

CRISTIN TIERNEY



## “We’re all storytellers.” – Skoto Aghahowa, Cristin Tierney, and Tarrah Von Lintel on Their Responses to the Ever-Changing Art World

By Beatrice Crow • March 2024



*Tarrah Von Lintel, Skoto Aghahowa, and Cristin Tierney.*

Like starting any business, opening a gallery can be daunting. For gallery owners, weathering the storms of financial crises, the ups and downs of the art market, and the rapid changes in the economic landscape since COVID-19 requires intuition, flexibility, and above all, a steadfast dedication to the mission.

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While no two roads to starting a gallery are the same, Skoto Aghahowa, Cristin Tierney, and Tarrah Von Lintel each opened their respective galleries at moments of economic turmoil—Skoto Gallery and Von Lintel Gallery in the recession of the early 1990s, and Cristin Tierney after the recession in 2008. In the first-ever round-table Gallery Chat, Aghahowa, Tierney, and Von Lintel compare notes on the changes to the gallery landscape throughout the years, their advice to young dealers on navigating moments of crisis, and their paths through the art world.

**What was your first job in the art world, and did it inform your career trajectory? Was there anything interesting that you learned there?**

**Cristin:** I started in the art world at the Corcoran Museum, which no longer even exists. It was 1993. I just graduated and finished my undergraduate degree and it was the middle of the culture wars. Not long before I started there, the Corcoran canceled their Mapplethorpe exhibition under great duress. And it was complete chaos. I mean, it was a recession in the rest of the world. It was an absolute goat rodeo, but it was great if you were 22 and wanted to learn things because there was certainly a lot of opportunity. “Oh, you can type? Great. Help us with the database. Oh, you’re not afraid of people? Great. We need you in this membership meeting. Do you know anything about art history? Great. Please catalog this.”

I started in the event department there and I actually began as an intern. It took about two weeks before I was hired on an hourly basis. Then I worked part of the time in events and part of the time in development and occasionally in curatorial. I saw how an institution worked; I learned what it meant to be part of a team. I also learned a lot about crisis management in my first few months working in the art world. But I think, most importantly, it really made me think about values. It really made me think a lot about why people are in this world, why do people do this? Why on earth would you stay at an institution like the Corcoran when it just seemed like the whole place was on fire?

That commitment to artists and that commitment in Washington, D.C. to freedom of speech, those were all really very present. I do think that had an outsized impact on me; it’s always there in the back of my mind when I’m thinking about what artists I want to work with. It’s always there when I’m making decisions.

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*Cristin Tierney and Alois Kronschlaeger.*

**Skoto:** For me, I've always strived to be independent, in a way. I have never worked in any art institution. Really, one of the things that has always motivated me was the lack of diversity, equity, and inclusion in the art world. So, with that in mind, I started off by doing salon shows at Salon d'Afrique, a space in Harlem hosted by Rashidah Ismaili Abubakr during the 1980s. A poet, fiction writer, and activist, she regularly organizes cultural events celebrating the Black experience that attract a diverse and conscientious audience of artists and scholars living in or passing through the city.

Then, in 1990, there was a major exhibition at The Studio Museum in Harlem titled *Contemporary African Artists: Changing Traditions* that brought together works by about eight or nine artists living and working in the African continent. One of the aims of the exhibition was to challenge stereotypes of the "anonymous African artist." It was a rare treat and an eye-opening experience for me, and I could relate to the works on display. I visited the exhibition several times during its run and was fortunate to meet and interact with some of the artists, as well as experience the richness and diversity of contemporary African art on display in real-time.

Also, from 1990-1991, I lived in Paris, France, where there was a very active art scene centered around contemporary African art from the Francophone and North African countries at the time, which broadened my understanding of a larger African art scene. These experiences helped propel us to seriously consider opening a space where contemporary African art could be exhibited on a regular basis in New York City, a space

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where art enthusiasts and collectors could engage with contemporary African art made by contemporary artists in close and intimate proximity.



*Ornette Coleman, inaugural exhibition curator on opening day at Skoto Gallery, February, 1992.*

**Tarrah:** For my answer to make sense, I'm going to go back a little further. I studied finance. I was an investment banker in London working for Salomon Brothers on the trading floor. Then the Lockerbie bombing happened and the guy who sat next to me on the trading floor was in that plane and that messed me up. I decided that life could be too short, and I was going to go find a job that I loved, something that I really loved to do instead. So I quit and I made a list of all the things I liked to do and art was one of them. And art won out.

