

Paris Art Fair Strives for Bigger and Bolder

FIAC, the Paris Contemporary Art Fair, Is Adding Satellite Events

By TARA MULHOLLAND. OCT. 23, 2014



“À votre avis,” by Amadou Sanogo, is being shown at the FIAC in Paris as part of the art fair’s (Off)icielle satellite event. Credit Amadou Sanogo/Galerie Magnin-A, Paris

PARIS — As the art world continues to boom and expand, there can be little doubt that, in order to survive in it, size helps.

In recent years, major galleries have compulsively opened outposts worldwide: Gagosian alone has 14 galleries, with another set to open in London next year; Emmanuel Perrotin has four; David Zwirner, three. Around 200 art fairs are crammed into the calendar, with the major ones like Art Basel and Frieze London also holding international sister events (Miami Beach and Hong Kong for Basel; New York for Frieze).

As the International Contemporary Art Fair in Paris prepares to open its 41st edition on Oct. 23, it appears clear that this event is happy to play with the big boys.

Under the guidance of Jennifer Flay, the fair's general director since 2010, the Foire Internationale d'Art Contemporain, or FIAC, is extending its reach in multiple directions. Its first international event, FIAC Los Angeles, will be held next year at the Convention Center from March 27-29. This year the Paris fair is effectively doubling, with the opening of a new satellite event, (Off)icielle, that focuses on emerging galleries.

"Since 2006 there have been up to six or seven different 'offs' around the FIAC, but, with respect, none of them really made the standard," the New Zealand-born Ms. Flay said during an interview this summer in her office here. "So yes, we decided to do it ourselves."



"Joel," 2011, by Omar Victor Diop, part of the (Off)icielle event at FiAC. Credit Omar Victor Diop/Galerie Magnin-A, Paris

Before Ms. Flay was named artistic director of the FIAC in 2003, the fair was considered a fusty relic on the art fair circuit: “too boring and too poor,” as Ms. Flay put it. Today, it has standing as a major international event that has injected new life into the French art scene.

As usual, the fair, which this year runs through Oct. 26, is being held in locations across Paris. Its main gallery base is in the Grand Palais, with events in the Tuileries, the Jardin des Plantes, the Place Vendôme and on the banks of the Seine. The spread of the FIAC is so extensive that this year it has organized shuttle boats along the Seine that can serenely transport ticket holders from the Grand Palais to the Cité de la Mode, where (Off)icielle is being held, avoiding the frenzy of the Paris Métro.

Such is the draw of the FIAC that many Paris art institutions synchronize their calendars with its opening. This year, happily timed events include the reopening of the Picasso Museum on Oct. 25, the inauguration of the Frank Gehry-designed Fondation Louis Vuitton on Oct. 20 (opening to the public on Oct. 27), and the reopening of La Monnaie de Paris on Oct. 25, with a major exhibition dedicated to the American artist Paul McCarthy. Celebrations are also being held by the Fondation Cartier for its 30th anniversary.

The Grand Palais will hold stands from 191 galleries from 26 countries, including Turkey, Mexico, Norway, India and South Korea. Most galleries, as in previous years, hail from France, the United States and Germany. Major dealers include Hauser & Wirth from Switzerland; White Cube from Britain; Paula Cooper and Gagosian from the United States; Sprüth Magers from Germany; and from France, the cream of the Paris galleries, including Perrotin and Marian Goodman.

It will also be a last FIAC for the legendary French dealer Yvon Lambert, who confirmed this summer that, at 68, he will be closing his Paris gallery in order to focus on books and literature.



“Installation View, Drawn,” by Lydia Gifford. Credit Lydia Gifford/Laura Bartlett Gallery

The Grand Palais will be divided into sections, with established galleries in one area and newer galleries in another. There will also be a space dedicated to the works of the nominees for the Marcel Duchamp prize, one of France’s most prestigious contemporary art awards. On the shortlist this year are Théo Mercier, Julien Prévieux, Florian and Michaël Quistrebert, and Evariste Richer. The winner will be announced on Oct. 25.

