

Phone Apps: Next Generation in Art Marketing

INTERVIEW BY HOLLY DAVIS

YOU HAVE A WEBSITE and a blog, and you know how to use them. So you're up-to-date with your art marketing, right? But wait—have you considered a phone app? A growing number of artists are exploring the capabilities of this new technology. Aaron Westerberg ("Fleeting Moments," *The Artist's Magazine*, November 2010) related to me how he answered the phone app call.

HD: What prompted you to create a phone application for your artwork?

AW: Ever since I saw the iPhone, I thought it could be a fantastic way to display artwork. I was excited when Dianne Dominguez, one of my former students, approached me about creating the app. Social media are changing the way collectors find artists, and being a part of the mobile experience is an important way for every artist to market his or her work. Earlier this year Dominguez's company, EnsoMobile (www.ensomobile.com), did an app for Jeremy Lipking ("Drawing Out the Riches," *The Artist's Magazine*,

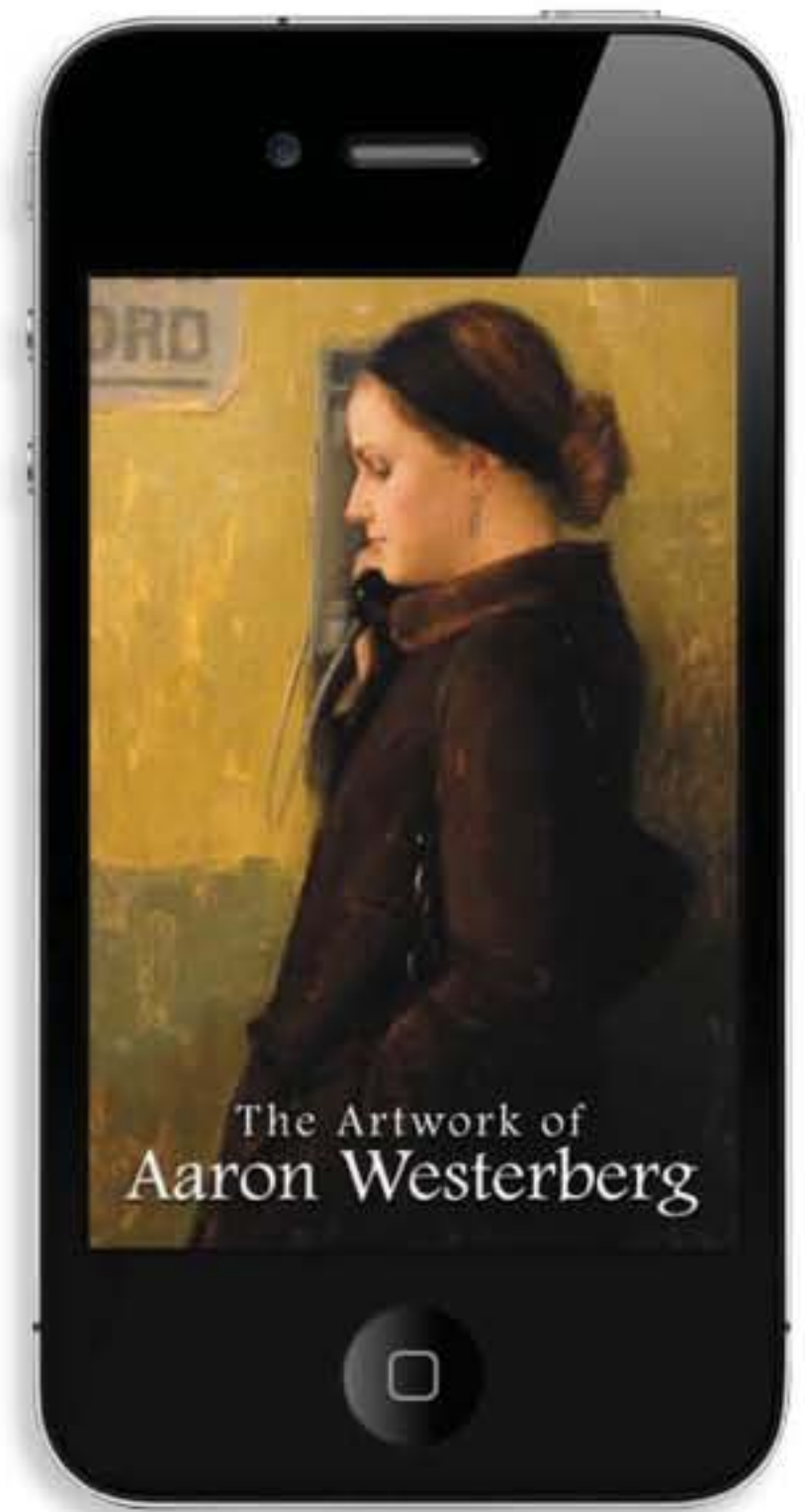
November 2008). Since its release the app has been downloaded nearly 250,000 times.

