

# ART *Seen* UPTOWN

**Artist:** *Tony Serio*

**Title:** *"870 Riverside Drive, Night"*

**Exhibited:** *Boricua College, 3755 Broadway at W 156th Street Dec. 5th - Jan. 8th*

Washington Heights artist Tony Serio's work, *870 Riverside Drive, Night*, depicts a scene anyone in Northern Manhattan can identify with. The oil on canvas work depicts a woman, with a shopping bag, walking down a curving street, opposite a park. Its dusk and a street light shines down on cars parked on the street, while light from shops in the building cast their own glow.

"This is a view that I've seen every night and is what comes to mind when I think of my walk home from the subway," Serio said.

"The work's subject is really of no consequence. Taking a common place event, casually observed from the corner of your eye and making that into something monumental is what interests me most in art. The moment of illumination from the entrance on this woman has an intimate feeling. It is the glimpse into another world which I may have no business looking into. I have drawn people on the subway having the same feeling inside, that is looking into other's lives of which I know nothing. My hope is to make the image provoking in a subtle way rather than tell a story."

Serio has made everyday scenes from near his home on Riverside Drive and W.162nd Street his main subject,

bringing, through in his paintings, a timeless character and warmth to the neighborhood.

With this particular scene, Serio wanted to create a large studio work.

"To do this, I painted a study on location at dusk by street light. This gave me a direct feeling for the composition and color reference," Serio said.

"I also had set up a camera there to take some shots where a woman who happened to be passing by was captured in one of the frames."

The image of the woman became very important to the work.

"I had no intention of putting her in there," Serio said. "But her action perfectly described the curving space around the building countering the progression of parked cars on the street which seem to move in an opposing direction, that I had to include her. She also adds a psychological focus to the image."

He returned over and over to the scene to capture the moment.

"I consider this work to be about the memory of the place rather than the depiction of details. It is more important to me to capture the sensation," he said.

~*Daniel P. Bader*

