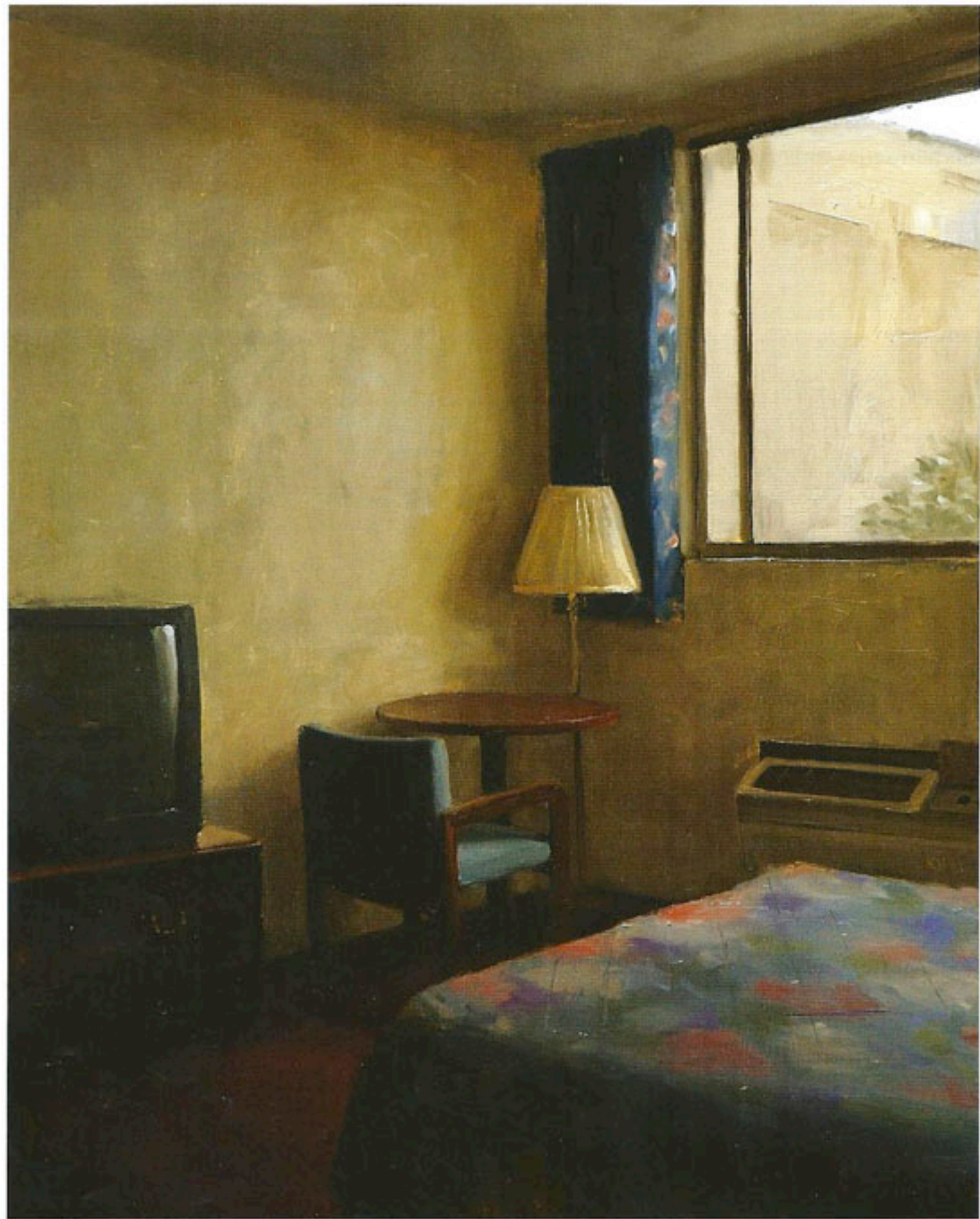
"Kenny Harris' road trip cross-country gave him endless inspiration. From the change of geographic scenery and the variety of people he met, Kenny created a body of work that glorifies the banal and celebrates the beauty of our country. As always, the artist paints light, space and reflections, but this new series embraces Americana."

— *George Billis, Owner, George Billis Gallery*



BEYBLE SKID-OUT, MISSOURI, OIL ON CANVAS, 16 X 18"





HOTEL ROOM, INDIANAPOLIS, IN, OIL ON CANVAS, 20 X 16"





EMILIO'S FLOOR, BEACON, NY, OIL ON PANEL, 12 X 8"



PAINTBOX EASEL BY THE HIGHWAY, STATELINE, NEVADA, OIL ON PANEL, 12 X 8"

I slept on, street scenes of small towns, a derelict loft above a convenience store. What ties them together, though, is that they are all things I saw and I connected with and touched me in some way. I'm exhausted from the trip and am still recovering."

Harris had interesting experiences and encounters all along the way, but some of the most unusual experiences came when he ended up in Las Vegas.

"Vegas was interesting, to say the least," says Harris. "I was at the Golden Gate Casino and talked to the owner and did a drawing for gambling chips. Then, someone bought another drawing for \$200

and I gambled that away at the craps table. The next night I went to the Tropicana, where they had these old-school showgirls and they let me do drawings of them backstage. I haven't shown the drawings yet but they are amazing and I might include them in the exhibition."

Overall, Harris loved the time he spent on the road and has nothing but good things to say about the people he met and the places he was able to visit.

"It was amazing," says Harris. "The generosity of people is pretty astounding. People didn't know me but seemed to respond to the maverick spirit of what I was doing. It was that attitude, 'What

you are doing sounds difficult, I'll help you.' It's really the American way. I did one interesting painting in Kansas City called *Portrait of Lucy* and it was an assistant on the crew and I did it full on, Sargent style, and sold it to a collector for \$2,500. He didn't know me at all but we did the whole thing in one day. I ordered a custom linen, did a quick sketch, figured out the composition and then finished the oil painting. It was stressful and crushing but awesome."●

For a direct link to the exhibiting gallery go to   
[www.americanartcollector.com](http://www.americanartcollector.com)