I proceeded to read every book, everything that I could possibly get my hands on, and visit every gallery and museum in Paris. I'd moved to Paris also to help my father on the side. And then I got a job at FIAC, the art fair. I absolutely loved the camaraderie of the art fairs. This was in 1990, something like that, when the galleries weren't as big. There were big galleries, but one of the booths that I helped out at was Anthony d'Offay. He was on the ground himself packing up stuff and doing things. You would not see something like that today.

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*Tarrah Von Lintel and Mark Sheinkman at The Art Show, 2023.*

**Cristin:** When you first started with the art fairs, did you feel like—when you looked around—the art fair was something that was growing and changing and that it was becoming a bigger part of the art world? Or not at that time? Did you see it coming, what it has become?

**Tarrah:** No. I mean, at the time, there was Art Basel, there was Art Cologne, FIAC, Chicago, and that was it for the big fairs. The fairs weren't as large and people would actually show their entire program, as opposed to now, [where galleries] are urged to show one artist or two artists because you don't want the booth to look like a fair within a fair, which I understand, but I also feel that's a pity because I think there are a lot of advantages if you can actually show your program if you're in a different city.

People in the art world always have these stories about when or where they were when they realized that they wanted to work in the art world forever. I'm wondering if there was a moment for each of you where it clicked into place that being in a gallery, specifically, was what you wanted to do.

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**Tarrah:** For me, the art fairs made me want to be a part of that family. I wanted to be a part of that group. I loved every bit of it. And you have to remember, I came from investment banking, which is just a completely different environment; and then I made it happen.

**Skoto:** There were two landmark exhibitions in the 1980s that highlighted the lack of diversity in the art world at the time. One was [\*Primitivism in 20th Century Art\*](#), organized by William Rubin at MoMA in New York, and the other was [\*Magician de la Terre\*](#), which was organized by Jean Hubert Martin in Paris at the Pompidou Center.

*Primitivism in 20th Century Art* was notable for its lack of tangible input by artists and art historians of African descent. There was classical art from Africa made by unknown artists that were on display alongside works by modern Western artists like Picasso and Matisse, who drew upon aspects of primitive art and culture that were valorized. The Pompidou Centre exhibition, which sought to address some of the issues surrounding the exclusion of non-Western artists from the global discourse on contemporary art, was equally flawed in its selection criteria of works and artists from the non-Western world which privileged self-taught artists and the exotic over their academic-trained contemporaries.

Both exhibitions generated widespread criticism from the art community that helped to usher in an era of globalization in the art world and the quest for equity, diversity, and inclusion—which, in turn, invariably led to the formation of the gallery in 1992.



*Skoto, Okwui Enwezor and Isaach de Bankolé, 1994 at reception for the Cote de Ivoire-born actor Bankolé.*

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**Cristin:** I mean, I knew from the time I was in college, and went to Paris, that I wanted to be in the art world. But I did not think that I wanted to own a gallery at all, not until I had been in this world for quite some time. It was during the financial crisis, really, in 2008 when everything sort of stopped short. The building in Chelsea that my office was in was full of art-adjacent businesses. There was a framer, photographers, and an oil paint distributor, and everybody was gone in six months [after the economy crashed].

The whole building was empty and my landlord was literally wandering the halls one day, and we got talking about all the empty spaces and all the smaller galleries that were gone. And he said, “why don’t you curate some shows?” And we did. It was all working with living artists in these empty spaces. He gave me absolutely enormous spaces for free and said, “if you sell anything, split the profits,” which, it was 2009, so there were no profits, but it was a great experience and it was so much fun. I loved the strategic thinking and I loved the problem-solving.

I actually really loved working with artists. I realized that one of the reasons I never thought I would be a good gallerist is that I never thought I could say no to artists, and I never thought I could be tough enough to toe the line between “I know what you want to do,” and “here’s what we should do.” I mean, I frankly think I’m still pretty bad at that and I’m pretty indulgent on the artist side of things. But I love artists and I think artists are magic people who deserve special status in our world. That’s kind of where the switch happened. I decided I should open up a space and then a real estate agent called and said, “I know a great space for you.” I went and I saw the space and I said, “Yes, I have to have it.” And that’s how it happened. I mean, it was really quite lucky in that way.

