

Nate Freeman, "Show and Tell: A vaunted bookseller takes the art world by storm," *Vanity Fair*, February 2022

VANITY FAIR

Vanities / Arts & Letters



SHOW AND TELL

A vaunted bookseller takes the art world by storm

Last October the gallerist Harper Levine opened an opulent new space in Los Angeles—the latest move in a rapid rise up the art world ladder. For years Levine was content as the proprietor of Harper's Books, a small East Hampton purveyor of rare volumes. (Bill Clinton was a notable client, as is the artist Richard Prince.) But in 2013, despite having no formal art training, he started staging exhibitions at the store: The Irish artist Genieve Figgis, an early find, labored in obscurity until Prince noticed her on Twitter and gushed to his bookseller. Levine sold her work for less than \$10,000—now, a Figgis painting might go for \$180,000 at auction.

In 2016 Levine opened a small by-appointment gallery on the Upper East Side, and at the end of 2020 a location on the same West 22nd Street block as Hauser & Wirth and Matthew Marks. This March the gallery expands to a second, larger space down that street with an inaugural show of new paintings by Marcus Brutus, a self-taught star in the making, found (again) through social media and an artist referral—Levine saw a painting on Jennifer Guidi's Instagram and DM'd immediately. Since then Brutus has shown twice in the Hamptons, but of the Chelsea solo exhibition, Levine says, "Marcus has seen his career blossom over the past few years, and now he's ready for prime time." So, it appears, is Levine. —Nate Freeman

An *NOI Officer & Korean War Vet 2021*, by Marcus Brutus, on view at Harper's Chelsea 512.