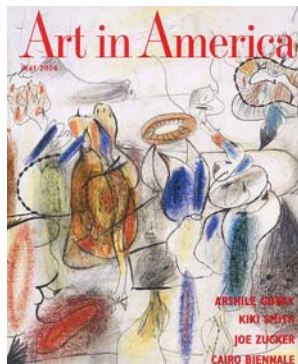


F R O N T
P A G E



Edgy Armory Show in the Spotlight

Once again this year, the "Armory Show," the annual international fair of new art, managed to add some heat to a particularly chilly and dreary New York winter. Held Mar. 12-15 on Manhattan's Hudson River Piers 90 and 92, the fair featured works of cutting-edge art from 189 galleries from around the world. This year's installment drew 38,000 visitors, almost 15,000 more than last year. Some 2,000 guests attended the opening night preview party, which raised \$500,000 to benefit the Museum of Modern Art's exhibition fund. According to fair director Katelijne De Backer, most galleries reported brisk sales, totaling more than \$43 million; and the entire run of 3,500 copies of the show's catalogue, featuring a cover and designs by painter Lisa Ruyter, was sold out before the fair closed. This year's catalogue came with a separate insert, a tribute to the late Pat Hearn and Colin de Land, two of the Armory Show's founders.

New to the fair this year was "The ARCO Forum at the Armory Show," a series of free panel discussions on collecting strategies. A collaboration with Madrid's ARCO, Europe's largest contemporary art fair, the program featured well-known art-world figures such as Dan Cameron, Lynne Cooke, Jeffrey Deitch, Thelma Golden, Glenn Lowry, Arnold Lehman, Paul Ha, David A. Ross, and Don and Mera Rubell. Held during the course of the weekend in the VIP lounge of Pier 90, the panels were enthusiastically received and were attended to capacity.

In years past, the Armory Show often coincided with the uptown "Art Show," presented by the Art Dealers Association of America [see "Front Page" Apr. '04]. This year, however, the Armory Show took place during the opening weekend of the Whitney Biennial. A similar diversity of mediums and moods prevailed at both events. And, as mentioned by Lee Rosenbaum in the *Wall Street Journal*, the Armory Show offered works for sale by 68 artists who are also featured in the Biennial. The Armory Show also coincided with Scope New York, a fair focused on works by emerging artists.

Visitors to the Armory Show expect to be provoked as well as informed, and this year did not disappoint. On Pier 92, Thomas Hirschhorn presented *Twin Tear* (2004), a large piece protesting the war in Iraq. The work's bright red bladder-like shape, suggesting a huge blood-filled bag, dominated one area of Barbara Gladstone's booth. Collaged photos clipped from magazines showing violent episodes in the war-torn country since the U.S. invasion last year cover the object like so many bandages. A smaller, seemingly related piece by Hirschhorn, *Nail Sculpture* (2003), was one of the standouts in the booth of Paris's Galerie Chantal Crousel.

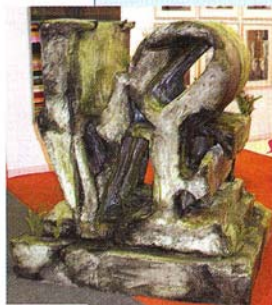
Elsewhere, Anish Kapoor's arresting relief sculpture, *Alba* (2003), a large magenta, concave lacquered stainless-steel disk, at Lisson, conveyed a meditative mood. Similar in shape and size, but more concerned with optical effects, Cerith Wyn Evans's mirrorlike sculpture, *Perverse, Inverse, Reverse* (1996) was a giddy highlight at White Cube/Jay Jopling. Equally dizzying, a kinetic light work by Conrad Shawcross, *Light Perpetual I* (2004), featuring a large, spinning wooden wheel in a cage, outfitted with a swinging light bulb on a cord, added a lively tone to Entwistle's display.

Among other light sculptures were wall pieces by Tatsuo Miyajima, incorporating both neon and LED numbers; they were presented by SCAI Gallery, Tokyo, and also by New York's Gavin Brown. A target sculpture, *Neon Circles* (2003), by John Armleder, glowed from Sandra Gering's booth.