Other artists who have adopted this technology include Duane Keiser ("Earning His Daily Bread," *The Artist's Magazine*, October 2008), the original "Painting a Day" pioneer, who created an app that he uses to sell his paintings directly in conjunction with his blog. Companies like online social art community DeviantArt.com are designing versions of their websites that look great on smaller screens like phones and tablets. Even museums are getting into this new technology.

How did you go about creating the application, and what were your expenses?

Dominguez and EnsoMobile did the heavy lifting. I just provided the artwork. The Artist Gallery application from EnsoMobile is available to artists for a one-time setup fee. There are no additional costs.

An artist can find more about creating an app by doing a Google search. I found a few different



ABOVE: This is the first page viewers see when they download Aaron Westerberg's phone app.

companies that create artist apps. One is called Artist Sketchbooks (artist-sketchbooks.com), which specializes in conceptual art. My App Builder (myappbuilder.com) creates apps for all kinds of clients—not just artists. Building phone apps is a new and fast-growing industry, so there are many companies offering this service—not just one big conglomerate.

How do you envision this application being used?

The app includes high-quality



LEFT: Clicking on any image in the gallery brings up a full-screen image of that artwork. Clicking a "share" button allows viewers to e-mail the image.

RIGHT: The viewer can scroll through full-screen images.

FAR RIGHT: Potential buyers find essential information about individual pieces on Westerberg's store pages. They can then purchase a piece from the app, link to Westerberg's website or blog, or contact him directly.



Photography by Dianne Dominguez

versions of my paintings, so I think it will be a great promotional tool as well as a source of reference material or inspiration. The app links to my website, where potential students and collectors can find out more about my technique and upcoming shows or workshops.

How and to whom will you distribute the application?

The application "The Artwork of Aaron Westerberg" is available for free via iTunes (itunes.apple.com/us/app/the-artwork-aaron-westerberg/id391278691?mt=8). Anyone who owns an iPhone or iPad can download it. I plan to get the word out through social media outlets such as Facebook and Twitter as well as my website, blog and e-mail newsletters. I have almost 5,000 Facebook friends plus a fan page with 2,000 more contacts. I'm hoping that once the word gets out, things will snowball.

What advantage does a phone application have over other media opportunities, such as a website, e-newsletter or printed brochure?

The phone app doesn't replace other media, but it has several advantages, the first being that it's a new form of technology so it's exciting and fun. It also lets an artist go where the audience is: The number of iPhone subscribers is expected to reach 100 million by the end of 2011. This offers artists an amazing opportunity to reach a worldwide audience that they wouldn't access via standard media outlets.

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Roy Delgado

Influential Art Seen Through a New Lens

Hide/Seek: Difference and Desire in American Portraiture by Jonathan Katz and David C. Ward (Smithsonian Books, 2010)—the catalog for the show of the same name—brings together works that imply or exemplify same-sex desire. Gender ambiguity, nonconformity, duality and masquerade are examined in this first survey of the influence of gay/lesbian imagery on Modern and Postmodern art. In the introductory essay, Katz outlines the shifting definition of *homosexual*; other essays explain the international milieu. Each of the images in the catalog is accompanied by an analysis that puts the work in context.



Smithsonian Books

The "Hide/Seek" exhibition is on view at the Smithsonian's National Portrait Gallery in Washington, D.C., through February 13, 2011. The accompanying book can be purchased at the Smithsonian, by calling 800/322-0344 or online at www.smithsonianstore.com. —C.H. ■



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