



Print Article



An aerial view of the booth of Paul Kasmin Gallery at Art Basel Miami Beach



The Suites of Dorchester in Miami Beach, setting for the Ink Miami 2006 art fair



A woodcut by David Alfaro Siqueiros from the "Grabados Portfolio" (1931) at Diane Villani Editions at Ink Miami



MORE ON MIAMI

by Ben Davis

"Just have a lot of money, and you'll have a lot of friends," **Andy Warhol** said, or words to that effect. So it was in Miami last week, where thousands of art collectors and dealers descended upon the city to revel in sales and soirees, the twin pillars of the art whirlwind anchored by **Art Basel Miami Beach** (ABMB), Dec. 6-10, 2006.

On the money side, business was so brisk that it hardly seems worth itemizing. According to ace art journalist **Lindsay Pollock** in *Bloomberg News*, trade at ABMB alone totaled in excess of \$400 million. Bragging rights went to those dealers who sold out their booth during the vernissage, and plenty claimed to have done just that.

"It seems like virtually anything sells at art fairs these days," said **Citigroup Private Bank** art advisor **Louise Eliasof**, "which makes it increasingly difficult for galleries to come up with fresh material." Eliasof said she was able to find some "major and wonderful" works for her clients, however.

After a little research in the Miami hall of records, veteran **Modern Art Notes** blogger **Tyler Green** reports in the pages of *Fortune* magazine that ABMB has a budget of \$9 million for the entire fair, including \$400,000 for renting the convention center and other facilities. Guesstimates put the contribution of **UBS** at about \$1.2 million for ABMB -- though its hard to break out, since the Swiss financial institution underwrites both ABMB and Art Basel together -- with other sponsors (like **Warren Buffet's NetJets**) ponying up another \$500,000 or so.

Of course, at the bottom of all the money and the socializing was a little something called art. And here, the Warhol spirit ruled the day - in the multiple art fairs up and down South Beach's main drag and in Miami's warehouse district, it all merged into one long esthetic delirium.

Ink Miami 2006

We begin along Collins Avenue in Miami Beach, where a constellation of five hotel fairs set up a stone's throw away from the solar heat of ABMB. At the northernmost point was **Ink Miami 2006**, 15 print publishers and dealers housed in the Suites of Dorchester hotel, an elegant new two-story, stucco-style motel arranged around a well-manicured courtyard, complete with palms and reflecting pool.

The elegant setting seemed perfect for the white-glove esthetic of the print world, with its especially precious treasures. **Diane Villani Editions** had a group of gem-like woodcuts by **David Alfaro Siqueiros** from the "Grabados Portfolio," made in 1931 while the artist was in jail. Printed on 6 x 4 in. sheets of cheap colored paper, these simple but dramatic images of peasants are an astonishing piece of art history for only \$1,250 (framed).

Prints are famously priced for the average art lover, but some do shoot up in price. Such were the wares at the second-floor suite of **Charles M. Young Fine Prints & Drawings**, which Young opened

A Kurt Schwitters collage from 1946 at Charles M. Young Fine Prints & Drawings at Ink



Works by Nancy Lorenz (left) at James Graham & Sons at the Flow art fair



Works by Lucrecia Troncoso at Julie Baker Fine Art at the Flow art fair



Inside the Bridge Art Fair at the Catalina Hotel and Beach Club in Miami Beach



in 1992 in Portland, Conn., after stints at **Associated American Artists** and the **Wesleyan University** art museum. The prizes ranged from a **Jasper Johns** 1964 *Ale Cans* lithograph to a 1946 **Kurt Schwitters** collage (members of the **International Fine Print Dealers Association** also handle works in other mediums) that once belonged to **Mies van der Rohe**.

Flow & Bridge

A few blocks south on Collins Avenue is the Catalina Hotel and Beach Club, which housed two unrelated art fairs with curiously related names. **Flow** brought together about 20 dealers in a group of rooms clustered around the Catalina's "Spy Lounge" including **Linda Durham** from Santa Fe, **David Lusk** from Memphis, **Arthur Roger** from New Orleans and **Roy Boyd** from Chicago.

New York dealer **Jay Grimm**, of **James Graham & Sons**, was having a great time with, among other wares, the post-Pollock pseudo-inlay mother-of-pearl abstractions of **Nancy Lorenz**. The 40-something artist has had a number of shows at the gallery, where large works go for \$30,000. Of the two at Flow, "one is going to Dublin, the other to Dallas," said Grimm.