**It’s interesting to me that all three of you opened galleries in financially tough moments, right? Cristin, in the crash around 2008, and Tarrah, Skoto, I think you both have recently celebrated the 30th anniversaries of your galleries, so you’re opening them in the early nineties, in a kind of economically fraught moment. And of course, may we never repeat any of those moments, but Tarrah and Skoto, do either of you feel like there was an opportunity in that moment because we were in a recession?**

**Tarrah:** I think for me what was important when I started in the art world [was that] things were already going badly. So I was never spoiled in the way that many other gallerists were. I didn’t pick up any bad habits, which I think is something that worked in my favor when I opened the gallery because I knew it was tough. I knew exactly what I was getting into. So I think, in a way, that’s a much better way to start than if things are going gangbusters and then you head into a big recession. I think just keeping track of money is an important part.

**Cristin:** There’s no indulgence. You must meet that budget because there’s no help coming if you don’t.

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**Skoto:** The economic downturn at that time [actually] played to our advantage, because the first place we got was on Prince Street. It was a street-level space with a beautiful garden in the back.

Prince Street, east of Broadway and close to the Bowery, was a very good location. The Museum for African Art was a mere 10-minute walk from us, and SoHo was then the hub of the New York art scene. There was no audience for contemporary African art in New York when we opened the gallery in February 1992, and almost no one knew that Africa even had something called “contemporary African culture.” We literally had to invent an audience for our program.

The garden at the back of the gallery became the site for very stimulating, impromptu conversations among African and African Diaspora artists, writers, and scholars who were focused on the progression of modern and contemporary African art. The push for the publication of the influential [NKA: Journal of Contemporary African Art](#) in 1994 by Okwui Enwezor came out of such conversations.

**How did you start to choose who you were going to show and begin those relationships when you were first starting a space and first going out on a limb and opening this space? What was that process like?**

**Skoto:** Our first exhibition at the gallery was curated by the renowned American jazz luminary Ornette Coleman. It was a group show of African artists that included [Bruce Onobrakpeya](#), Saheed Pratt, Obiora Anidi, and Ben Ajaero, among others. This was followed by several solo exhibitions of African artists as part of our “Art in Africa” exhibition series. Soon enough, word got around town that something different was happening on Prince Street. Many artists were interested in our program and wanted to work with us.



*Left to right: Mel Edwards, Skoto Aghahowa, Stephen Prokuniar, Richard Hunt, Alix du Serech and David Prokuniar at the reception for Richard Hunt-Stephen Prokuniar exhibition in 2007.*



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**Cristin:** It's funny, people are like, "how do you decide what artists you want to work with?" Well, at the beginning, you're lucky if any of them will agree to work with you. [Jokingly] "Hi, I have no track record. I've never really done this before, but I have a big building in Chelsea; would you like to show some work? I don't actually know if I can sell any of it, but maybe, I mean, we'll see how it goes. Would you like to join?"

That's sort of how it starts. [Then] one artist leads to another artist leads to another artist. There are lots of artists and artworks that I see at art fairs or museums, and I track those people down or have conversations with them, but I do really think that part of the way that your program grows is through the artist themselves. You're just there along for the ride and hoping to occasionally have semi-intelligent input once in a while.

**Cristin, do you feel like when you're thinking about an artist and your relationship with the artist in terms of their career, do you want to let it unfold totally organically, or do you see your role there as along for the ride with the artists? Do you feel like you have a position to shape it in some way or to provide feedback that will inform their trajectory?**

**Cristin:** I think it's a partnership. As far as the content of the art or what artists make or what they do as artists, that's entirely up to them. I love to do studio visits and I love to talk about the work, and if an artist asks me, "what do you think about this?" Or "what does it make you think of?" I am a hundred percent there for those conversations. I mean, it's one of the great gifts in this world as far as I'm concerned; but when it comes to the rest of it, when it comes to conversations with museums, conversations with collectors, what are we going to show and how are we going to show it? How are we going to contextualize it? All of those things, that's a much bigger conversation. I would say that I am a little bit more hands-on with that.

It's ultimately up to the artist, but I don't think that anybody's career in 2023 unfolds organically. I mean, things can take unexpected twists and turns. Hopefully there are great twists and turns, but I think it's really important, again, as part of that partnership, if you're in an art fair and a curator that you weren't expecting walks into that booth, that part's organic, but getting that curator then into the artist's studio and signed up to do an exhibition for that artist and everything that comes along with it, that's not organic, that's my job. That's on me.

