

Park West Gallery and Bernard Ewell Salvador Dalí *Blue Unicorn Blues*

Bernard Ewell, Park West's Dalí expert of choice, pronounces a Dalí print given to a Park West employee in lieu of payment, to be an out and out fake with a forged signature. But Park West asserts they have never sold a fake piece of art.

A Park West Gallery employee, who, for fear of retaliation shall remain nameless, was working in the "basement" at Park West Gallery in Southfield Michigan. He wanted a couple of Park West prints but could not afford them. He went over this with his boss who arranged for him to do some extra work, in exchange for which he would be given a print instead of payment.

He did the work which he estimates to be about \$1,000 - 1,500 at the time and, sure enough, was allowed to choose a print as his reward instead of being paid money. In fact, he was allowed to choose two prints.

One of the prints he chose was *The Blue Unicorn* by Salvador Dalí, hand-signed in pencil by the artist. This was quite something!



Years went by and he read some articles about Dalí fakes and began to wonder if his print might be a fake.

He tried several times to obtain a certificate of authenticity from Park West Gallery for the print. None was forthcoming.

Here follows a portion of a letter from this ex-employee to Morris Shapiro, Gallery Director, which Shapiro never answered.

Dear Morry:

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My question now is the Blue Unicorn an authentic Dali lithograph? I never received any proofs of authenticity and would like to sell both lithographs. I feel I can't honestly sell either one until I know for sure that they are in fact authentic lithographs. I hope you can understand the situation and address this dilemma as soon as possible.

Then, by coincidence, he read in the local Detroit paper that a Dalí appraiser was going to be in town and available at a local gallery to authenticate people's Dalís. This appraiser was none other than Bernard Ewell. At the time he had not begun working for Park West Galleries. For a fee of \$100 anyone could bring their Dalí in to the local gallery and have Bernard Ewell look at it and pronounce judgment.

Our ex-Park West employee took the opportunity to get his print examined.

What did that eminent expert find?

Well, the full report is available [here](#) but the meat of it is here:

INTRODUCTION:

At the request of Mr. XXXXX XXXXXXXX I examined the print described below at DuMouchelle Auction House in Detroit. My assignment was to discern all the clues the print offered as to authorship, authenticity, and value.

Upon return to my office in Colorado, I researched, with the assistance of Director of Research Kristine Betts, the artist's career, market, and recent sales of his works as well as publication history of the subject print.

DESCRIPTION:

After Salvador Dalí (Spanish 1904 - 1989) "Blue Unicorn", screenless photo-offset lithograph with gold ink on Arches paper, framed and matted; 48.3 X 59 centimeters;

numbered in pencil lower left - "194/300"; signed in pencil lower right - "Dalí"; watermark upper right - "Arches France" (and infinity symbol).

Excellent condition with exception of very small nick in surface lower left.

CURRENT FAIR MARKET VALUE: negligible

COMMENTARY:

"Blue Unicorn" as a print is a fake with a forged signature [emphasis added]. The original artwork on which it is based is Salvador Dalí's "Happy Unicorn" oil painting on copper completed in 1977 and held in a private collection. The print is one of many fakes produced by Gilbert Hamon of Paris.

The watermark in the paper contains an infinity symbol. This was added to the watermarks of all papers manufactured by Arjomarie paper mill in France in 1980 and after. Dali signed no prints or paper for prints after December 1979.

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The full report with only the name of the owner obscured, is available [here](#).

The owner said that he had asked Bernard Ewell at the time if he had heard of Park West Gallery. "He didn't know much about them but the attitude I got from him was that he didn't want to deal with them. He said right away that it was a fake." And he further comments, "At the time it seemed as if he didn't want to have anything to do with them and then all of a sudden he's working there?"

It was some time after that that Bernard Ewell started working with Park West.

And what of the print? The owner sold it *as a fake* for \$138 on eBay.

So much for Albert Scaglione and Park West Gallery's oft-repeated claim that they have never sold a fake piece of art. Either their expert doesn't know what he is talking about, or they lie.

So much for Bernard Ewell's oft-repeated confidence that the current litigation is going to vindicate him and Park West Gallery completely.

What is the judge going to make of this?