The work of 3,430 contemporary and Modern artists will be on sale, including established names like Marina Abramovic (Krinzinger Gallery); Zeng Fanzhi (Gagosian); Nan Goldin (Matthew Marks); and Ai Weiwei (Lisson Gallery and Continua). They will be alongside rising stars like the 35-year-old British painter and sculptor Lydia Gifford (Laura Bartlett); the multidisciplinary Indian artist Asim Waqif (Nature Morte); and Cyprien Gaillard, the 34-year-old French multimedia wunderkind, whose work will be on show at Bugada & Cargnel, Sprüth Magers and Gladstone Gallery.

(Off)icielle, the new satellite fair, runs from Oct. 22-26 at Paris’s new City of Fashion and Design, known as Les Docks, which opened in 2012 in the 13th Arrondissement in the city’s southeast quadrant. Sixty-eight galleries from 13 countries will be showcasing works there in a vast, 3,700-square-meter space.

Fringe events are not new to art fairs, a recent example being Frieze Masters, focused on historical art, which opened in London in 2012. But rather than scanning the past, Ms. Flay wanted (Off)icielle to highlight up-and-coming dealers, or galleries that might have been overlooked.

“It’s not some little thing we’re doing on the side, it’s absolutely a part of FIAC,” said Ms. Flay, who, having run her own gallery in Paris from 1990 to 2003, understands the importance of art fairs for dealers.



“Untitled (video still),” 2011-2014, by Aslan Gaisumov. Credit Courtesy of Aslan Gaisumov and Galerie Zink, Berlin

Galleries showing at (Off)icielle include the London-based Limoncello, with works by the young Israeli artist Yonatan Vinitzky. From Paris, galleries include Magnin-A, which focuses on contemporary African art and is showing works by Omar Victor Diop and Amadou Sanogo among others, and Semiose, which includes the multimedia artist Sébastien Gouju.

From the United States, LTD Los Angeles is showcasing the 25-year-old Argentine-born artist Amalia Ulman, while Zink Gallery from Berlin brings the 23-year-old Russian video artist Aslan Gaisumov.

Ms. Flay said that in holding the satellite event, she also hoped to provide an accessible entry point to the art world for aspiring collectors. “There is something about being surrounded by these younger galleries that is so much less intimidating than the context of the Grand Palais,” she said. “We’ll be creating a different atmosphere.”

While the FIAC offers private gallery tours and exclusive events for its V.I.P. guests, (Off)icielle is channeling an edgier vibe. Les Docks has impeccable hipster credentials: The former industrial warehouse holds the ultratrendy bar-cafe-nightclubs Nüba (run by the Baron nightclub crowd) and Wanderlust (part of the Silencio bandwagon), where (Off)icielle will hold screenings and events. In keeping with the urban vibe, street food will be available.

Another new event at this year’s FIAC is a collaboration with the Austrian crystal maker Swarovski. As part of the Hors Les Murs section—the showcasing of art outside of the Grand Palais — the house is sponsoring a new work by the French sculptor Didier Marcel, which will be in the Jardin des Plantes in the Fifth Arrondissement. Mr. Marcel, who won a competition to create a work “inspired by Swarovski,” is creating “Rosée” (Dew), described as a scattering of drops of crystal throughout the Jardin’s Rose Garden.

Meanwhile, a Hors Les Murs feature, “Tree” by Paul McCarthy in the Place Vendôme, will not be visible during the fair: The 80-meter-high inflatable sculpture was [deflated by vandals](#) the night of Oct. 17, and Mr. McCarthy and local authorities said he would not seek to re-inflate it. The lime green sculpture was described by the artist as a Christmas tree, but critics said looked like something much more prosaic: a sex toy. “After the violent reactions, the artist was disturbed by the potential impact of the work,” according to FIAC officials.

Doreen Carvajal contributed reporting.

Correction: October 28, 2014

An earlier version of this article, using information from the organizers of the Paris art fair, erroneously included one artist among some of those represented by the Pace Gallery. Dan Flavin is not one of them.

A version of this special report appears in print on October 23, 2014, in The International New York Times.

http://www.nytimes.com/2014/10/23/arts/international/fiac-the-paris-contemporary-art-fair-is-adding-satellite-events.html?_r=0