

Download this edition from
www.theartnewspaper.com



INTERNATIONAL EDITION

THE ART NEWSPAPER™

THE ARMORY SHOW EDITION WEDNESDAY-THURSDAY 26-27 MARCH 2008

Tenth Armory Show more European than ever

For the first time, more than half the galleries at the Armory are European—demonstrating the increasing internationalism of a fair that detractors used to describe as a “local” event. Eighty five of the 160 selected this year are from Europe, including London galleries such as White Cube (801), Lisson (529) and Victoria Miro (1005), while a further seven have come from countries including South Africa, India and Korea. “You can’t *not* do this fair,” says Peggy Leboeuf, of Galerie Emmanuel Perrotin, Paris (101). “Clients are spicing up their collections with artists outside the obvious: we are showing artists from Austria, Sweden, Japan and Iraq, as well as from the US and France.”

Among US dealers, those from Los Angeles have increased markedly since 2000, from two to 12 this year, although New York dealers are still the best represented with 50 (31%), many more than the London galleries at the Frieze Art Fair (18%). These include major names such as David Zwirner (601) and PaceWildenstein (541). Securing a place remains competitive: three galleries are turned away for every successful applicant (a similar level as Frieze) but it is not as taxing as Art Basel Miami Beach (seven galleries turned away for every two accepted last year).



...but New York dealers are still the most prominent: Assume Vivid Astro Focus being installed at Deitch

Katelijne De Backer, executive director of the Armory—which is under the new ownership of Merchandise Mart Properties—says: “Over the years, more international galleries have applied to the fair. It is important to have the right balance of support for local galleries without having too many.” Of the new galleries showing, 11 are from Europe, and four from the US.

One first-timer, Guillermo Romero Parra, of Pilar Parra & Romero (239), says: “This could be a

first step to doing Art Basel Miami Beach,” while another, Simon Lee (1011), says: “It is such a long time since we did a fair in New York and we have added artists without New York representation to our programme. There is less glitz and glamour at the Armory but that is not such a bad thing. They are also very rigorous about what you can show: there are categorically no secondary market works allowed. It feels like a fresh fair as a consequence.”

Nevertheless, the absence of

some major New York galleries—including Gagosian, Marian Goodman and Gladstone Gallery, all of which are exhibiting at Art Basel in June—is hard to ignore. “There are many New York dealers who wonder why they show at the Armory,” admits Lucy Mitchell-Innes, of Mitchell-Innes & Nash (127), given that so many are based nearby. But she says “the Armory is a great opportunity for our artists as it is devoted to living artists,” adding that “something always happens here involving a museum”.

Jeffrey Deitch of Deitch Projects (131) agrees: “We’re concentrating on a younger generation with more accessible prices. At the Armory the most expensive work is \$175,000 while at Basel we bring works worth several million dollars. This fair is far more oriented to clients of new art. Some of the best art costs \$10,000.” This year he is mounting a special project at the fair by artist collective Assume Vivid Astro Focus.

The biggest issue for many dealers (the economy aside) is, however, the overcrowded art fair calendar. Former Armory stalwart, London dealer Maureen Paley, says: “There used to be two fairs you definitely did, then suddenly there are four you’d like to do. Every year you need to make a decision based on your priorities, and this year the timing of the Armory was unfortunately just not right.”

Melanie Gerlis, Judith Dobrzyński, Brook Mason, and Charmaine Picard

Bear Stearns: a sign of things to come?



“We opened our gallery in Los Angeles at the bottom of the 1994 recession when there was no art market. Most of the galleries who have opened in boom times have no idea how unglamorous it can be. All the other market indicators now would suggest we are heading for a downturn but the art market keeps ploughing on.”
Tim Blum, Blum & Poe



“Art is constantly subject to scrutiny and filtration and a recession can be helpful in sloughing off the fat. The critic Dave Hickey made mention recently of his looking forward to watching the ‘bubble burst’. While I certainly do not share in his glee, I understand how it can be helpful in house cleaning. Goodness, what a lot of cute, clever, superficial junk we have been plagued with.”
John Cheim, Cheim & Read

“Most of the galleries who have opened in boom times have no idea how unglamorous it can be”—Tim Blum



“In 1990-91 we watched the art market drop almost immediately, but now it is more global, which in one sense protects it. But it also means that it is more difficult to predict what could trigger any problems. I expect the US market to slow, but there are two sides to every recession: when the Japanese pulled out of the market in the late 1980s, the Americans came in. This year’s Armory probably won’t be that affected as recession talk has yet to have a significant impact on contemporary works under \$100,000.”
Lucy Mitchell-Innes, Mitchell-Innes & Nash



“I don’t think it has any impact in the short term, especially not for the primary market. For every buyer that disappears there are three new ones.”
Aby Rosen, collector

CONTINUED OVERLEAF

Guggenheim Abu Dhabi to have “potentially unlimited” acquisition budget

ABU DHABI. Buying contemporary art for the new Guggenheim museum in Abu Dhabi is starting already, with a “potentially unlimited” budget, according to Zaki Nusseibeh, the culture adviser to the Abu Dhabi Authority in the UAE. The acquisitions budget for the Guggenheim has not been revealed, but is thought to be at least comparable to the planned Louvre Abu Dhabi’s \$62m per year.

