

**TOM
WESSELMANN**



CONTENTS

- **IMPORTANT** FACTS
- **DETAIL** IMAGES
- **MARKET** ANALYSIS
- **TOP** WORKS SOLD AT AUCTION
- **COMPARABLE** WORKS SOLD AT AUCTION
- **MUSEUM** COLLECTIONS
- **HISTORY**



TOM WESSELMANN (1931-2004)

Smoker #21

1975

Signed and dated on the overturn edge, "Wesselmann 75"

oil on shaped canvas

74 ½ x 67 ½ in. (189.2 x 171.4 cm)



WATCH VIDEO

PROVENANCE

Estate of the Artist

Robert Miller Gallery, New York

Private Collection, Japan, acquired from the above, 2006

Private Collection of Yusaku Maezawa, Japan, acquired from the above, 2012

Sotheby's New York: Contemporary Art Evening Sale, May 18, 2017, lot 28

Private Collection, acquired from the above sale

Christie's London: 20th/21st Century Evening Sale, Tuesday, June 28, 2022, lot 73

Heather James Fine Art

EXHIBITION

New York, Sidney Janis Gallery, *New Paintings by Tom Wesselmann*, April-May 1976, no. 9

— IMPORTANT FACTS

- Apart from perceiving smoking as cool and chic, a painting such as *Smoker #21* is the consummate celebration of Wesselmann's abilities as a painter.
- Like all of Wesselmann's prodigious scaled artworks, *Smoker #21* has the commanding presence of an altarpiece.
- It was produced during long hours in his impressive Manhattan studio in Cooper Square, and the result is one of sultry dynamism, a painting that flaunts his graphic supremacy and potent realism varnished with his patented sex appeal flair.

DETAIL IMAGES







MARKET ANALYSIS

Tom WESSELMANN

Statistical Analysis

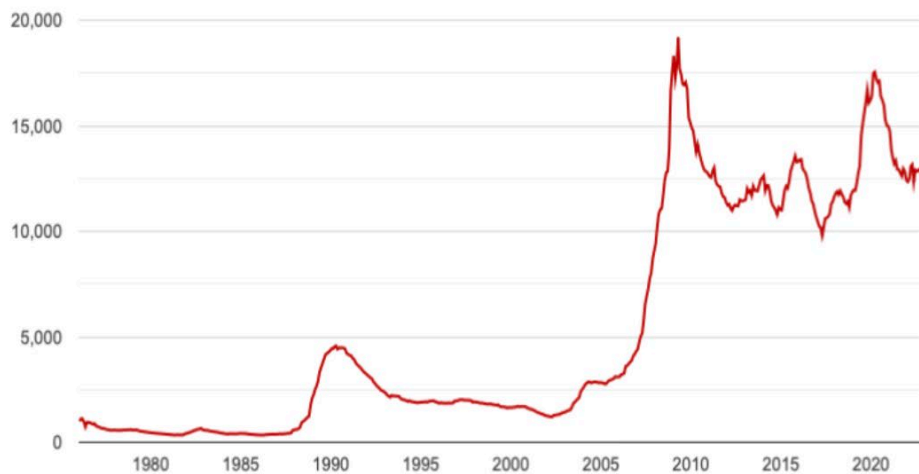
Number of lots	1718
Change from 1/1976 - 12/2022	+1167.6%
Compound Annual Growth Rate	5.5

Revaluation

Input value	0 USD
Revalue date	01/1976
Revaluation	0 USD

Central 80%-USD (Nominal terms)

AMR Art Market Research



Since 1976 Wesselmann's market has grown with a 5.5% annual rate of return.