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*Installation view of "Mary Lucier: Leaving Earth" (Cristin Tierney Gallery, New York, January 19 - March 2, 2024). Photo by Adam Reich.*

**Tarrah, you've talked about the difference between working with younger artists and mid-career artists and how that relationship is very different at a younger stage. Could you talk a little bit about that in your program?**

**Tarrah:** I think when you start working with an artist, you have to get to a point with that artist where there's trust, and sometimes that comes faster, and sometimes that takes a longer period of time. But once there is that trust, then I find I have yet to meet an artist who doesn't value an honest opinion. One of the problems they face is if they show their artwork to friends and family, the typical response is, "Wow, that's fantastic!" but that's really not helpful. When I critique or give my opinion, I make sure that the artist understands that I'm coming from a dealer's point of view and I'm bringing some very practical ideas to the table. It can be as simple as a horizontal format versus a vertical format, or sizes. I think that's actually one of the things that artists value the most is honest feedback, but I would never tell them what to paint.

**Skoto:** Some of the artists we work with at the gallery live and work outside of the US, in Africa, Europe, and the Caribbean. Some of them already have very strong reputations back home and are seasoned artists, while others are relatively young. For most of these artists, showing at the gallery was probably their first exhibition in a New York City gallery, where their works might be unfamiliar to the audience.

Artists want a direct and honest opinion from you as a gallerist, and you have to be able to convince them to be patient while insisting on the consistency and quality of the artist's work over a long period. I still remember the first time we showed works by the Ghanaian artist El Anatsui at the gallery in the 1990s. There was practically no audience for his work

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at that time. Today he is among the most highly recognized artists in the world. It can take time for the audience to catch up to the work of an artist.



*Aimé Mpane, "Bach to Congo," installation view, 2006-2007. Courtesy Skoto Gallery.*

**Tarrah:** If I may just add in my case, because I didn't go the typical trajectory and I didn't study art history, when I was starting to get into the art world, I made it a point to become friends with artists. And even in Paris, while I was working for other galleries and I became the director of [Thaddeus Ropac](#), I still kept all these relationships going. When I left and opened my own gallery, the first people I went to were my best friends. I had met [David Row](#), so I showed David Row, and then through David Row, I met this group of New York artists in the New York School of Abstraction, [Stephen Ellis](#) and [John Zinsser](#), and then [Jamie Nares](#) and on and on and on.

**Cristin:** It's true. It was [Joe Fig](#), who had been my friend for years, who convinced me that I should open up a gallery. It's totally the artist's fault.

**Tarrah:** The reason why I opened a gallery in New York is because my artists, David Row and Stephen Ellis and John Zinsser and [Lydia Dona](#) got together and asked and said, "have you ever thought about opening a gallery in New York?" And once I had that bug in my head, I couldn't get rid of it, so I made it happen.

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*Tarah Von Lintel at The Art Show 2022  
with fashion icons Robert Verdi and  
Jerome LaMaar.*

**If you could all share what your advice would be to an aspiring dealer in 2023, what would you say?**

**Skoto:** I tell them to stay focused. Don't look for that quick, short-term return. It is long-term, strategic planning, so stay focused. I always tell them to be deliberate in their decision-making process and be confident in their decisions. You must learn to make up your own "Top Ten." Don't let anybody impose theirs on you. Don't listen to what anybody's telling you in terms of what is trendy and what is not trendy. Just believe in yourself and go with it. Be honest and deal with what it is. Do what is right. Do what is right by you and what is right by the artist.

**Cristin:** Something that I always say to people is never forget who your first and most important clients are. It's the artists. You have, of course, also clients who are acquiring their work and supporting their work. But you should always think of your artists as your clients and do for them just the same as you would do for the collectors and the curators and everyone else. You represent them. You should always have that set of clients' best interests at heart, first and foremost.

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The second thing is something that somebody told me; [Charlie Moffett Sr.](#) and I had a conversation years ago. We were talking about an older generation of dealers and how they did what they did. And essentially, to him, the common thread was that their client bases were not necessarily broad, they were deep. Those people, if you treat them right, if you invest in them the way that they're investing in you, intellectually and emotionally, not just financially, they're going to support you.

I think that's a really important thing for the long-term success of a gallery. You want to focus on having relationships that are deep rather than broad, because that broader audience or market might be gone tomorrow. They might get preoccupied with NFTs, or if the stock market plunges, they're out of there. But the relationships that run deep, the relationships that are formed with people who believe in the same sorts of artists and artworks and the same sorts of values that you believe in, they're with you for the long run, and that's the depth and that's what you need to stay alive for decades, rather than years or months.



