



Emerging Artists Hang with Top Collectors at NADA's Best Edition Yet

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Installation image of SIGNAL, NADA New York, 2015. Photo by Nick Simmons for Artsy.

Last night at 8 p.m., some five hours after NADA New York opened its doors, security guards were hard-pressed to wrangle the herds of artists, collectors, and dealers out of the then-closed art fair and into their respective Ubers. But such is life when you're NADA, the fair run by the New Art Dealers Alliance nonprofit that, 13 years and counting, is as beloved by the artists and galleries it supports as the collectors who count it as their favorite place for discoveries.

And it seems the lingering crowd had much to celebrate. This fourth edition of NADA New York (the fair's first nine years were solely based in Miami Beach) comprises 103 galleries, making it the largest edition to date—and, at least on day one, what many have deemed its most successful. This, according to collectors zipping through the fair in high spirits (three times, someone excitedly rushed me through the aisles to show off a new work they discovered, rather than simply describe it) and dealers, rattling off their numerous early sales. Some of today's most-desired young artists—Daniel Heidkamp, Kadar Brock, Chloe Wise, and Chris Succo among them—were out in full force, something that's often a key metric of a fair's health as a platform for more than mere commerce.

"At this fair, you feel health in the market," dealer and adviser Seth Carmichael tells me. "There are more collectors than ever and more people interested in young artists and emerging contemporary art. Even though a lot of people are talking about the fact that the bubble has burst already, you still see all of these people here and a lot of work selling." For Carmichael, his most exciting encounter was with work by Anthony Miler at ART 3, which he groups among the "neo-figurative, post-abstract" trend of the past few years. "It feels really raw and genuine; it's painting that isn't process-oriented or concept

driven. It's driven by the hand of the artist." When I run into Los Angeles-based collector Niels Kantor, he takes me for a spin by the Miler work—one of his favorite finds of the day as well. "People are really hyped up on this," he said. "[The gallery has] made a bunch of sales."

Mega-collector Michael Hort, on the other hand, walks me over to a wall of paintings by Alex Nolan at Galerie Bernard Ceysson, priced from \$1,500–3,500. "I always like to discover new things," he says, pointing out the two paintings he'd purchased with his wife Susan—together they're well known for deeply supporting young artists—and noting the studio visit they've planned. According to gallery director Raphael Sachsenberg, two paintings by the new addition to the gallery had sold to the Bronx Museum as well. "I'm sure we'll sell them all," Sachsenberg says, further noting that Nolan's work had sold out on the first day of Art Brussels.

Hort's other discovery may perhaps be the most-talked about artist at the fair, Chris Hood. His paintings are abstractions of cartoon imagery and archives of clipart—think a heart smoking a cigarette—that are painted from the back of the canvas, allowing the oil to bleed through. They hang with work by MacGregor Harp in the inaugural (and tiny!) booth of Lyles and King, a brand-new Lower East Side gallery slated to open at the end of the month. "They have this wonderful stained character that connects everything from Frankenthaler to Morris Louis to tie dye," says Isaac Lyles, who will open the gallery with his wife Alexandra. "This is day one for our gallery," he says. "Luckily in a \$3,000 booth it doesn't take much to get into the black. It's an auspicious start, and we're thrilled." In similarly high spirits was Hood himself—also currently featured in a two-man show at Rod Barton in London—who swung by the booth for a moment to say hello.

At DUVE Berlin, Maximilian Arnold, a young artist studying at the Städelschule in Frankfurt who the gallery is showing abroad for the first time, spent the day chatting with collectors and artists who dropped by the booth. Arnold's moire canvases are a mix between painting and printing, made using two layers of polyester fabric—one black, one white—which he cuts from the back and covers with solvent. "There are artworks that look better on the internet; it is really important for me that you see the work in reality," Arnold says, who enjoyed manning the booth for the opportunity to chat about his process.

Elsewhere at Jack Hanley, Brussels-based artist Alain Biltreyst was in earshot of the yellow-and-blue booth, filled with small paintings on plywood (priced at \$3,500 each) where patterns recalling '60s hard-edged minimalism are met with forms inspired by his day to day—from the ads gracing Belgian trucks to something as simple as a woman's shirt, evidenced by the snapshot he shows me on his iPhone, depicting a pink-striped shirt and the back of a stranger's head.

On a walk from the Marlborough Chelsea booth, Leo Fitzpatrick, who recently closed his much loved project space Home Alone 2 and subsequently joined Marlborough as a director, described his fair highlight: Dan Herschlein's work at Signal Gallery, a first-time art fair exhibitor, tucked along a corridor of phone booth-sized project spaces. According to Kyle Clairmont Jacques, co-founder of the gallery, "We usually do site-specific, large-scale installation work, so we considered how we were going to deal with 36-square-feet of space and be excited." The solution was found through building a chamber that fills the entire dimensions of the booth in which seven artworks can be displayed at a time. "I don't know the artist but it made me stop in my tracks," Fitzpatrick said. "They're challenged by having such a small booth. They took a gamble by doing an installation as opposed to showing a bunch of smaller works. When you take a gamble to do something interesting, it sticks out much more. I've never heard of the artist, I've never heard of the gallery. It's kind of why you come to these things."

Not to be forgotten are older artists being rediscovered—or newly discovered. At London's The Sunday Painter, 52-year-old British artist Leo Fitzmaurice is introduced to the U.S. crowd by way of wall-mounted sculptures that resemble miniature car hoods. "He's had a lot of institutional representation in the U.K., but as of yet his market hasn't really been pushed," Will Jar-

vis said. Similarly, over at Louis B. James, “Fuck Paintings” by 69-year-old artist Betty Tompkins hold their own among the fair’s work by twenty- and thirtysomethings. “There is a lot of momentum behind her right now,” said RJ Supa, co-owner of the gallery. “Historically, female artists like Louise Bourgeois, Judith Bernstein, and Marilyn Minter didn’t become well known until much later.” Of responses to the work at NADA, he offers, “There’s two: either they know her work as a feminist icon and a great painter, or they’re immature. It’s really so childlike. People have intercourse, period. This is what it looks like.”

Around the corner from the Tompkins works, Supa’s eyes periodically dart to a live poker tournament being screened on a kiosk, where a Texas Hold ‘Em game orchestrated by Melissa Brown and Where—the winnings being artworks—was taking place. The cell phone numbers of players (including artist Siebren Versteeg, whose work is showing at bitforms) were exposed on the screen, prompting anonymous text informants to sway the game.

And not last, among the many artists-as-dealers present at the fair, two booths stood out. At Regina Rex, Brooklyn-based artist Max Warsh manned a fantastic booth filled with work by Matthew Schrader, Nancy Haynes, Corey Escoto, and Michael Assiff. Assiff’s air-vent sculptures, made using images sourced from environmentalist and anti-fracking websites, stole the show. 247365, the Gowanus-based gallery led by artists MacGregor Harp and Jesse Greenberg, has mounted a solo presentation of Los Angeles-based artist Nathaniel de Large. His three-tiered sculpture with a rotating magnetic pole gives movement to various domestic items—from a tea kettle to a clock—which fairgoers were invited to swap with alternative items from a neighboring filing cabinet.

A basketball court on the East River might seem an unusual place for New York’s top collectors to intermingle with the emerging artist crowd. But come closing time, on a sun-drenched patio packed with those who bought, sold, or made the work inside, the setting was a fitting one for the fair that (at least where this writer is concerned) may have just won Frieze Week.

—Molly Gottschalk