

# The good, the not so good, and the very, very expensive

The Art Market | Fairs and sales during London's epic art week; Chinese collectors in town; Donald Marron gives advice; an honour for Jennifer Flay. By *Georgina Adam*

The most frantic week of the year in London opened this Monday with a VIP preview for the Pavilion of Art and Design (PAD), the French-organised fair combining mainly modern art and design, and with a strong showing of this year's hottest ticket, modern Italian art. The fair's tent is cunningly sited in Berkeley Square, within a wallet's throw of the Connaught and Claridges, and its opening attracted the hordes of art world denizens in town for Frieze.

"We have seen French, American, Russian and Brazilian collectors," said Andrew Duncanson of the Swedish gallery Modernity. Among them was Sheikh Hamad Al Thani, who has a home nearby, jeweller Laurence Graff and fashionista Valentino.

Italian art sold well, too: Mazzoleni (with a marvellous Alberto Burri show in its nearby gallery) reported placing the artist's "Rosso Plastica" (1966) for around £2m. "This fair is very successful commercially; dealers and collectors buy here for their homes, it's convenient to visit on foot, and it's on a human scale," said photography dealer Michael Hoppen, who sold Sarah Moon's "Fashion 4" (1999) for £35,000. PAD closes tomorrow, October 18.

"Welcome to Purgatory" says a slogan scrawled on the blacked entrance corridor to Frieze this year. This is one of the projects at the fair, thanks to US artist Lutz Bacher. On Tuesday, invited guests quickly tripped along the sinister entry and pushed through inky plastic fronds into the brightly lit and spacious fair, which has evolved far beyond its gritty, edgy beginnings.

Today's Frieze is a slick, professional affair exemplified by the Gagosian stand. Packed in a smart grey booth is an impressive solo show by Glenn Brown, from highly detailed drawings (\$75,000-\$120,000) to sculpture (\$300,000-\$450,000), with a number of the drawings immediately sold.

Some (but not all) admired Sadie Coles' booth featuring a giant ostrich/aubergine sculpture by Darren Bader and a large Laura Owens painting that collector Donald Marron, on his first visit to Frieze, just missed out on buying — by five minutes, he said.



"Dealers are definitely making extra efforts to curate their booths, and the market is getting so competitive that they have to — to stand out," said art adviser Lisa Schiff after trawling the two fairs and making manifold purchases. She admired the Coles stand, as well that of Mary Mary and Hauser & Wirth, with a forest of small sculptures on plinths; the gallery said a number sold in the first hours, citing a Phyllida Barlow for £25,000.

**Unanimity reigned about the marvellous Frieze Masters, which opened the same day as Frieze London — this is the strongest year ever for the classic fair, which features a number of "crossover" displays. Standouts include the collaboration between Hauser & Wirth and Moretti Fine Art, spanning the 14th to the 20th centuries. Hely Nahmad has reimaged the lunatic asylums that inspired Jean Dubuffet and his are for-sale Dubuffet works, one asking for £750,000. The usually classic Simon Dickinson celebrates Cubism with a re-creation of Léonce Rosenberg's 1930s "Galerie de l'Effort Moderne".**

Sales at Frieze Masters are inevitably slower, but gallery Eykyn Maclean immediately sold "Propaganda" (1975-78) by Mario Schifano from its "Pop Dialogues" display price in the region of \$750,000, while Stephen Friedman found a US collector for a hanging sculpture of chains by the African-American Melvin Edwards, for about \$300,000. Frieze London ends today, October 17; Frieze Masters runs until tomorrow.

Despite all this, the sheer number of events on in London this week and the quantity of art for sale rattled dealers — particularly on the second day of Frieze, which was quiet after the storm of the opening. As well as the fairs there were plenty of auctions: on Wednesday Christie's and De Pury disposed of the rambling Lambert collection, raising just under £15m.

However, Phillips's apparent triumph with its "white glove" sale of contemporary art on Wednesday night needs qualifying. Of the 36 lots on offer, 18 came from the estate of the "Baron of Botox", Dr Frederic Brandt, who ended his life earlier this year.

The cosmetic surgeon's tick-the-boxes compilation of brand-name artists was guaranteed by a third party, so in effect the works were pre-sold. Nevertheless, Phillips achieved £31.5m for its sale — double its tally in October last year — and set new price highs for Yoshitomo Nara (£1.9m), Mark Bradford (£3.8m) and Danh Vo (£602,500).

**Chinese collectors were in evidence in London this week — one group even visited 1:54, the African art fair. Retail billionaire and strong promoter of Chinese art Adrian Cheng picked up works at Frieze by Alicja Kwade, Do Ho Suh and Trevor Shimizu. As active as the Indonesian-Chinese Budi Tek, who opened the vast Yuz museum in Shanghai last year.**

Accompanied by adviser Jeffrey Deitch, he bought three paintings by Mira Dancy at Los Angeles's Night Gallery, for a project show planned for Yuz. Tek also wanted a

**Left: 'Shackled Shadow' (2015) by Mira Dancy, which was sold by Los Angeles's Night Gallery.**

**Below: Fiac director Jennifer Flay, who has been awarded France's Légion d'Honneur**  
*Jason Mandella, Henri Gault*



*Georgina Adam is art market editor-at-large of The Art Newspaper*

number of works by Camille Henrot from new exhibitor Kamel Menouar from Paris. Henrot's pastel-coloured figurative paintings and a sculpture, priced at €22,000-€150,000, sold out at the opening, with Tek snaffling just one. But he consoled himself later with a wine tasting at the Royal Academy, featuring, among other vintage tipples, a 2006 Romantée-Conti.

**Renowned art collector, financier and philanthropist Donald Marron, founder of Lightyear Capital, offered advice for collectors in a talk he gave this week. "Firstly, you need to have a passion for art," he said. "Then you need to do research — lots of it, books, the internet — there is so much information available today. You need to be in touch with knowledgeable people: museum curators, and also dealers. And before buying something, make sure you've seen all the available works by an artist. There's nothing worse than buying something and then later seeing a better work somewhere else."**

**Finally, congratulations to Fiac director Jennifer Flay, who was decorated this week in Paris with the Légion d'Honneur by foreign minister Laurent Fabius. New Zealand-born Flay is acknowledged as the driving force behind the success of the fair, which she has run since 2004. Its off-site event Officelle opens this Tuesday and Fiac proper on Wednesday, running until next Sunday.**