

ART & ANTIQUES



HOT TALENTS:
Tom Christopher
Roberto Cortázar

**Fabulous Fabergé
Collection**

**Elegant Palm
Beach Shops**

"Times Square Millennium," 46" x
46", by Tom Christopher.

UP \$4.00
Covers \$0.00

Millennium Man

Tom Christopher's 21st-century canvas is Times Square.

By Nancy A. Ruhling



It's high noon in Tom Christopher's vibrant "Times Square Millennium." The sky is white hot. The cabs, boxes of yellow, are streaking down the street, playing dodge-'em with Big Apple-red tour buses as jaywalkers jump out of the way. Horns bleat, sirens scream, billboards blink, blink, blink a billion times a second and traffic lights throb red, green, yellow, red, green, yellow. The figures are so full of life that they look as if they're going to leap right off the canvas into your face. That's in your face, bud. 'Cause this is New York, see.

Like the neon lights of Broadway, Christopher's Times Square paintings, crescendoes of color, scream NEW YORK, NEW YORK. And as the eyes of the millennium look toward the biggest party of the century, they beckon, "Hey, you, come take a closer look." It is, as they say, an offer you can't refuse. For even if you've walked through Times Square a million times, you've never really seen it until you've seen it through Christopher's neon-blue eyes—or through the eyes of his bold impressionistic paintings.

"There is something about New York and painting New York scenes, particularly Times Square, that give me a charge," says Christopher, whose work

Tom Christopher surveys the scene, his inspiration reflected in his sunglasses (left). "Times Square Millennium," 46" x 46" (above), anticipates the end-of-century celebration and another 100 years of activity in Times Square.

is so identified with New York City that he is all but its artist in residence. "I like to go to Times Square, stand on a corner and just watch the endless parade of grifters, pilgrims, con artists, toupeed theatrical agents and rail-thin fashion models and hear the chatter of a million different dialects."

When he does stand on city street corners with his old beat-up Minolta, backpack and black sketchbook, the



"Broadway Steps," 62" x 74" (top). The artist and his Minolta in action (above and right), gathering fodder for a studio session in South Salem, New York.

6-foot-3 Christopher becomes one of the carnival characters in Times Square. Clad in jeans, a blue-checked Paul Bunyan shirt and size-11 black sneakers splattered with Jackson Pollock points of paint, the 47-year-old Christopher spends the day click, click, clicking away then hops on the train for the hour's journey back to his studio in South Salem, New York. There, in a secluded treehouse-like loft surrounded by woods,

he turns his city snapshots into his big-city canvases, which are snapped up by fans not only at the David Findlay Galleries Inc. in Manhattan but also at galleries in France, Germany and Japan.

But even New Yorkers who have never so much as set foot in a gallery see Christopher's work every day. Two of his paintings have been turned into posters that hang in the city's subways, and his most prominent public work is playing on Broadway: The mammoth mural is on the outside of Roseland, the city's famed Times Square dance hall.

Robert Macdonald, director of the Museum of the City of New York, which has one of Christopher's works, says, "We are very impressed with Tom's work as a chronicler of New York City."

