

## **The Art Economist** **February, 2011**

### **Manhattan's ADA Art Show and Armory Show are set to dazzle international collectors**

Brooks Mason

This country's longest running national art fair, The Art Show, led by the prestigious Art Dealers Association of America (ADAA), along with The Armory Show slated for the first week in March, are already shaping up as the twin-barreled events packed to the brim. With both top tier modern and contemporary art certain to rival offerings at Art Basel during June. With both Manhattan fairs set for March 2-6 and the ADAA event touting a record 70 dealers, plus the Armory Show trumpeting 275 participants, New York City is poised to draw collectors globally.

Yet that pair of Manhattan fairs could not be more decidedly different. There's the venerable ADAA show staged in the historic Park Avenue Armory, just blocks away from the homes of deep-pocket collectors like takeover titan, Henry Kravis, and Blackstone's Stephen Schwarzman. On the other hand, The Armory Show takes place in a venue more suited to edgy art sought by high velocity collectors, as both modern and contemporary dealers set up their stands on two piers jutting out into the Hudson River.

What distinguishes The Art Show, which benefits The Henry Street Settlement, is the museum-like, specially prepared exhibition dedicated to pivotal artists and curated by leading dealers. "Museum quality work has always been the touchstone of The Art Show, and nowhere else in this country can you experience in a single fair the breadth and depth of curatorial expertise as evidenced by this year's unprecedented 30 solo and two person exhibitions, along with group shows, as well," says Lucy Mitchell-Innes, ADAA president. Another remarkable feature of this show is the quiet, intimate setting. While participating dealers are all members of the ADAA, the art on view is international in range, beginning with the 19th century.

Blue chip work abounds, starting with Acquavella Galleries showcasing Fernand Legers striking 1920 oil, *Nature Morte, Etat Definitif*. A testament to its importance, this painting had been exhibited in Paris' *Musee des Arts Decoratifs* an astonishing fifty years ago. Equally compelling for connoisseurs is Lucio Fontana's 1962 oil, *Concetto Spaziale*, emblazoned with one of his signature lacerations and featured in the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum's acclaimed 1977 Fontana retrospective.

Then Richard Feigm, who has placed work in the permanent collections of more than 100 museums, including the Louvre and the Getty, is spotlighting Warhol rarities. "On offer are the first set of silk-screens of the iconic Campbell's Soup Cans, which the owner purchased directly from Andy in 1968, and they're in perfect condition," said Frances Beatty, Feigen director.

Certain to attract collectors, is the stand of Mitchell-Innes & Nash with sculptor, Jessica Stockholder, who now has an installation at the Reina Sofia museum. "Jessica's work is enormously influential in the way it brings together painting,

sculpture, and installation," said Mitchell-Innes. "Our presentation is an opportunity for her to create an entire environment around this new body of work - a completely artist-designed booth, from carpet to chandeliers."

New work by Turner Prize winner, Rachel Whiteread can be found at Lühring Augustine gallery. Her Light series reflects her ongoing interest in exploring space, form and architecture. But now employing resin, she turns to a jewel tone palette of rich amber and turquoise.

Spanish sculptor, Jaume Plensa, who just dedicated a group of seven sculptures in a major Houston park last month and will unveil his first New York City public commission for the Madison Square Conservancy in May, is the subject of a first time joint exhibition by Chicago's Richard Gray Gallery and Galerie Lelong (Chelsea). They are spotlighting the artist's recent alabaster sculpture of girls' heads towering five feet in height, along with works on paper. "With Jaume already in the conceptual phase of projects in Seoul, Calgary, Sacramento and at the Chichester Cathedral in England, his stature continues to reach new heights," said dealer Paul Gray. Prices run from \$45,000 up to \$300,000.

Trailblazing Chinese contemporary artist, Zhang Huan, will be celebrated with a special showing of his recent small-scale ash paintings at The Pace Gallery, which just marked its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Created by a labor-intensive process in which ash is first collected from Shanghai Buddhist temples, then sorted into subtle gradients of color and texture and finally applied to linen to create haunting images of mid-20th century government propaganda photography. For Zhang Huan, that incense ash is infused with "all the dreams, aspirations, all the spiritual longings, all the ideas that people have."

