

# Island in the Sun: Collectors Flock to Frieze New York for High-Temperature Opening

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Banners by Lara Schnitger above Frieze New York 2018.

MAXIMILIANO DURÓN/ARTNEWS

The long-awaited arrival of spring in New York coincided with the VIP preview of the seventh edition of the Frieze New York art fair, and it was quite warm. There was a hallucinatory haze over Randalls Island as collectors, dealers, curators, and various other art types mingled under the sweltering tents. The dazed mood was bolstered by the fair's new layout, a casino-like series of rooms that one could get lost in for hours, sifting through the offerings of nearly 200 galleries that ranged from Arthur Jafa photo works at Gavin Brown's Enterprise to a spectral Pierre Huyghe light ballet at Marian Goodman.

Thaddaeus Ropac, which has galleries in Salzburg, Austria, Paris, and London, quickly sold a Georg Baselitz painting for \$850,000, a Jack Pierson for the same price, and an Emilio Vedova for \$500,000. Max Hollein, the newly minted director of the Met (who, as it happens, was born in Austria) was chatting in the booth midday, not far from some huge Robert Longos, as he made the rounds.

Nearby, Los Angeles's David Kordansky Gallery had, by mid-afternoon, already sold a vast majority of its booth, a solo presentation of characteristically discomfiting works by the Norwegian-born, L.A.-based photographer Torbjørn Rødland that carried price tags between

\$14,000 and \$28,000.

New York dealer Anton Kern, who was showing works by Lara Schnitger, praised the “more cleaned up and spacious” setup of the fair, and added that there didn’t seem to be “the regular frenzy.” Perhaps it was the temperature. “The heat might be making people indecisive,” dealer Alex Logsdail said at his Lisson Gallery booth. “I don’t think I would be in a buying mood right now.”

Nevertheless, sales proceeded apace, including at Lisson. Andrew Kreps Gallery, of New York, said that it had parted with four of its Bruno Munari works for prices between \$25,000 and \$45,000. Pace Gallery sold 27 David Hockney works, made variously on his iPad (\$26,000 each) and by analog means (\$40,000 to \$56,000). “These works are more affordable than what’s currently in the gallery,” Pace’s press rep Hanna Gisell said, referring to the blockbuster show by the British giant that is now on view at its West 25th Street branch and noting that they were ideal for collectors entering the field. (They might also be attractive to those who can’t swing the price of the marquee Hockney being sold at Sotheby’s later this month: it carries a \$20 million-to-\$30 million estimate.)



A vast majority of works by Torbjørn Rødland have both at David Kordansky's booth, at Frieze New York 2018.  
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David Zwirner, which has galleries in New York, London, and now, Hong Kong, said that it parted with all of its paintings of the grim reaper by Josh Smith and several drawings by Raymond Pettibon. Those two offerings were actually located in two separate booths—one in the standard Galleries section and another in a section dedicated to the late, storied New York

art dealer Hudson, whose many prescient discoveries included Pettibon. That special section, titled “For Your Infotainment: Hudson and Feature Inc.,” also included drawings by the inimitable Tom of Finland, which sold quickly in the range of \$10,000 to \$25,000.

At Chelsea’s Mitchell-Innes & Nash, two paintings by Eddie Martinez sold in the \$40,000 range, and one larger painting brought in \$100,000. Jack Shainman Gallery, which has two Chelsea locations and another in Kinderhook, New York, sold several pieces by Hank Willis Thomas, as well as works by Lynette Yiadom-Boakye, Becky Suss, Enrique Martinez Celaya, and Geoffrey Chadsey.

Collectors had apparently not been deterred by the weather. Among those on hand were Dennis Scholl, Joel and Sherry Mallin, Don, Mera, and Jason Rubell, Frank Moore, Adam Lindemann, Aaron and Barbara Levine, and AC Hudgins, and they were joined by a bevy of museum curators and directors, from MoMA’s Laura Hoptman and the Studio Museum’s Thelma Golden to the Whitney Museum’s Scott Rothkopf and Chrissie Iles and the Brooklyn Museum’s Anne Pasternak.

Justine Ludwig, the new director of Creative Time, was at David Lewis’s booth, admiring Barbara Bloom piece about Steinway pianos, and Jeffrey Deitch was snapping photos of the Jafa works at Gavin Brown. An energetic Jerry Saltz gushed over the works by the self-taught Forrest Bess lining the walls of Parrasch Heijnen’s booth, priced at about \$200,000 apiece. (In a nice confluence, works by Bess’s onetime dealer, Betty Parsons, were on display at Alexander Gray Associates.)

And speaking of artists, just a few of those on hand were Thomas, Natalie Frank, and Rainer Ganahl, whose “seminar/lecture” photos were on view at Kai Matsumiya. The series, which the artist has been working on since the mid-1990s, documents seminars and lectures—both the speakers and audience reactions, which at times can be dryly comedic. Works are priced between \$9,000 and \$24,000.

In the sweltering blur certain celebrity spottings had almost the feel of seeing a mirage. There was model Soo Joo and—could it be?—Scarlett Johansson. And designer Raf Simons. And there was former New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg, sporting a pin-striped suit with an American flag pin.



Works by Emma Amos on offer in the booth of Ryan Lee Gallery, New York, at Frieze New York 2018.  
MAXIMILIANO DURÓN/ARTNEWS

A supersized folding table and chairs by Robert Therrien were the subject of many a selfie at Gagosian's main booth, and word spread briskly about other highlights: a full booth of 1960s Emma Amos works (the lone woman member of the Spiral group) at Ryan Lee and three stunning abstract Ed Clark paintings at Weiss, Berlin.

In the Spotlight section, near the Ryan Lee booth, Royale Projects from Los Angeles had another rediscovery: a suite of early work, from 1964–65, by the artist Clinton Hill, causing some people reading the fair's signage to think the gallery hailed from that neighborhood in Brooklyn. Hill spent time around Morris Louis and Helen Frankenthaler in the '60s, and the work, with its bright colors and stain-like technique, reflects that. This particular cache of pictures was recently discovered by the estate, un-stretched. The gallery now represents Hill's estate, and had the paintings stretched. At Frieze, they were well-received; Royale had sold several pieces on the fair's first day, to collectors in London and California, for between \$95,000 and \$125,000.

But it was the heat that dominated most conversations. By the middle of the afternoon, Frieze sent an email to exhibitors and said they were working on it. It was cooler outside, and there was a Stella Artois bar in one section serving up cold chalices of beer. No one seemed overly displeased. "There's really great energy here," one dealer told me dryly. "That must be what's making it so hot."