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## Art Basel Miami Beach Gets Youthful Infusion

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MIAMI BEACH, Fla.—The common refrain in the opening hours of the VIP preview for the eighth edition of **Art Basel Miami Beach** was something to the effect of, “I’m lost, where is E12?” Distinguished visitors, some chaperoned by art advisers, struggled with the new layout, which had some 250 galleries spread across about 500,000 square feet of Miami Beach convention hall territory. The re-designed, re-configured fair brought 64 galleries from Art Positions, which had formerly resided in a cutting-edge maze of container spaces at Collins Park, indoors to the main convention center. “There was room for reinvention on the layout,” said Christie’s contemporary art specialist Amy Cappellazzo, one of a handful of auction honchos checking out the merchandise for their private sale activities, adding, “it’s too soon to know if it works.” Cappellazzo said she recognized a large number of “Latins, Mexicans, and Argentineans” at the fair, and said of the atmosphere, “there’s a certain sobriety to it that I like.” It does feel different, with much wider corridors that reduced rubbernecking when a celebrity showed up. Still, it was hard to miss the gridlock around the buff, well-tailored Hollywood legend [Sylvester Stallone](#), holding media court in front of a number of his paintings at Zurich’s Gmurzynska Gallery. “I’m going to have to get a job in order to afford anything,” Stallone told ARTINFO during a one-minute interview. “I collected a great deal about 15 years ago and [then] I went through a life change. Now that cycle is coming around again.” Doffing his collector’s hat for an artist’s one, Stallone said he paints in his garage in California, explaining, “I’m not just painting for painting’s sake. I want to be truthful.” One of these honest works, *Trapped Ideals* from 1977 (the same year of his breakout film *Rocky*, which, incidentally, he wrote as well as starred in), a glaring self-portrait with artist’s frame, was priced in the \$40–50,000 range. The biggest drama at Gmurzynska’s booth came when fellow dealer Asher B. Edelman arrived with a dozen law enforcement agents and carted off paintings that included works by Miro, Degas, and Leger, reportedly to fulfill a \$765,000 default judgment against the gallery stemming from a lawsuit over an insurance dispute decided in Edelman’s favor earlier this year. There was still some expensive fare to be had at Gmurzynska, including Yves Klein’s circa 1960 *Ant 125 (Jonathan Swift)*, in monochrome blue pigment on paper mounted on canvas, which is priced at \$12 million. “The closets in the back of the booths have the best stuff,” said Connecticut collector Lawrence Benenson as he sneaked a look in Per Skarstedt’s office-sized “closet,” which included a 1966 Andy Warhol *Self-Portrait* measuring 22 inches square and priced at \$3.5 million. “One [Warhol self-portrait] sold at auction two weeks ago for \$6 million,” said Skarstedt, who seemed quite pleased with the action so far, especially since his big stand here was a last-minute decision. “I didn’t apply to the fair,” said the dealer. “I decided to do FIAC (in Paris) this year, and not Miami, but then I realized it was probably a mistake because New York is so quiet right now.” Skarstedt snagged the stand after London/Berlin dealers Sprüth Magers dropped out. “I think it

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was the right decision,” he said. Skarstedt sold a new, large-scale painting *Female Figure Composition* (2009) by George Condo (who he noted he now represents in New York) “to an important New York collector” for \$350,000, Barbara Kruger’s striking and graphic, *Untitled (Your Property is a Rumor of Power)* from 1981 for \$150,000, and an untitled 1983 Richard Prince Ektacolor photograph, from an edition of two, for \$250,000. Serious collectors were definitely on hand, giving the fair an almost studious air, with less of the bling factor that has colored so many previous editions. “This is as good as you’re going to get in the U.S.,” said Miami collector and patron Marty Margulies, “everybody can get in on this.” Margulies seriously admired a Joan Miro painting from 1938 that he had seen on offer at Gmurzynska for \$8.8 million, he said, but wound up buying two works by young artists for his Margulies Warehouse exhibition space. The two winning objects were Martin Boyce’s light-work sculpture, *We are in a constant state of explosion* (2009), in steel, chain, fluorescent lights, and electrical components, which was priced in the range of \$25–30,000 at New York’s Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, and a large abstract painting by Sarah Caine “in the neighborhood of \$15–20,000” at New York’s Sara Meltzer Gallery. New York/London/Zurich gallery Hauser & Wirth also saw action with younger art at Art Kabinett, with an untitled 2009 wall-sized installation of 46 ink-on-paper works by Polish artist Jakub Julian Ziolkowski, which sold for \$100,000, and a single painting, also untitled, for \$75,000. Ziolkowski spent six months at a Vietnamese monastery on his mini-show, and the works have the studied silence of a meditative retreat. That quiet, contemplative mode was offset by fair visitor Ai Weiwei, the famed Chinese artist, architect, and dissident, who described his struggles to be an artist in China. “My biggest project is my life,” said the artist, who was strolling the fair with New York-based Chinese contemporary art collector Larry Warsh and is still recovering from a beating by Chinese police. “I’m still struggling and trying to find a proper way for myself in China. You have to struggle for a very basic need.” (Hear more from Ai Thursday morning at 10 at Art Basel Conversations.) Even with the sting of current world events that appeared in some works, the fair evoked a stronger, more youthful spirit. “Having the younger galleries under the same roof,” said dealer Lisa Spellman of Chelsea’s 303 Gallery, “makes it feel more vibrant.” Spellman had sold *Untitled (Passo Stelvio)*, a large Florian Maier-Aichen C-print measuring 20 ¾ by 89 ¼ inches, from an edition of six, for \$75,000, and Karen Kilimnik’s landscape *High Grove, Prince Charles’ Royal Home*, for \$80,000. Trying to explain the new configuration and atmosphere, Spellman said, “You used to have the front and back of the fair, and now it’s all mixed up. I’m glad it’s kind of confusing and off-kilter. The timing of it is right.”