“The budget will be flexible,” said Mubarak Al Muhairi, director general of the Abu Dhabi Tourist Authority. “If something we really want is two or three times the annual amount, then we will buy it.” The authority has already made purchases, including a large Keith Haring sculpture at the Art Paris



Gehry’s design for Abu Dhabi

fair held in Abu Dhabi last November from Enrico Navarra, as part of an agreement made with the organisers to support this event.

Mr Al Muhairi also said the departure of Thomas Krens from the Guggenheim in New York is seen as a positive step in Abu Dhabi. “He will be more available now,” said Mr Al Muhairi. “Other Guggenheim initiatives didn’t go

through for political or financial reasons, but we have sealed this agreement, and it is now in the construction phase, and Mr Krens will be coming regularly to work on the project,” he said.

The Guggenheim museum, designed by Frank Gehry, is due to be opened in 2012-13 on Saadiyat Island off Abu Dhabi. Western art dealers are already meeting with key contacts in Abu Dhabi, even before the advisory committee for acquisitions has been announced.

The acquisitions committee will include advisers from the Guggenheim and from Abu Dhabi, with the final say remaining with the Emiratis. “We have already had hundreds of offers from collectors and galleries,” said Mr Al Muhairi. G.A

CONTEMPORARY ART

UNDER THE INFLUENCE

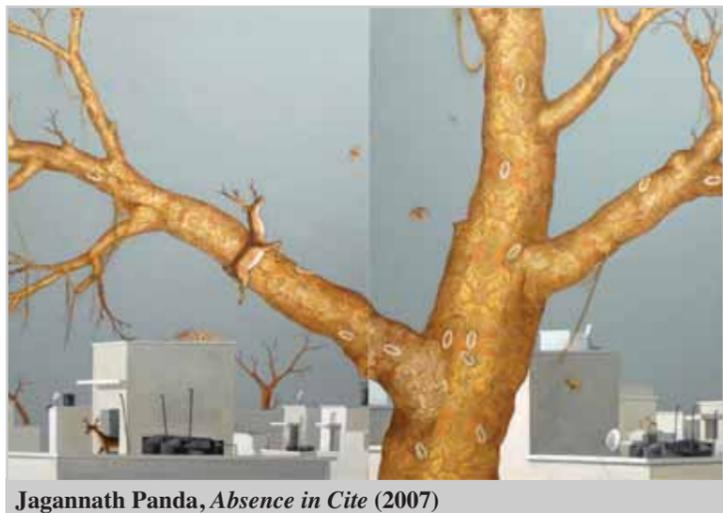
AUCTION 31 MARCH 2008 NEW YORK

+1 212 940 1260 www.phillipsdepur.com

PHILLIPS
de PURY & COMPANY

News

First report from Dubai: strong sales shadowed by censorship of Pakistani artist



Jagannath Panda, *Absence in Cite* (2007)

DUBAI. Market worries were conspicuously absent at Art Dubai (which ended on Sunday) among those galleries dealing specifically in Indian and Middle Eastern art. This consolidated the trend established at the inaugural fair in 2007, when Indian and Pakistani art were the best sellers.

Walsh Galleries, Chicago, who have supported Indian contemporary art since 1993 told *The Art Newspaper*: "We have strong offers on almost everything. Our problem is deciding where to place works." The gallery sold *Rickshawpolis 8* by Jitish Kallat to two Indian collectors residing in Dubai although a Ravinder Reddy head, priced at \$600,000, was unsold despite strong interest.

The majority of the buyers at Art Dubai were from the region but leading European collectors made significant purchases. The British collector Charles Saatchi, whose upcoming show in London, "The Empire Strikes Back" will focus on Indian contemporary art, did not attend the fair, but he acquired a large pop-style group portrait (*Untitled Eclipse 3*, 2007) by Indian artist Jitish Kallat at Chemould Prescott Road Gallery (Mumbai), for about \$200,000. Another Saatchi acquisition, *Arabian Delight* by the Pakistani artist Huma Mulji, which the collector bought before the fair opened, was removed from a curated display on the fair's third day (see box).

Another leading British collector, Frank Cohen, snapped up Jagannath Panda's figurative study of trees, *Absence in Cite*, 2007, for about \$95,000, again from the Chemould Prescott Road Gallery, a price that seems a bargain considering that a similar image and size of work sold

at the Saffron Art auction house in India for \$353,000 in March.

The artist Rashid Rana from Pakistan, and Jitish Kallat and Subodh Gupta from India, were also sought after, with Continua gallery selling Gupta's painting *Idol Thief* for just under \$400,000 to a European buyer.