TOP WORKS SOLD AT AUCTION



Great American Nude no. 48
1963

oil and collage on canvas, acrylic
and collage on board, enameled
radiator and assemblage
84 x 106 in. (213.3 x 269.2 cm)

**Sold at Sotheby's New York:
May 2008 for \$10,681,000**



Smoker no. 9
1973

oil and Liquitex gesso on linen
83 x 89 ½ in. (210.8 x 227.3 cm)

**Sold at Christie's New York:
May 2008 for \$6,761,000**

TOP WORKS SOLD AT AUCTION



Smoker no. 17
1973
oil on shaped canvas
96 x 131 in. (243.8 x 332.7 cm)

**Sold at Sotheby's New York:
May 2007 for \$5,864,000**

COMPARABLE WORKS SOLD AT AUCTION



Smoker #9

1973

acrylic on linen

83 x 89 ½ in. (210.8 x 227.3 cm)

**Sold at Christie's New York:
May 2008 for \$6,761,000**

Smoker #17

1975

oil on shaped canvas

96 x 131 in. (243.8 x 332.7 cm)

**Sold at Sotheby's New York:
May 2007 for \$5,864,000**



COMPARABLE WORKS SOLD AT AUCTION



Smoker #5 (Mouth #19)
1969

oil on shaped canvas
96 $\frac{7}{8}$ x 66 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. (246 x 168 cm)

**Sold at Sotheby's London:
March 2017 for \$4,703,900**

WESSELMANN IN MUSEUM COLLECTIONS



**Museum of Modern Art
New York**

Smoker, 1 (Mouth, 12)
1967

oil on canvas

108 $\frac{7}{8}$ x 85 in. (276.6 x 216 cm)

Minneapolis Institute of Art

Expo Mouth #10
1967

oil on canvas

119 x 106 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. (302.3 x 270.5 cm)



WESSELMANN IN MUSEUM COLLECTIONS



**Crystal Bridges Museum of
American Art, Arkansas**

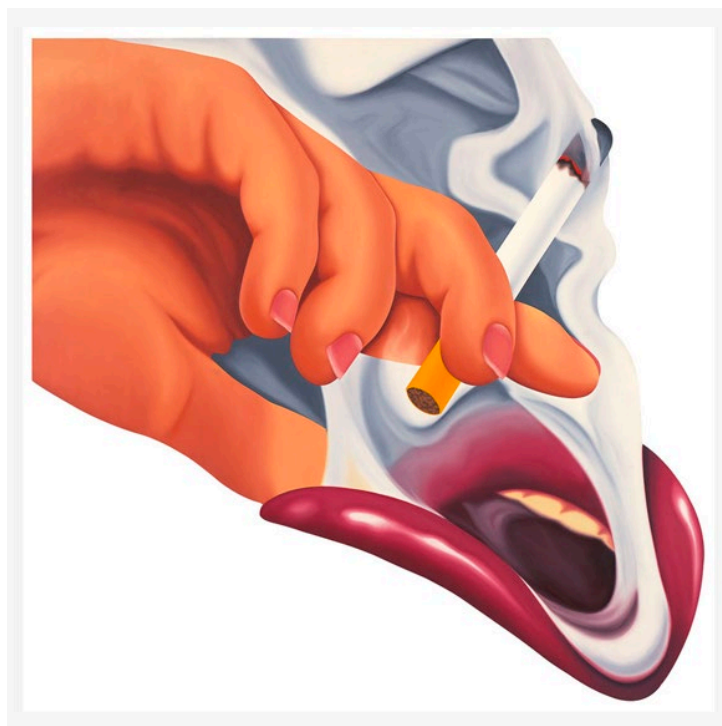
Smoker #9
1973

acrylic on linen
83 x 89 ½ in. (210.8 x 227.3 cm)

