

## 5 Late LGBTQ+ Artists Finally Getting Their Due

By Arun Kakar  
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LGBTQ+ artists have long been excluded from popular narratives and public recognition both in art history and the art market. But in recent years, as the art world at large reevaluates its relationship to the past and revises the canon, several previously overlooked names have begun to receive overdue attention from institutions, galleries, auction houses, and collectors.

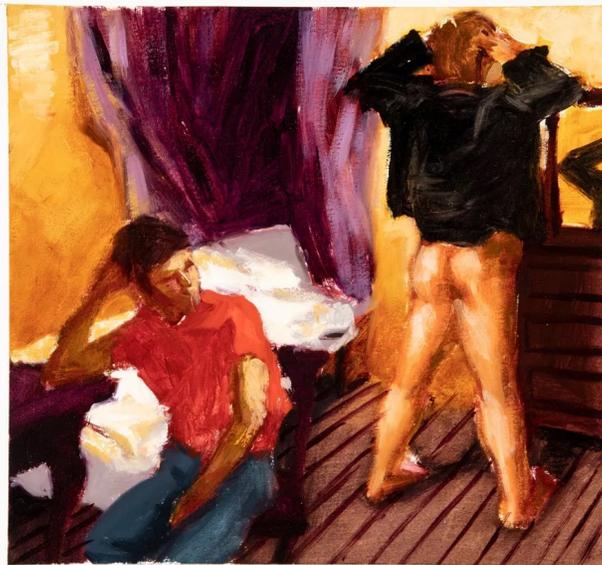
Here, we spotlight five LGBTQ+ artists who, while not fully appreciated during their lifetimes, are being recognized posthumously in the art world today.

### Hugh Steers

B. 1962, Washington, D.C. D. 1995, New York.



Hugh Auchinschloss Steers  
*Mouse & Apple*, 1988  
Rago/Wright/LAMA  
Bidding closed



Hugh Auchinschloss Steers  
*Black Leather Jacket*, 1988  
Heritage Auctions  
Bidding closed

Hugh Steers was an American artist known for his poignant figurative paintings reflecting the physical and emotional impact of the AIDS epidemic. Despite his talent, Steers's work was largely overlooked during his lifetime due to the prevailing abstract and conceptual art movements of the 1980s and '90s, and the societal stigma associated with AIDS. A few galleries and institutions *did* take notice—Steers had half a dozen solo shows between 1989 and his death in 1995, including at New York gallery Richard Anderson and New York University's Grey Art Gallery.

After his death of AIDS-related complications at just 32 years old in 1995, art historians and critics began to reevaluate the artistic responses to the AIDS crisis, and Steers's work started gaining broader attention. A number of key exhibitions of his art, such as at Alexander Gray Associates (which represents the artist's estate and has been showing his work for more than a decade), and the 2009 Visual AIDS exhibition "That Soft Glow of Brutality: The Art of Hugh Steers" Visual AIDS later published the first Steers monograph in 2015. In 2021, mega-gallery David Zwirner featured Steers in a solo show in Paris as part of its "More Life" series of exhibitions to commemorate 40 years since cases of HIV/AIDS were first identified.

By last year, it was clear that Steers's work had made its way to the wish lists of collectors. Last July, Sotheby's sold two works—*Hudson Bay* (1994) for \$69,300, 73% above its mid-estimate; and *Red Velvet Curtain* (1992) for \$20,160, more than double its mid-estimate—and several impressive sales have followed. A new record was set for the artist's work when *At the Amoire* (1994) sold at Phillips New York in May 2023 for \$133,350, 167% above its mid-estimate.