Julie Baker Fine Art, which is based in Nevada City, had filled her room with bargain-priced works by young artists, including elaborate sculptures of wall-hanging vines, plants and flowers by **Lucrecia Troncoso**, made of carved cellulose cleaning sponges. Some smaller works could be had for only a few hundred dollars. "With younger artists, low prices make sense," said Baker.

The operation next door at the **Bridge Art Fair** was rather denser and a bit more hectic, largely because of the setting, which featured rooms opening off of both sides of a long narrow hall, rooming-house-style, carpeted in bright red. Among the 65 exhibitors was the topically named **Go Go Gallery**, based most of the time across the causeway in Miami proper. The irrepressible dealer **Robert Casterline**, who also runs the **MW** galleries in Aspen and New York (where a show of paintings by Mafia mom **Victoria Gotti** is currently on view), was singing the praises of 52-year-old, Tampa-based painter **Peter Stanick**.

Stanick's most recent paintings, which suggest a cross between the work of **Tom Wesselmann** and contemporary girlie photography, are made with "digital images" that are converted to "raster files" and printed on canvas. In one picture, a girl in little more than an apron and garters takes a turkey from the oven, while in another a young woman sits in a little black dress besides a **Keith Haring** drawing in the subway. Smaller paintings are \$4,000 each. "He's having an exhibition at Scores in 2007," Casterline said.

Aqua, DiVA, more

Winning the prize for the most festive hotel fair is **Aqua Art Miami**, thanks to the setting at the Aqua Hotel -- a two-story beach motel with a spacious, planted central atrium -- and to the free beer. In the room of **Cynthia Broan Gallery**, **Chuck Agro**'s three-foot-square, glitter and spangle-infused painting *The End* (2006) seemed to anticipate a New Year's Eve kind of spirit. "Everyone likes that one," said Broan. The work had sold for \$6,000.

Special mention is deserved for the **Digital and Video Art Fair**, otherwise known as **DiVA**, which set up in a village of 24 silver-painted, half-size cargo containers, sited right on the beach at around 11th Street. After a day of pounding the pavement, spending 45 minutes sitting -- perhaps that should be in italics -- *sitting* and watching short, inventive, amusing videos is not half bad.

Dealer Robert Casterline with a painting (right) by Peter Stanick at the Bridge Art Fair



The Aqua Art Miami art fair at the Aqua Hotel in Miami Beach



Chuck Agro's *The End* (2006) (top left) in the room of Cynthia Broan Gallery at Aqua Art Miami



The container village of the DiVA Art Fair in Miami Beach



The NADA Art Fair at the Ice Palace Studios in Miami's Wynwood Art District

At **Rubicon Gallery** from Dublin, artist **Martin Healy** had a short tape of a pickup band doing a remarkably talented cover of *Stairway to Heaven*. Several videos were playing at once in the container of **Chi-Wen Gallery** from Taipei, including **Yuan Goang-Ming's** video of a humble fisherman's boat that, in a fixed shot from the stern, is seen slowly, inexorably to revolve, first taking on water, then turning completely upside-down and finally turning back right-side-up.

And featured in the booth of Brooklyn's **Boreas** gallery was a comically anti-intellectual tape by **Adam Bateman**, in which a random collection of paperbacks is seen tumbling in the soap suds in a washing machine. Congratulations to New York dealer **Elga Wimmer**, who curated the video section as well as taking part.

The NADA Art Fair

Over in Miami proper, another half-dozen art fairs were disposing themselves across the spread-out landscape of parking lots, furniture warehouses, new hurricane-resistant concrete condos and art galleries now known as the Wynwood Arts District. The first stop after crossing the Fifth Street bridge was the **NADA Art Fair**, set up by the **New Art Dealers Alliance** at the airy, resort-like Ice Palace Studios at 1400 North Miami Avenue. Visitors rested in hammocks strung among the palm trees that lined the path to the front door -- but not for long, lest they miss out on the action barreling along inside.

At the booth of Madrid's **Vacio 9** was a large panel by **Mark Titchner**, the art-world's newest concrete poet and runner-up for the **Turner Prize**. It declared "The Final Times Have Been and Gone" in blocky letters on a psychedelic background. The work, which looked either like a missive from the future or an ad for a new video game, was sold for \$16,000. Titchner certainly seems to be the man of the moment. His picture graces the cover of *ArtReview's* recent "Power" issue, which was free for the taking at the fair.