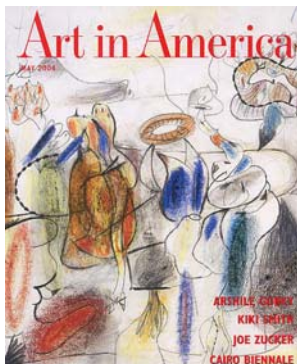
Sam Durant's multipart work *Proposal #2 for Monument at Altamont Raceway, Tracey, CA* (2003), presented by L.A.'s Blum and Poe, was at once wacky and engaging. The installation centered on a large white polyurethane-foam blob splayed out



MP & MP Rosado, *Team Work*, 2004, at Pepe Cobo.



Jason Middlebrook, *The Beginning of the End*, 2004, at Sara Meltzer.



on a long wooden table; it emanated Rolling Stones music. More elaborate was Brian Dewan's installation at Pierogi, in which he created a classroom lined with blackboards and filled with old-fashioned school desks. Visitors were invited to sit through the artist's slide show and lecture.

A team of brothers from Germany, Tobias and Raphael Danke, presented an intriguing installation at the booth of Aachen's Adamski Gallery. In this work, the jagged shapes of black monochrome abstract wooden floor sculptures were echoed in a large, quasi-cubist landscape painting on the wall, which recalled a work by Lyonel Feininger. One of the most striking installations at the fair, *Team Work*, was by another pair of brothers, MP & MP Rosado, a Spanish duo showing at Seville's Pepe Cobo. An imaginative merger of surrealism and existentialism, the work shows two life-size and lifelike male mannequins in street clothes, each suspended upside down, wedged between a faux-brick wall and the booth's wall. Another remarkable piece, Lara Schnitger's installation of a brick-patterned cloth enclosure guarded by a tall fanciful fabric figure, at Anton Kern's booth, also had a surrealist flavor.

A glittery installation by Sang-Kyoon Noh, at Seoul's Galerie Hyundai booth, featured a large figure of the Buddha covered entirely with bright blue sequins; this was placed on a pedestal before a vast monochrome canvas covered with yellow sequins. Shanghai's Shanghart Gallery featured a large, delicately stitched fabric piece by Zheng Guogu, showing Chinese characters taken from neon advertising signage, while London's Stephen Friedman Gallery displayed big, bright circular paintings on textiles by Yinka Shonibare.

New York gallery Murray Guy presented one of Francis Cape's elegant wood wall constructions in white. Conflating sculptural and architectural forms, this work corresponded to a brilliant and refined work by Jim Lambie, *Louise X*, made of reconfigured heavy wooden doors painted yellow and trimmed with strips of mirror, which Glasgow's Modern Institute brought to the fair. So American audiences could see why Grayson Perry won this year's Turner Prize, Victoria Miro brought from London his 1996 ceramic work *What a Bunch of Kunst*, a tall vase covered in yellow glaze, with female faces and nudes combined with various obscenities etched into the clay.

With tongue-in-cheek humor, Jason Middlebrook showed *The Beginning of the End* (2004) at Sara Meltzer. This large cast-fiberglass object puns on Robert Indiana's famous "Love" sculpture. In Middlebrook's piece the iconic 1960s Pop work appears as an ancient stone ruin, moss-covered and cracked, its sentiment long forgotten. One of the more bizarre works on view was the giant "hair brain" sculpture, *Bob* (2004), by Birgit Dieker, on view at Berlin's Volker Diehl. Made of real human hair, the piece was shaped like a human brain about four feet high. A hairy sculpture by Pablo Vargas-Lugo was a highlight of Mexico City's Galería OMR display. A large white wall relief, *Snoopy* (2003) has long tufts of brown human hair hanging down the front and sides of an extremely abstracted and geometrized dog face. Also not to be overlooked in the fair's "crazy objects" sub-category was Tony Matelli's sculpture of a life-size and lifelike chimp leaning against a wall at Emmanuel Perrotin's booth. Wearing an Apple Computer "Think Different" T-shirt, the apparently sick animal seems to have just thrown up; it leans against a wall hung with a recent abstract painting by Bernard Frize.

Unlike past years, painting was prominent at the fair. Frize's recent works were themselves presented by several galleries. Nicole Klagsbrun showed a resplendent work by Dennis Hollingsworth. In this large abstraction, *Second Thought* (2004), a

brilliant red field is activated by globs of yellow and black paint. A large, colorful figurative composition by Thomas Trosch was a standout at Fredericks Freiser. Kravets/Wehby featured photo-based figurative works by Aaron Romine, while Courtyard Gallery from Beijing displayed large tondos of hybrid portraits by Ling Jian. *Saint Remi* (2004), Kehinde Wiley's tall canvas featuring an all-over fleur-de-lis pattern and a standing male figure holding a large gold staff, at

Sergio Prego, *Cowboy Inertia Creeps*, 2003, at Lombard-Freid.