On land with Chelsea's Paul Kasmin Gallery is bronze sculpture by the renowned husband and wife team, Claude and Francois-Xavier Lalanne. Lately, their sculptural artistry has been securing wide attention, and only two years ago Kasmin staged their appealing bronzes along the Park Avenue meridian. "At the fair, the Lalanne Pomme and Wapiti represent some of the most iconic images of their oeuvre, and those particular works were made in (an) edition of eight with only a few remaining," said Kasmin. Prices run up to \$300,000.

The Lower East Site based-Sperone Westwater, which is still garnering attention for its Sir Norman Foster designed galleries, will present a show focused on the ZERO Group, with vintage examples dating from 1957-1966 by that movement's three German founders, Heinz Mack, Otto Piene, Gunther Uecker. There's a revolutionary large-scale 1957 grid painting close to six feet high by Otto Piene tagged at \$450,000. "It's totally rare to see such a monumental Piene work," said Sperone gallery director David Leiber, of the artist who also is responsible for a groundbreaking MIT arts and technology program. "We have placed ZERO paintings with collectors who are highly prominent Museum of Modern Art trustees," said Leiber, indicating the importance of that specifically among art world cognoscenti.

To tempt photography buffs, Pace/MacGil is featuring a particularly captivating period of work by Irving Penn. On their stand will be Penn's 1948 gelatin silver print portraits, from Truman Capote to Salvador Dali. The work of fashion legend, William Klein, will be with the Howard Greenberg Gallery, while dealer, Robert Miller, is

showing iconic work by Diane Arbus. Pioneering early photography can be viewed at Hans P. Kraus, Jr.

Turning to a topical subject, Cheim & Read is curating a compelling exhibition devoted to hotel rooms. The bound to intrigue artist lineup includes such masters as Edward Hopper. Alice Neel, Jack Pierson. William Eggleston and Diane Arbus.

Works on paper collectors will zero in on the stand of St. Louis-based based Greenberg Van Doren to study the creative efforts of Richard Diebenkorn. Especially riveting is the artist's 1977 Ocean Park acrylic and gouache abstraction, in which he defines space by line and subtle range of color; it is priced at \$480,000. "Collectors should know that the Orange County Museum and the Texas Fort Worth Museum are co-producing an exhibition of Ocean Park works on paper and print," said Dorsey Waxter, Greenberg executive director.

Nearby Manhattan specialist, David Tunick, who also participates in The European Fine Art Fair held in Maastricht, Holland, is bring a number of exceptional works on paper. Alphonse Mucha's 1902 Madonna will be among the stars on his stand. "His Madonna is one of the iconic images of the 19<sup>th</sup> century European art in any medium, but this particular example is a recent discovery and has never been published," said David Tunick, while adding the price will be \$1.5 million. Masterpieces like that will explain why both novice and seasonal collectors consider The Art Show a mandatory stop on the art circuit.

Part II:

From The An Show to the 13th edition of The Armory Show is only a quick skip across town. At the piers, dealers hail from an impressive 31 countries, with Peru and Colombia represented for the first time. "The latest version of the Armory Show demonstrates the dynamic power of an as a global connection and entire new levels of artistry," says Katelijne De Backer, Amory fair executive director.

The Armory Show is cleverly divided into two major sections, with contemporary art at Pier 94 and blue chip Modern works right next door at Pier 92. The contemporary offerings, from the latest paintings, photography, video and sculpture right up to the monumentally scaled installation are certain to tempt the most discerning collectors. Located on Pier 94 is the invitational Armory Focus: Latin America, composed of 18 dealers from that region. The fair commissioned Mexican artist, Gabriel Kuri, who is touted in an exhibition at the Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston, to create a special work for Focus. The galleries from south of the border are top tier and they're hardly newcomers to Americans. Take Sao Paulo, Brazil's Baro Gallery. "As to US and European clients, already we have almost 20 percent coming form there," says Adriano Casanova, Baro's director. On his stand will be the work of Chilean, Ivan Navarro, whose lighting sculptures have merited an exhibition at the Museo Mural Diego Rivera in Mexico City and are currently on view.