"We wanted to do Art Basel," dealer **Antonio Menchen** confessed. "You have to do a smaller fair first, though, so we came to NADA. But we've done so well here that we'll definitely come back."

Haunting new art was everywhere at NADA. Japanese artist **Keisuke Maeda's** almost ghost-like drawing of a fairy, priced at \$3,500, was seemingly no more than an afterimage on the wall outside Denmark's **Galleri Christina Wilson**. And at **A Gentil Carioca** from Rio de Janeiro, the talented **Laura Lima** -- an artist featured in the current **Bienal de São Paulo** -- offered her "Flexible Gold" series, arabesques of gold ink drawn over prints of European Old Masters. Lima's tracework quietly evokes both Medieval gold-leaf embellishment and the complexity of circuitry, plugging the classics into both the past and the future. Works from the series were selling for \$600-\$2,500.

Pulse Miami

The two-year-old **Pulse Miami** set up in a low, white tent at 2700 NW 2nd Avenue, a short ride away by taxi -- or by pedicab, groups of which clustered at the entry, waiting to drive fair-goers to the nearby Scope or Photo Miami fairs or the **Rubell Collection**. Above the door to the tent, giant wooden letters read, in French, *Je ne regrette rien* (I regret nothing), an artwork by **Tom Ellis** that could have come straight from the mouth of the impenitent Warhol.

And really, what was to regret? "We did better this year than last," said Chicago dealer **Monique Meloche**. Occupying center stage at her booth was *El Zorzal Criollo* by Minneapolis-based **Alexa Horochowski**, a streamlined "low-rider bed" made of fiberglass and painted hot-rod red, mounted on hydraulics that could be controlled



The booth of Vacio 9 at the NADA Art Fair, with works by Belén Uriel, Julio Jara and Mark Titchner (left to right)



A work by Laura Lima from her "Flexible Gold" series at A Gentil Carioca at the NADA Art Fair



Pedicabs waiting outside the Pulse Art Fair in Miami



from switches on the floor. Guaranteed to liven up some collector's bedroom activity, the piece was \$28,000 and on reserve.

Meloche directed attention to a pair of canvases by Chicago artist **Todd Pavlisko**, each depicting in high relief the face of Jesus in moss-like fields of plastic product fasteners, one orange and the other pink. The work proved so popular, Meloche said, that the collector who bought it was already receiving offers to sell it at a handsome profit.

Patterns made using aggregations of everyday objects were a theme, perhaps in a nod to the fact that you could spin gold out of almost everything at the fairs. At Santa Monica's **Richard Heller** gallery, **Cal Arts** grad **Dane Picard** was represented by a video titled *Gibbon Hands*, a short, nonsensically repeating loop showing bits of the artist's hands digitally collaged together and animated to resemble a simian cavorting against a white background. The video was priced at \$3,500.

At **Galerie Erns Hilger** from Vienna, Irish artist **John Gerrard** offered imagery that was more sublime, or at least fantastic. His *Smoke Tree* depicted a 3D digital rendering of a tree framed against a calm, starry sky, branches seemingly made of clouds of amorphous smoke. The hook, though, was strait out of *SkyMall* magazine -- viewers could swivel the tablet in which the screen was embedded, an action which in turn rotated the image on the screen, allowing them to see different aspects of the fanciful landscape.

Hilger sold through an edition of six, at \$50,000 a pop, and was busy working on a second edition by the artist, featuring a swimmer frozen at the center of a splash, which Gerrard hadn't even finished yet!

Photo Miami

Eye-filling overload and **Vik Muniz**-style artifice seemed to be the photographic strategies of choice for new photography in Miami. Correspondingly, at **Photo Miami**, headquartered in the warehouse-like Soho Building at 2136 NW 1st Avenue in Wynwood, one could find very little of the visual silence that is typical of classic modernist photos.

A good example is the work of **Lukas Maximilian Hüller** on view at Berlin's **Galerie Caprice Horn**. Illustrating the seven deadly sins, Hüller's long, panoramic photos present a 360-degree pan across a landscape of operatic excess. For instance, *Gluttony* takes the viewer around a room where wolves pose, a waiter fellates a customer, a tray of artfully styled poo is served, a naked woman is laid out on a table full of food, and a man shoots a syringe into his mouth -- just your typical night out in South Beach (ok, except for the wolves). As morality plays go, it is pretty amoral. It could be yours for €4,800.

