

14 September 2020: Post-fair press release

Grand Palais
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Art Paris 2020 took up the challenge of being the world's first post-lockdown art fair and met with immense success

All eyes were turned on the 22nd edition of Art Paris, as 112 galleries from 15 countries came together in Paris for what was the art market's first major event in over six months. On Sunday September 13th, as the modern and contemporary art fair closed its doors under the vast glass roof of the Grand Palais, a general mood of enthusiasm reigned in recognition of its immense success

Visitors in number and quality despite the health context

The total number of visitors was 56,931. As a consequence of the strict application of health and safety measures, the maximum number of visitors per day was voluntarily limited to 3,000 (instead of the 5,000 authorised in the Grand Palais) and the vernissage was spread throughout the duration of the fair by means of special, private daily previews from 10.00 am to 12.00 pm. These measures avoided crowding, thereby ensuring conditions of optimum safety for exhibitors and visitors alike. If the number of members of the general public visiting the exhibition fair decreased by 10% compared to 2019 (when 63,257 people came to the fair), there was a massive 25% rise in visits by collectors and directors of cultural institutions compared to 2019, with a total of 23,218 professional and VIP guests.

All of the visitors underlined the audacity and tenacity of Art Paris in managing to organise a physical edition of the fair through thick and thin. Let's not forget that the fair was first postponed and then reinvented online, before finally being reborn from 10-13 September. This historic edition saw collectors and French institutions make extraordinary efforts to rally round and play their part in supporting the work of galleries and their artists. The visitors also highlighted the dynamic nature of the French art scene (as illustrated by Gaël Charbau's focus), the sheer quality of the galleries' exhibits in which different generations rubbed shoulders (for example at Galerie Pauline Pavéc where works by Jacques Prévert were juxtaposed with those by the very young artist, Mathilde Denize) and the arrival of major international heavyweights such as Perrotin amongst other prestigious galleries.

The fair welcomed around 30 friends of museum associations, mainly from mainland France because of the current travel restrictions, as well as numerous personalities such as Brigitte Macron, Roselyne Bachelot, Catherine Frot, Michel-Edouard Leclerc and Alain Ducasse to name but a few. 70 special visits analysing the works on show were organised for collectors with the invaluable assistance of the Observatoire de l'Art Contemporain and there were more than 450 accredited journalists.

Satisfactory sales results

This edition of the fair was a testing ground for the art market in terms of sales of which there were no lack, above all in the more affordable price range between 5,000 and 30,000 euros, giving the lie to the more pessimistic forecasts.

As far as historical works were concerned, Galerie Jean-François Cazeau sold a drawing by Giacometti and a Chassac sculpture for more than 100,000 euros; AD Galerie disposed of two sculptures by César from the 1950s for 150,000 and 200,000 euros respectively; and Galerie Traits Noirs sold 7 works by Miro, Hartung and Fontana for between 7,000 and 80,000 euros. As for contemporary art, Galerie Perrotin is delighted by its first participation at Art Paris with around fifteen sales of artworks priced between 2,000 and 120,000 euros (for sculptures by Jean-Michel Othoniel). The same sounds of jubilation could be heard from Galerie Jeanne Bucher Jaeger, which was also taking part for the first time and which sold around twenty works by its Portuguese artists Miguel Branco and Rui Moreira for between 500 and 20,000 euros. Yvon Lambert was very pleased to have found a purchaser for, amongst others, two paintings by Nathalie du Pasquier priced at 25,000 euros each. As the fair closed its doors, Galerie Nathalie Obadia confirmed that this year's turnover was higher than the previous year with around twenty sales in a price range between 10,000 and 200,000 euros (for a painting by Shirley Jaffey). Galerie Daniel Templon found purchasers for some ten works, including two diptychs by Abdelkader Benchamma priced at 40,000 euros each. Collectors also took an interest in the fair's solo shows several of which sold out, notably Galerie Univer Colette Cola and Toronto-based Canadian gallery Christopher Cutts. Art Paris undertook to donate all the proceeds from its ticket sales (110,000 euros) to young galleries which have been severely affected by the current crisis. Some saw excellent results at the fair: Galerie Pauline Pavéc sold around thirty works for between 2,900 and 3,900 euros (drawings by Prévert), whereas in the Promesses sector devoted to young galleries created less than six years ago, the African art scene caught the eye of both collectors and institutions. Afikaris sold works by all its artists, including all the paintings by the Cameroonian artist Jean David Knot priced at 15,000 euros. The fair was also a great success for Galerie Véronique Rieffel from Abidjan, which found a purchaser for the "carré de survie" (survival square) by Clay Apenouvon from Togo priced at 25,000 euros. Galerie Bessières summed up its participation with a resounding "It was fantastic!" having sold around ten works for between 2,700 and 10,000 euros (for Stephen Ormandy's geometrically inspired paintings).

Many galleries expressed their appreciation to have sold to new and French clients, which confirms the commitment and mobilisation of French collectors in support of this exceptional edition that will surely go down in history. They also underlined the presence of numerous top-level collectors and institutions, which corroborates the notable increase this year in the number of professional visitors.

Art Paris, the first art fair to take up residence in the ephemeral Grand Palais on the Champ de Mars in April 2021

After being the first art fair worldwide to open its doors after lockdown restrictions ended, Art Paris will also be the first art fair to take up residence in the ephemeral Grand Palais on the Champ de Mars from 8-11 April 2021. This spectacular temporary structure fit for the 21st century designed by architect Jean Michel Wilmotte is located in front of the Ecole Militaire and aligned with the Eiffel Tower: it will play host to the Grand Palais' events until the latter reopens in time for the Olympic Games in 2024.

Art Paris would like to give special thanks to all its exhibitors who believed in this edition that was a real act of resistance, its collectors and art enthusiasts who rallied round in numbers despite the pandemic. Art Paris would also like to warmly thank its partners:

The Art Newspaper, Antik Batik, Artsy, Beaux Arts Magazine, BFM Business, Chabé, Connaissance des Arts, Diptyque, Euronews, IDEAT Contemporary Life, IESA, Immersion 3D, L'Observatoire de l'art contemporain, Le Figaro Magazine, Le Journal des Arts, Le Quotidien de l'Art, Madame Figaro, Magic Event, Museum TV, Point de Vue, The Wall Street Journal, No More Penguins, OnlineViewingRoom.com, Point de Vue, RMN – Grand Palais, Ruinart, The New York Times, all our press and media partners and the Parisian cultural institutions who partnered our *À Paris en septembre* VIP programme.