*Cristin Tierney Gallery artists on a Zoom call with gallery staff during the Covid-19 lockdown.*

**Tarah:** I have two things to say about that. I do think that the artist is your biggest asset, so treating the artists with respect and paying them is really important. I believe that I have a very good reputation in dealing with artists. I'm paying them. And so when I approach a new artist, they're going to ask their friends, and then their friends say, "Well, we've never had a problem." I think that's really important.

Cristin, my experience with the deep versus broad has changed. It used to be deep, but since COVID-19, it has moved to broad. Most of the people who were the deep collectors in my case, stopped in COVID.

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They didn't like the digital art fairs or the digital viewing rooms, and the fact that the social part of the art market was completely removed, they lost their interest because they didn't need more art. I mean, these people have so much art that they have warehouses full of it. So I've actually been fighting with this problem—I had deep relationships, but I'm getting calls from them now saying, "I bought this from you 29 years ago. What can we do with it?" So then you try to either resell it or you try to have it donated to a museum, which makes everyone happy, but that's a tremendous amount of work for no money.

**Cristin:** Did the heavy emphasis on digital outreach broaden your client base? It did somewhat for us but I didn't find that it was a huge amount the way that you read in some of the publications for us.

**Tarrah:** No, I can't say that that's the case. In terms of broadening, I don't have this core, really healthy, strong core group of collectors anymore. I now am selling just to a wider audience, but not as deeply. Not as much. I mean, I wish that would change, but the younger generations, they're not "the crazy collector." For me, a collector is somebody who keeps buying even though they can't hang anything anymore. I find that a lot of the buying that's happening now is either for investment purposes or for the piece above the couch.

**Cristin:** Yeah, it's not patronage in the same sense either. It's not about supporting an artist, really.

**Tarrah:** No.

**Cristin:** Yeah, there's a lot less of that, sadly, I think. Skoto, what's your experience been?

**Skoto:** Unfortunately, art has become something of an investment rather than just buying work because you like it, because it's something that you want to live with for a long, long time. My experience has been a mixed bag. Thankfully, you have some collectors who still buy work because they want to support what you're doing and because they like what you're showing.

At the same time, you also have collectors who come in and sporadically buy work, because they figure it is something they can flip in a few years and make a fortune out of it, which is unfortunate because it just kills the spirit for both the artist and the dealer. But that's the world we live in now.

**How do you feel like your conversations with your clients have changed as the digital landscape has changed over the course of the last three years?**

**Tarrah:** I mean, one of the big problems now is getting people to actually look at work in person. The difference between a two by three inch .jpeg and a work of art that's six feet

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by eight feet, that doesn't translate. I keep thinking that I should rename the gallery to "Does Not Reproduce."

**Things may be larger in person than they appear.**

**Tarrah:** Well, yeah. I actually had a show during COVID, a group show that I called *Does Not Reproduce*, and it's all work that just did not work on a screen-size, texture, any kind of depth didn't show.

I believe that a good artwork is one that grows with you over time, so you have a long dialogue with it. That's what makes it really good. But that's exactly the opposite of what's happening at the moment. People are looking at, myself included, thousands of images every day. When I started, there were five ways to see art. You could either go to a gallery, go to a museum, buy a book, buy a magazine, or make the art yourself. But those were your choices.

**Skoto:** Yeah. Well, slides were also available at that time, too.

**Cristin:** And transparencies! But I feel like I have to agree. It's hard to get people in front of the work. Once they're there, though, the amount of time they're willing to spend talking about the work is still substantial. And I don't think it's just an older generation. I do think that there are a lot of younger people who come to galleries wanting to have those conversations, wanting to get away from screens and TikTok and attention-distorting social media programming and stuff like that.



*Installation view of Concrete Remains: Postwar and Contemporary Art from Brazil (Cristin Tierney Gallery, New York, May 9 - June 22, 2013). Photo by John Muggenborg.*

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**Tarrah:** I mean, I do feel that COVID had one positive outcome, because in 2019, things were very much going towards social media and [as a result] less people were coming to galleries. Because of COVID, everyone looked at their phones so much that [they're all] sick of it now. So now when they come to the gallery, they don't lead with the phone anymore, which, in 2019, they were looking at their phone while walking through the gallery. I feel like people have put away their phones when they are now experiencing something, which I'm very happy about.

**Skoto:** One thing we've done after COVID is to have a longer duration for our exhibitions. Prior to COVID, most exhibitions were usually four weeks, five weeks. Now, you find that galleries are more willing to extend their shows. I remember [in March of 2020], we just opened a show when COVID came along. We had to keep the show up for nearly a year, which was a smart thing to do because we ended up almost selling the whole show by the end of that year. In a way, I think it has allowed us to readjust and to make changes to things that we used to do. Another way to get around this short attention span is to figure out how to join them. You should have a stronger presence online. Of course, because we are all saturated with images and media, very few people respond.