Meanwhile, **Carmen Correa Contemporanea** -- which was not an official part of the Photo Miami program, but was exhibiting under the auspices of **Karpio + Facchini Gallery** -- featured photographs by the young Puerto Rican artist **Marcos Ruiz** that almost split the difference between elegant simplicity and overloaded excess. His intensely colored images, selling well at \$18,000 apiece, are meant to depict a child-like extraterrestrial world, with blobby white figures made from cotton balls as its protagonists. But the alien shapes and high-key blues and reds dissolve any real reference into abstract, half-identifiable volumes -- pure visual candy.

For lovers of calm, however, there was a large composition by **Rut Blees Luxemburg** at Paris' **Galerie Dominique Fiat**, depicting a rusty chain dangling above a canal, water below fading into a plane of pure, muddy color. The photo came as, well, a splash of cool water.

Trying out Alexa Horochowski's *El Zorral Criollo* at the booth of Monique Meloche Gallery at Pulse



Dane Picard's *Gibbon Hands* at the booth of Richard Heller Gallery at Pulse



Lukas Maximilian Hüller's *Gluttony* at Galerie Caprice Horn at Photo Miami



Works by Marcos Ruiz at the booth of Carmen Correa Contemporanea at Photo Miami



Rut Blee Luxemburg's *The Chain* (2001) at Galerie Dominique Fiat at Photo Miami

Scope Miami

Of the various fairs in Miami, it was **Scope** that served up the best and most playful energy, both inside and out. Epitomizing the seat-of-the-pants feeling, when the shuttle to Miami Beach showed up Saturday afternoon, the driver was none other than Scope production manager and designated troubleshooter **Jordan T. Adams**. "Hello, my name is Jordan Adams," he declared. "We had a problem with the shuttles, and I fixed it -- so now we're all going to be in a van together!"

Scope took place in a spacious, L-shaped tent with shiny plywood floors, sited in filled Roberto Clemente Park and complete with an entrance made of stacked shipping containers. Inside, the fair had the feeling of productively chaotic diversity.

At the booth of **Dunn and Brown Contemporary** from Dallas, artist **Deborah Grant** had a series of moody collages that juxtaposed folkish black silhouettes (made in homage to **Bill Traylor**) with figures cut from '70s lifestyle magazines, executed on birch panels. Selling for a formidable \$54,000 each, the pieces seemed to be emanating from a personal universe very far away from the cool sidewalks of Miami.

On the other hand, **Graham Dolphin's** artworks at the music-themed booth of **Seventeen** gallery from London epitomized the dominant vision of art as slick, sleek, minimal and hip. Consisting of the covers of various classic rock albums, their song lyrics scratched onto their surfaces in a tiny, tiny hand with an intensely controlled fidelity, Dolphin's adjusted readymades rework Warholian Pop appropriation as adolescent obsession. *59 Prince Songs* could be had for \$5,500; *25 Talking Heads Songs* for \$3,800. The booth also featured deadpan balsa wood copies of iPods and musical instruments by **David Ersser**.

And finally -- speaking of Warhol subjects -- there was **Mao**. At the London/Beijing gallery **Chinese Contemporary**, Chinese conceptual pioneer **Huang Rui's** project *The Three Written Works* was on offer for \$36,000. Appropriation put to a more subtly critical end, the piece consists of three official-looking documents reprinting what are supposedly the most important revolutionary texts by the Chairman, produced by the artist after finding the blocks used to print the originals in government archives.

Huang included the blocks together on the floor below each of the framed texts, gathered in plastic boxes like ashes in a burial urn -- an homage to anti-colonial ambitions gone way, way off course.

Somehow, the fact that the texts were completely illegible to Western fairgoers made them extra-poignant in the context of Art Basel week -- the critical idea reduced to pure spectacle, between the money and the movers-and-shakers.

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Inside Scope Miami
Photo by Peter Duhon



A work from Deborah Grant's series
"The Skin of Our Teeth" at the booth of
Dunn and Brown Contemporary at
Scope Miami



Graham Dolphin's 25 Talking Heads
Songs at Seventeen at Scope Miami



Huang Rui's *The Three Written Works* (2003) at Chinese Contemporary at Scope Miami