

# Satellite Fairs

## Volta scores with its fresh, off-beat art

*Strong attendance reflects desire to buy recent works by emerging artists*

The buoyant, well-attended launch of the Volta art fair on Thursday, held for the second year in a swanky venue opposite the Empire State Building (until 8 March), reflected the hunger for recent work by emerging artists. Several collectors, including London-based patron Anita Zabludowicz, said the Armory fair across town was more “conservative”, which may explain why numerous established and new collectors were drawn to its sister fair, boasting 80 international dealers. (Armory owner Merchandise Mart Properties Inc. bought Volta in 2007.)

The selection process, which requires galleries to present single-artist shows, appears to have paid off with the quality of the work on show praised by several visitors. “This fair is meant to be more experimental. It’s always best to go solo, you see the depth of the artist’s practice,” said Dave Hoyland of London gallery Seventeen (A1) who sold a wooden piece by Susan Collis, inlaid with mother of pearl and black diamonds (*The Sum of My Parts*, 2008), priced at £6,000, to a New York private collector within ten minutes of opening. Other ambitious works included a puppet show performance (*I*



Photograph: Corey Frabnet

*Hate Her, I Hate Her*, 2008) by UK artists Heather & Ivan Morison, which dealer Danielle Arnaud (F19) hoped a museum would buy.

Exhibitors also welcomed the chance to present “curated” booths, along the lines of this year’s Armory, said Jesper Elg of Danish gallery V1 (C6): “It’s much more true to what we do as gallerists. You’re forced to show the range of an artist’s work rather than bring pieces you know will sell.” Collages incorporating

anatomical and historical illustrations by Copenhagen-based artist Troels Carlsen, on offer for \$800-\$9,000, were sold to a pair of Danish buyers who had come specifically to the fair to buy the works.

Affordable, credit-crunch led price points were common, even falling as low as \$3 for lolly-pops by artist and pastry chef Tara Strickstein, hawked by distractingly flirtatious vendors. But higher priced pieces were available, including Joshua Callaghan’s *One*

*Hundred Year Anniversary Commemorative Ford Model-T Lamp and Alarm Clock*, sculpture made from found brass beds (2009, \$60,000, Haas & Fischer, E19).

Visitors swarmed around the stylish black booth of London gallery Paradise Row (A3) with a Russian collector immediately buying two works (*I Am as One Dead*, 2009, \$14,500, and *Destruction Cometh*, 2009, \$13,000) from a series of seven giant cartoon-esque



Gosha Ostretsov’s *I Am as One Dead*, 2009 (left), and a puppet show by UK artists Heather & Ivan Morison

paintings by the Russian artist Gosha Ostretsov, entitled “The Abyss” (2009).

Around the corner at FAS (D3), a series of beautifully executed paintings by UK artist Annie Kevans depicting the mistresses of US Presidents (“All the President’s Girls”, 2009, 28 pieces at \$4,500 each), featuring figures such as Marilyn Monroe and Monica

Lewinsky, was pulling in crowds. A gallery spokeswoman said that all 11 pieces relating to John F. Kennedy sold before the fair opened, with “around 12” other works purchased within an hour of the event launch. However, a US collecting couple said that “as Americans, we find the paintings mildly offensive”.

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