

Exciting results for BEIRUT ART FAIR 2014

by Naharnet Newsdesk 02 October 2014, 20:32

MORE THAN 20,000 VISITORS, 300 ARTISTS, 1000 ART WORKS

AND NUMEROUS ENTHUSIASTIC COLLECTORS

BEIRUT HAS BECOME A *FINE ART DESTINATION*

47 galleries from 14 countries welcomed 20,000 visitors (8,000 on its opening night) who came to celebrate the vitality of the 5th edition of BEIRUT ART FAIR. Among the participating exhibitors and artists, the following countries were represented: Germany, Saudi Arabia, Argentina, Armenia, Belgium, China, United Arab Emirates, Egypt, Spain, United States, France, Iraq, Lebanon, United Kingdom, Switzerland, Syria, and Thailand.

Under the patronage of Lama Tammam Salam, BEIRUT ART FAIR's inauguration was held on September 18 in the presence of officials and representatives of the diplomatic and business world.

According to Lama Tammam Salam, "BEIRUT ART FAIR has surpassed its original purpose, contributing to Lebanon's influence as a whole. The fair, based on the quality of the art work exposed, the participating galleries, and the artists, represents and embodies the dialogue between different cultures with and within the Arab world."

Art lovers came from all corners, including those living in Beirut, collectors, artists from the Arab world and Asia, international auction houses representatives, decorators, and fashion designers. Even show business personalities explored BEIRUT ART FAIR's aisles.

Among the visitors, one could notice not only collectors from Qatar, Kuwait, and Saudi Arabia, but also from the Lebanese Diaspora, who returned to their homeland to support the fair.

Laure d'Hauteville, the fair's founder and director, comments about its success: Lebanon represents the country of Culture. Despite its delicate geopolitical context, Lebanese people are still interested in all forms of art and are curious about international cultural developments. With BEIRUT ART FAIR, we show that collectors are very active in Lebanon and we are happy to notice that culture has become powerful economic leverage. The Lebanese artists, and also those of the ME.NA.SA region, are becoming part of the leading international collections, both public and private.

SIGNIFICANT SALES

Galleries reported strong sales during the fair which closed on Sunday, September 21. This success firmly establishes this event, now in its 5th year, within the ecosystem of international art fairs.

BEIRUT ART FAIR's newest edition witnessed the collector's appetite for all forms of art, be it painting, sculpture, drawings, photography, video, or installations. Out of the 47 exhibiting art galleries, all of them sold art works or established significant new contacts.

Among the sales that took place during the fair, we can highlight the following ones:

PAINTINGS, WORKS ON PAPER, AND SCULPTURES

Lebanese Galleries

Galerie Janine Rubeiz, directed by Nadine Begdache attracted all eyes. As in all international fairs in which it participates, it was a great success. The works by the artists Charles Khoury, Hanibal Srouji, Dalia Baassiri, and Ara Azad, in particular, were sold between \$1,000 and \$15,000.

This was also Agial Art Gallery's case. This year, Saleh M. Barakat, who founded his gallery in Beirut 24 years ago, chose to present Hady Sy's solo show with the theme "Loving Kills". Several of his works were acquired by Lebanese and international collectors delighted to discover the gallery's newest signature, who has also been actively participating at the magnificent Michel Basbous exhibition being held at BEIRUT EXHIBITION CENTER until October.

Emmagoss Art Gallery, who has participated in BEIRUT ART FAIR since its first edition, presented works on paper created in Shanghai by Jean Paul Guiragossian. These were estimated between \$2,000 and \$9,000.

Elie Kannan, a leading Lebanese painter, attracted many collectors. They purchased paintings from this artist who was noticed by André Malraux in the 1960s. Some of his art works have exceeded the value of \$60 000.

Delighted with their first participation in the fair, Salwa Zeidan Gallery, sold six art works from the series "Guardian Angel" by Marc Guiragossian for \$2,000 each and the 1988 painting "Retour" by Paul Guiragossian estimated at \$22,000.

At the Lebanese- Armenian gallery Noah's Ark Art Gallery's stand, several paintings by Yuroz sparked the desire of collectors, including the creations "Geisha" for \$38,000, "Young man in profile" for \$18,000, and "Young woman in profile" for \$19,000. Artist Gevorg Yeghyazarian had a similar reception with paintings "Symbol of Eternity" estimated at \$21,000 and "Bliss" estimated at \$20,000 finding buyers.

South Border Gallery sold all the artworks exposed in its stand, each one estimated to be between \$6,000 and \$8,000.

From here and elsewhere

Based in Munich and Beirut, present in all major international encounters,

Galerie Tanit sold several paintings to Lebanese collectors, as well as a sculpture by Ghassan Zard for \$16,000.

Gala Art Gallery came from Armenia and presented unusual works from several artists, including Karine Matsakyan. Her canvas known as “Good Guys”, estimated at \$9,000, enchanted more than one collector.

