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BLOUIN ARTINFO



Young Artists Dominate Armory Show Opening Sales, as Focus Section Draws Crowds

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The **Armory Show** may be celebrating its centennial, but young artists — and the collectors who support them — dominated the VIP opening. For one thing, the Armory Show's Focus section, with energetic crowds and sales, wasn't this year's sideshow.

"People seem to be buying a lot in the young section," said art advisor **Wendy Cromwell**.

Twenty minutes into the fair's preview, Focus galleries were already reporting strong sales. "The first thing we sold was this **Paul Gabrielli** box to John Waters," said **Invisible-Exports** co-owner **Benjamin Tischer**, pointing to a chained-up cardboard box that went for \$6,500. The gallery also sold two of the artist's wooden soap-dish sculptures.

Next door, meanwhile, **Monique Meloche** had already sold **Joel Ross** and **Jason Kreps**'s photograph of a desolate Illinois landscape for \$7,500, plus a neon work by collective **Type A** and an installation of bronze-plated shoes by **Kendell Carter**.

Connersmith gallery was offering **Lincoln Schatz**'s photographs of American innovators for \$5,000 each, but a

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collector had placed the entire set of 89 on hold. Across the way, **Gagosian's** booth of **Warhol** paintings brought star power to this subsection of the fair.

Despite the buzz at Focus, big-ticket sales were few and far between. Modestly priced works, however, like 32-year-old **TM Davy's** lush paintings of candles at **Eleven Rivington**, were selling fast. The gallery sold all 20 paintings in three hours, the works priced between \$2,500 and \$3,500. **Kavi Gupta Gallery** sold two ink-stained canvases by **James Krone** for \$6,000 each as well as a paint-splattered fabric work by **Angel Otero** for \$35,000.

The lower price points suggest a shift in the Armory Show's collector base, according to art advisors. With the arrival of **Frieze New York**, which returns to Randall's Island for its sophomore edition in May, blue-chip buyers may not feel the need to shop at the piers. Still, said Cromwell, "collectors who are buying new artists are all here."

Major international dealers, most of which are also participating in Frieze New York this spring, did manage to secure a handful of marquee sales. "Let's just say we'll be rehang tomorrow," dealer **Sean Kelly** said. **Lisson** sold a maroon fiberglass disk by **Anish Kapoor** for \$455,350 and a grisaille canvas covered with sandpaper by **Allora & Calzadilla** for \$125,000. **Victoria Miro** sold a glistening blue and black web painting by **Yayoi Kusama** for \$400,000. **Sprüth Magers** sold three works by **George Condo** — two works on paper for \$45,000 and one painting for \$250,000 — as well as a black knit painting by **Rosemarie Trockel** for \$228,000.

Two of three grainy, soft-focused video installations of flower bouquets by **Diana Thater** also sold at **David Zwirner**. Priced at \$150,000, both went to private collectors. That one of them has an art foundation pleased Thater, who was at the booth. "I don't like my work disappearing," she said. "I like it to go to institutions and museums so it can be seen."

Smaller New York galleries noted the fair marked a welcome return to business as usual. "We're back to being dealers as opposed to hurricane victims," said **Ed Winkleman**.

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