**Cranbrook Art Museum
Michigan**

Smoker #18
1975

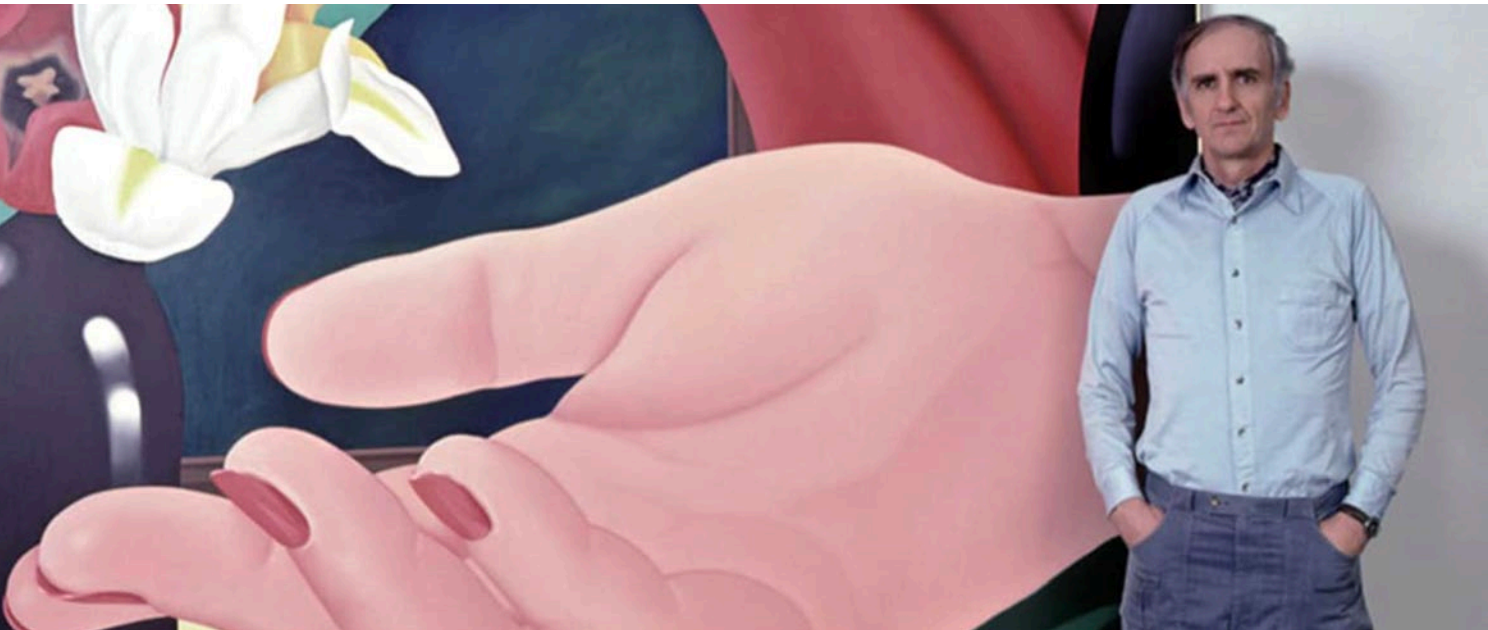
oil on canvas
89 ¾ x 91 ¾ in. (227.9 x 23 cm)



"The prime mission of my art, in the beginning, and continuing still, is to make figurative art as exciting as abstract art."

Tom Wesselmann

HISTORY



Having unwittingly inserted himself into the Pop Art conversation with his *Great American Nude* series, Tom Wesselmann spent the rest of his career explaining that his motivation was not to focus excessively on a subject matter or to generate social commentary but instead, to give form to what titillated him most as beautiful and exciting. His disembodied *Mouth* series of 1965 established that an image did not have to rely on extraneous elements to communicate meaning. But it was his follow-up performances with the *Smoker* series and its seductive, fetish allure that raised his standing among true sybarites everywhere. Apart from perceiving smoking as cool and chic, a painting such as *Smoker #21* is the consummate celebration of Wesselmann's abilities as a painter. Enticed by the undulating smoke, Wesselmann took great pains to accurately depict its sinuous movements and observe the momentary pauses that heightened his appreciation of its sensual nature. Like all of Wesselmann's prodigious scaled artworks, *Smoker*

#21 has the commanding presence of an altarpiece. It was produced during long hours in his impressive Manhattan studio in Cooper Square, and the result is one of sultry dynamism – evocative, sensual, alluring, sleek, luscious, and perhaps, even sinister – a painting that flaunts his graphic supremacy and potent realism varnished with his patented sex appeal flair.



Tom Wesselmann with his wife, Claire, and the in-progress "Great American Nude #37", 1962

Tom Wesselmann expanded upon the success of his Great American Nudes by focusing on singular features of his subjects and began painting his Mouth series in 1965. In 1967, Wesselmann's friend Peggy Sarno paused for a cigarette while modeling for Wesselmann's *Mouth* series, inspiring his *Smoker* paintings. The wisps of smoke were challenging to paint and required Wesselmann to utilize photographs as source material to capture the smoke's ephemeral nature properly. The images below show Wesselmann photographing his friend, the screenwriter Danièle Thompson, as she posed for some of Wesselmann's source images.