Certain to rank among the most talked about stands is that of SoHo's Ronald Feldman Gallery, with a solo presentation by Sam Van Aken that will transform the booth into an orchard of live trees. Right in sync with high tech science, each tree is genetically altered. As designed by the artist, the trunks and leader branches identify

the trees as being five different types: peach, plum, cherry, nectarine and apricot, yet the individual trees have the capacity to simultaneously grow all five fruits. Plus they will be in flower. Van Aken is bound to be heralded as the quintessential millennium botanical artist. Also, Ivan Navarro is creating a site-specific installation in the Paul Kasmin Gallery booth, titled Armory Fence, composed of neon lights and with a perimeter of 82 feet.

Telling of collectors stepping up their demands for yet larger art works for the walls of their homes and private museums, Susanne Vielmetter of Los Angeles Projects will be presenting a massive painting by the artist, Rodney McMillian. The stellar piece is 27 feet long, and made from hand-sewn vinyl.

Timothy Taylor of London will be spotlighting the work of Susan Hiller, who currently has a critically acclaimed major survey exhibition at Tate Britain. "For many years now, Susan Hiller has proved herself to be one of the most influential and innovative artist of her generation. She continues to make experimental and incisive work across a range of media," said Timothy Taylor. On hand will be Hiller's archival color prints, as well as her pivotal *The Paragon Case: Homage to Joseph Beuys, 1969 - 2010*, consisting of a found cabinet filled with 67 bottles of water she collected from pilgrimage springs.

The Chelsea based Lehmann Maupin is presenting a solo exhibition of never-before-seen Urethra Postcard Pictures by that quixotic Brit duo, Gilbert & George. Images even include their perennial teddy bears.

Exceptional video is prominent with Yvon Lambert (Paris), which is spotlighting the oeuvre of David Claerbout, who is the subject of a solo exhibition at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art. "The contrasts between light and shade, moments of still and rapid speed, and vocal silence with vibrant music, all contribute to the stunning effect of his video work," noted Lambert director, Chrissie Shearman.

Capitalizing on today's fascination for Egypt, Carolina Nitsch has turned to photographer, Vera Lutter, whose images were snapped in a custom fabricated suitcase/camera obscura. Even that relatively peculiar camera is on show at Nitsch's stand.

Access to the Modern section of The Armory Show can be gained simply by climbing a staircase to the nearby Pier 92. Although established only two years ago, the Modern section boasts outstanding offerings, and some dealers even include contemporary work.

On view with the midtown Manhattan dealer, Edward Tyler Nahem, is a particularly arresting Joan Mitchell oil close to eight feet in height. "Her 1977 *When They Were Gone* represents the artist's considerable talents, mining her deeply felt emotions through paint while firmly establishing her work as a leader in Abstract Expressionism," says Janis Gardner Cecil, Nahem director.

Returning this year with another finely curated exhibition is Galleria d'Arte Maggiore

from Bologna, Italy. At the last Armory Show, their stand was so jam-packed with curators and collectors that their upcoming "The silence of Giorgio Morandi and the enigma of Giorgio de Chirico" is sure to prove a crowd pleaser

The latest work of 2010 MacArthur 'Genius' grantee, sculptor Elizabeth Turk, can be found with Hirschl & Adler Modern of Manhattan. A total of seven works are coming directly from her LA studio; Turk creates enticingly convoluted ribbons of marble. Also on their stand will be paintings by the late Richard Lonsdale-Hands.

Contemporary fans should check out Helsinki's Galerie Forsblom for Tony Oursler's eerie sculpture and video, Mercury Mind, 2005. Equally riveting on their stand is the work of Ola Kolehmainen, the most internationally exhibited Finnish photographer, who created a color diptych of stunning glass building reflecting an older, traditional façade just in time for the Armory Show, and it's room-sized.

With such cutting edge contemporary artistry also in the Modern section, collectors are certain to trek to both piers for their Armory Show jaunt. Last year, more than 40,000 visitors, including heavy doses of Europeans, Latins, Asians, and not to mention Russians, took in this art fair, indicating the prowess of art internationally in spite of a downturn. Now with financial markets on an upswing, sparking a new confidence among collectors, shopping for art should be more pronounced at both fairs, say insiders.