Gallery Ward, based in Cairo, Dubai, and Riyadh, had an enthusiastic reception. Many collectors adored and bought the works from the Egyptian artist Essam Marouf, estimated at \$13,000.

Based in Paris, New York, and Beirut, Mark Hachem Gallery sold several bronzes by Alfred Basbous, including “Taurean” and “Abstract”, estimated between \$7,000 and \$9,000, an art work by Thaer Maarouf for \$18,000, an acrylic painting by Saad Yagan for \$15,500, a creation by Sabhan Adam for \$1,300 and an installation by Yves Hayat for \$4,000.

The young gallery JAMM, coming from Dubai, presented a group of artists from the Arab world which included the photographer Lalla Essaydi. They also sold one artwork by Paul Guiragossian, the Lebanese modern painting master, for \$18,000, as well as several photos by Ibi Ibrahim. In addition, Farideh Lashai’s video-installations attracted the public’s attention and interest.

Coming from Damascus, Samer Kozah Gallery presented Syrian artists, painters, and sculptors, both established and emerging artists, who attracted the eyes of several collectors.

SAWART, based in Beirut and Cairo, presented an exhibition curated by Jacques Antoine Gannat. The exposing artists Alaa Awad, Keizer, and Marwa Adel symbolize the creative eruption experienced in Egypt and are part of the revolutionary artistic avant-garde. The gallery sold several pieces, including “Harmony” by Marwa Adel for \$2,200 and Keizer’s graffiti works for \$1,500 each.

In its first participation, the Lebanese gallery Tosh Fesh presented and sold all the drawings created by the Egyptian artist Mohsen Abu El Azem. Each one was sold between \$1,500 and \$2,000. The gallery also sold caricatures and comics by the Lebanese artists Jad El Khoury and Barrack Rima.

The Urban Fusion sold a piece by Nayla Saroufim for \$5,000 and another one by the young graffiti artist Yazan Halawi for \$3,000.

Sophie Deschamps & Nathalie Gaillard, two French gallerists who know the Middle –East, exhibited a work on paper created by Aurèle and the art works by Joël Brisse and Bernard Pras. In addition, they sold two monumental paintings by Guy Ferrer for more than \$18,000.

For its second participation in BEIRUT ART FAIR, the Argentinean gallery Laura Arce Art Gallery, highlighted the works of one of its fellow citizens, Andrés Paredes. Many collectors purchased the creations of this young artist with a promising future.

PHOTOGRAPHY, VIDEOS, AND INSTALLATIONS

Hania Farrel captured the public's attention at the entrance of the fair with her images and giant screens. She projected excerpts of her photography project TEAL, which was a huge success in London.

Island 6, coming from Shanghai, invested on Liu Dao's installations, receiving unanimous approval. More than six installations were purchased by Beirut private collectors for between \$12,000 and \$20,000. The gallery also exhibited creations along BEIRUT ART WEEK's route.

The Singaporean gallery Sana Gallery, who was participating for the first time in the fair, showcased the exhibition "Sublimed Elsewhere's" curated Marine Bougaran and which presented pictures shot by two emblematic Lebanese photographers. One of the images by Jack Dabaghian "Bana Pharao", was sold on the opening night for \$3,800. Several other photos by

Roger Moukarzel, taken from “Effect Series Nordic”, “Effect Series Africa”, and “Effect Series America” were also added to the picture rails of a collector.

Adler Subhashok Gallery sold several copies of “Ice cream” by Chirtsak Phaijitsattaya, as well as “The Way of Success” and “Imagination of Success”, two unclassifiable works by d’Uttaporn Nimmalaikaew who is part of the new generation of Thai artists and who won the Sovereign Asian Art Prize in 2006 and 2007. Pierre Koukjian’s neon, on the avatars of the electricity in Lebanon, found a buyer during the fair’s opening night.

Represented by Jennifer Norback Fine Art (United States), the artists Vivian van Blerk and Katya Traboulsi witnessed their images reach the homes of several Lebanese collectors.

DESIGN

Some design galleries decided to participate in BEIRUT ART FAIR to project their most recent achievements and to initiate or extend a dialogue with international collectors visiting the fair.

Among the sales of the Lebanese gallery Smogallery, we can highlight a ceramic by Nathalie Khayat “Inside In – Inside Out” which was sold for \$4,500 and two lamps signed by Georges Mohasseb sold for \$1,700 and \$1,900.

A similar enthusiasm was expressed for the creations exhibited by the famous gallery twentytwentyone, based in Beirut, which presented creations inspired on the XVIth century by Piero Fornasetti, a table designed by the French artist Hubert Le Gall, and art pieces by Piet Hein Eek.

OUNOVIS by baalcreations revealed creations by Claudia Elissar Chahine and Gilbert Debs, some of which were sold for \$2,500.