Iranian and other Middle Eastern artists were also in demand. The Third Line Gallery in Dubai sold Iranian artist Monir Farmanfarmaian's metallic sculpture *Cubes within Cubes* for \$120,000 to an Emirati woman, while B21, also based in Dubai, sold out works by the Iranian painter Rokni Haerizadeh (prices around \$30,000). At the satellite Creek fair, Iranian artists, such as Malekeh Nayiny at the XVA Gallery, were also in demand.

In general, those dealers who tailored their offerings to the Middle Eastern audience did well, and even Japanese and Korean art was selling; least popular, it seems, was European and American art.



Subodh Gupta, *Untitled*, 2007

Some major pieces, including a large \$850,000 Sam Francis at Max Lang, and Wim Delvoye's lacy metallic sculpture *Cement Truck* (2008) at Albion (\$900,000), failed to find a buyer at Art Dubai, although what was probably the most expensive work on show,

Jawlenski's *House with Palmtree* (1914) priced at \$1.78m at Galerie Thomas, was under negotiation with a Russian collector.

Like Dubai itself, the fair is in a sense "under construction" and evolving rapidly. But the camel incident reveals the limitations of this still nascent market. Dealers had already self-censored their stands—one exhibitor, for example, had decided not to bring Botero nudes. If works of a political or sexual nature might be problematic, it is difficult to imagine that the fair can become fully international, the risk being that it becomes a niche event for Middle Eastern art.

And with Abu Dhabi offering the strongest cultural programme with its new museums (see p1), Art Paris, which expanded to the state last year, could become a serious rival. The Abu Dhabi authorities claim that there will be no limitations on what will be bought for its new museum: "Art is an international language and there are no politics in it," said Zali Nusseibeh, culture adviser to the authority. **Georgina Adam**



Camel gives Art Dubai the hump

Arabian Delight (2008) by Huma Mulji, a stuffed camel squashed into a suitcase, was removed from Art Dubai because it was considered "offensive" to the local culture. The censorship of the taxidermied dromedary was the talking point of the event. The controversial work of art was bought by the British collector Charles Saatchi for \$8,000 before the fair opened, where it was displayed in a special non-commercial section featuring artists from Pakistan. Huma Mulji told *The Art Newspaper*.

that her work examined issues of transience in the modern world, and also referred to migrant workers who sometimes sleep in car boots. This is a sensitive subject in the booming United Arab Emirates (UAE), of which Dubai is part, and which is undergoing massive expansion thanks to millions of construction workers who can labour in harsh conditions. "I think there could have been more dialogue instead of the quick decision," Mulji told *The Art Newspaper*. **G.A.**

Takashi Murakami: "It will soon become difficult to sell art"

Japanese artist Takashi Murakami, who was installing his forthcoming retrospective yesterday at the Brooklyn Museum (opens 5 April), has always blurred the lines between art and commerce and this show will be no exception.

Travelling from the Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles, "©Murakami" includes Louis Vuitton goods designed by Murakami in a specially constructed shop in the middle of the galleries, fully operated by the fashion line. For the Brooklyn show, "editioned canvases" will be available from 1 June in a new pattern called "Monogramouflage" designed by Murakami with Louis Vuitton artistic director Marc Jacobs.

The sale of commercial goods—Murakami's bags sell for around \$900—in the galleries has already caused much controversy, but he defends the concept, calling it "my [version of Duchamp's] urinal". A spokeswoman for the museum meanwhile describes it as "at the heart of his work".

Murakami says the shop fits into a longer-term view about art, comparing it to the music industry



Murakami installing his retrospective in Brooklyn on Tuesday

in the 90s. "The day will come when music can be downloaded completely for free. In the same way, in the art world it will soon become difficult to sell art. So this project predicts a future when art will be available to all, at every level. Museums are also now exploring the interaction between art and entertainment and this project tries to show how this can be achieved," he says.

Meanwhile, Murakami will open a permanent gallery to promote young, emerging artists in Tokyo

next month (11 April), on the back of his production and merchandising company Kaikai Kiki. "Tokyo does not have a lot of galleries," he says. "Mature artists rent their own spaces at \$2,000 a week, but young artists can't afford to do this," he adds. Murakami says he plans to visit the Armory Show this week. "It's a place where you can see the real art scene, the foundations, including the young art that's in vogue; I think it's an exciting thing and you can learn a lot from it," he says. **G.A.**



MODERN + CONTEMPORARY | FINE ART + DESIGN

BASQUIAT CALDER FRANCIS GUPTA HARING HIRST HUAN JUHL KJAERHOLM KUSAMA
LICHTENSTEIN MRZYK & MORICEAU PEI-MING PERRIAND PICASSO RAUSCHENBERG
ROSENQUIST RUSCHA STELLA VENET WARHOL WEGNER WESSELMANN

max lang

229 10TH AVENUE NEW YORK 212 980 2400 MAXLANGALLERY.COM