Kehinde Wiley, *Saint Remi*, 2004, at Jack Tilton.

Jack Tilton's booth, was one of the most memorable paintings at the fair.

Angles Gallery from Santa Monica brought gorgeous gray cityscapes by L.A. painter and sculptor Tom LaDuke. London's Wilkinson Gallery showed equally refined cityscapes by George Shaw, which were elegantly paired with minimalist abstract neon sculptures by David Batchelor. At New York's 303, a simple and graceful painting of a white farm house by Maureen Gallace outshone many of the fair's more bombastic works; and at Antwerp's Zeno X, a large Morandi-like composition of poppies in a vase, by Cristof Yvoré, was displayed to similarly good effect.

Nolan/Eckman presented a major 1979 canvas by Peter Saul, *Subway*, which was full of acerbic social comment, while James Cohan showed a striking new mural by Trenton Doyle Hancock. Charlotta Westergren's pristine image of an octopus, made of car paint on aluminum panel, at L.A.'s Mary Goldman, was a standout, as was a group of ethereal paintings of trees by Luca Pancrazi, featured at Galería Marta Cervera

from Madrid. These canvases corresponded to similarly haunting images of olive trees by Israeli photographer Ori Gersht presented by CRG, whose booth was devoted to a solo show of her work, and also to a spinning tree in Jennifer Steinkamp's striking video projection, *Dervish 5* (2004), at Lehmann Maupin.

Video and photography hardly took a back seat at the Armory Show. Spain's Sergio Prego presented his mesmerizing stop-action video, *Cowboy Inertia Creeps* (2003), at Lombard-Freid. With the help of some fancy digital editing, it shows a prostrate man zipping along concrete street barriers like a supercharged locomotive. Also noteworthy were Loretta Lux's pretty yet unsettling photos of children, featured by Yossi Milo, and Rauf Mamedov's uncanny multipanel allegorical images using models with Down's syndrome, at Moscow's Aidan Gallery. Costa Rica's Galería Jacob Karpio exhibited large, striking photos by Cynthia Soto of figures who turn their backs to the camera as they gaze at panoramic vistas in the distance. Craigie Horsfield's recent hand-colored still-life photos, shown at Frith Street Gallery, were arresting; and Malerie Marder's large, untitled photo of a female nude seated on a bed, at Artemis Greenberg Van Doren, was another exceptional work.



Malerie Marder, *Untitled*, 2004, at Artemis Greenberg Van Doren.

At least two galleries decided to change their exhibitions each day of the fair. Tanya Bonakdar started off with an installation of drawings and objects by Mark Dion, followed by solo displays of works by Jason Meadows, Sabine Hornig and Peggy Preheim. Friedrich Petzel started with a Richard Phillips show, followed by Allan McCollum, Björn Dahlem and Jon Pylpchuk.

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Meanwhile At Scope

This year's Scope New York, an art fair featuring works by emerging artists, was held Mar. 12-15, on four floors of Manhattan's brand-new Hotel Gansevoort in the meat-packing district. It drew some 8,000 visitors, and fair organizers estimate that the 68 participating international galleries generated approximately \$2 million in sales.

Among Scope's highlights were Thomas Wrede's seascape photos presented by San Francisco's James Nicholson and cityscape photos by Miklos Gaál at Berlin's Galerie Sphn. Paintings by Christoph Schmidberger at Mark Moore, and Bernhard Härtter's paint-encrusted metal grilles at Patricia Sweetow from San Francisco, were also notable. William Anastasi's drawings and self-portrait Polaroid collages, shown with Monika Bravo's videos at Solway Jones from L.A., made an engrossing display. David Michalek's photo installation with sound, *Stations of the Cross*, was made up of large black-and-white images of homeless individuals; it occupied the room of New York's Stevenson Fine Art. Another solo show was presented by Tokyo's Taro Nasu Gallery, which filled its room with delicately wrought abstracted landscapes by Japanese artist Nobuya Hoki.

—David Ebony