The boundless inspiration of the talented Lebanese designer Ramy Boutros allows him to create unique works such as his version of “The Concorde” transformed into a showcase or the unusual chairs of the “Opulent” series. His refined white and gold stand was a hit among the visitors.

It was Vick Vanlian’s first participation in BEIRUT ART FAIR. Embedded with humor and reference to the rock and comics universe, his creations won general approval.

Hala Habib’s creations presented in Barjis Design’s stand was a great success with her series “Barjis Games” which were sold to several Lebanese collectors.

The Lebanese gallery Mécanismes focused on the presentation of a single work by the young designer Céline Eid, “Throne of Social Destruction”.

It is worthy to note that the majority of top designers and collectors of the Arab world are Lebanese.

BEIRUT ART FAIR - HIGHLIGHTS

Every year, BEIRUT ART FAIR offers a multidisciplinary cultural program to open new horizons to all its visitors.

ENGRAVING WORKSHOP

This workshop run by Fadi Mogabgab was, undoubtedly, one of the most popular attractions during the fair. Leading personalities like Nora Joumblatt, the movie director Nadine Labaki, the musician Khaled Mouzanar, and Patrice Paoli, the French ambassador to Lebanon, signed up to learn how to operate an engraving press.

With BankMed’s support and the daily presence of the talent scout Fadi Mogabgab, this workshop offered BEIRUT ART FAIR’s diversified public the chance to create a personal and customized artwork.

As a result, hundreds of visitors passed by each day to be introduced to the art of engraving.

INDIAN PAVILLION

In its pursuit to explore emerging artistic scenes, BEIRUT ART FAIR presented the creations of 15 Indian artists who participated together in the exhibition “Small Art is Beautiful – Dharma”, curated by Fabrice Bousteau. These miniature works reflect the multiple streams of inspiration that drive the contemporary Indian artistic scene.

VIDEO PROJECTS

The section “video projects” broadcasted unreleased videos of artists coming from all parts of the ME.NA.SA region. Selected by the exhibition’s curator, Silke Schmickl, these videos focused on the theme “Bodypolitics” and presented, through poetry and irony, the artists’ perception of our contemporary societies. Among the represented artists, we point out Larissa Sansour, Khaled Hafez, and Sookoon Ang.

BYBLOS BANK AWARD

The third edition of the Byblos Bank Lebanese photography award was won by Myriam Boulos. The prize consists of a solo exhibition that will be promoted through both a targeted media campaign and the publishing of her personal catalog. The jury of the 2014 edition was composed of renowned experts, including Jack Dabaghian, the photographer Tony el-Hage, the collector Tarek Nahas, and the editor-in-chief of the French magazine Polka, Dimitri Beck. The jury was presided by Renaud Bergonzo, founder of the “Acte2galerie” in Paris.

BLC BANK DESIGN PLATFORM

For the 2nd edition of BLC BANK DESIGN PLATFORM, the journalist and writer Philippe Trétiack was invited to share his favorite works. This year,

the three winners of BLC Bank DESIGN PLATFORM were Khaled El Mays, Carlo Massoud, and Sandra Macaron.

BEIRUT ART WEEK

With the collaboration of the Ministry of Culture, the Municipality of Beirut, and Solidere, the 2nd edition of BEIRUT ART WEEK presented a new route to be explored allowing the city as a whole to experience contemporary art.

With more than twenty sculptures and monumental creations, the route displayed works by Jean Marie Fiori, Alain Salomon, Kameel Hawa, Louis Debré, Alfred Basbous, Lamia Maria Abillama, Katya Traboulsi, Marc Quinn, Hania Farrell, Kimiko Yoshida, Pablo Reinoso, Gilbert Debs & Claudia Chahine, Nayla Romanos Iliya, Ghassan Zard, Arne Quinze, Luis Lleo, Xavier Corbero, Hiroshi Sugimoto, Jeppe Hein, Anachar Basbous, Saloua Raouda Choucair, and Emile Mezher.

As these creations amazed and surprised the public passing by downtown Beirut, and encouraged them to visit BEIRUT ART FAIR. Moreover, as these visitors walked through the aisles of the fair, some of them during its opening, they returned on a second day with their kids and friends to share the discoveries they made.

Laure d’Hauteville, who, together with her team, dedicated her energy to serve art and artists, was delighted to observe the growing interest towards the fair and to witness the busy crowds visiting it daily. *“After 5 years, BEIRUT ART FAIR is the most important showcase of the ME.NA.SA creativity in the national and international artistic art scene. It is a unique source of information about the artists, trends, galleries, publications, and the institutions which contribute to the rapid growth of art in this region. Our desire is to always be in line with the developments in the art market and our passion is to nurture a worldwide dialogue that first passes through art.*

That is why we continuously strive to implement and strengthen the art developed in the ME.NA.SA region even further throughout the world. Based on this we are launching, next November, SINGAPORE ART FAIR.”



Naharnet © 2019