**What advice do you have for people who are aspiring collectors who might come into your gallery?**

**Skoto:** Make them feel comfortable and provide them with as much information as possible when they come to the gallery. Taking that bold step to come to the gallery, that's something positive. You should always try to help them understand and engage deeper with the work you have on display. Follow up and communicate with them.

**So you really encourage them to ask questions. That for you is a vital part of building that new relationship with the collector.**

**Skoto:** Oh, yeah. You should always strive to get their opinion about the work they are looking at or interested in. Let them tell you in their own words what they think about the work or an artist.

**Cristin:** What I always say to our younger groups is that, first of all, you should never be afraid to ask somebody to come talk to you about the work in a gallery. But when you're there with somebody who knows so much more than you do about the work—and you are kind of nervous and it's intimidating to even think about questions to ask—one question that I always suggest is, “tell me something about the work that I can't read in your press release. Give me a way into the work right here, right now, that goes beyond what I can read on my phone.” It's a powerful, useful question because that person in front of you probably has so much information about this exhibition and about the artist's work.



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It also doesn't require you to have a tremendous amount of information, but it does enable you to get to a point where it's not just about, like Skoto said, what they're reading on their phones or what they can find online. What's here that I can't see and understand any other way? It's a pretty simple thing, but it's also kind of empowering, right?

**Tarrah:** I find myself trying to get them to have a dialogue with whatever it is that we're looking at. I know the things that are important that I can draw people's attention to. I'm sort of becoming the teacher in how to look at this, how to experience this, just to involve them, to pull them into the story. And then of course, by telling stories, the next time they see something, they become the teacher, which makes them feel good. It's like when you see people recognize an artist at an art fair, they're the happiest people.



*Tarrah von Lintel with the artist Miles Regis during his last show at the gallery, titled 'Better Days Ahead'*

**Cristin:** Totally true. Totally true. I actually remember when my husband and I were really young and we didn't really have very much money. We started buying art and we bought this work that we hung in our living room area of our first home together. He never said much about the art, but his friend from high school was there one day and started asking him questions about the art; and as you said, Tarrah, he knew all the stories. He knew all the details because he listened to me so many times and talked to the artist so many times and he just could not tell his friend enough information about this artwork. I'm sure his friend was like, "Okay, that's enough!" Again, it's like you said, there's something very empowering about that, about recognizing and knowing like, "Hey, I know something about this."

**Tarrah:** We're all storytellers.

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**Cristin:** Question for the group: why did you guys want to join the Art Dealers Association of America? **[Says Cristin, the head of the Membership Committee.]**

**Tarrah:** Good question. I mean, frankly, a big draw I think is The Art Show. The Park Avenue Armory is one of the nicest places to see art in, because of the location and the size of it.

**Cristin:** I agree.

**Tarrah:** And now that I'm in it, what I truly love about this organization is the professional way that everything about it is handled. It's fantastic. It doesn't happen often enough.

**We aim to please, Tarrah!**

**Skoto:** I think the recognition by your peers that what you're doing is relevant... that's a big plus. To be able to, from time to time, stay in touch with your peers who are doing the same thing, I think that's a big motivation to join the ADAA.

**Cristin:** It's like getting an award from the Screen Actors Guild, because the Screen Actors Guild is the award that your peers give to you.

I have to agree that the peer recognition is immensely gratifying. And [so is] the sense of community that you have as part of the organization. I think especially we're talking about a world that's increasingly fragmented, and the distance that we all feel between our clients and our colleagues, and what living on a world of screens has done to us, and the ADAA is a kind of remarkable antidote to that for all of us, right?

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*Skoto Aghahowa is the founder of [Skoto Gallery](#), located in the Chelsea neighborhood of New York. Aghahowa founded Skoto Gallery in 1992 as a space where works by African artists are exhibited within the context of a diverse audience.*

*Cristin Tierney is the owner of [Cristin Tierney](#) in New York. After years as an art advisor, Tierney opened her eponymous gallery in Chelsea in 2008. In 2019, the gallery moved to the Lower East Side.*

*Tarrah von Lintel is the founder of [Von Lintel Gallery](#). After years in Paris at Galerie Claire Burrus and Thaddeus Ropac, Von Lintel opened her own gallery in Munich in 1993. The gallery moved to Chelsea in 1999, then to Los Angeles in 2014.*