

FINANCIAL TIMES

ART IN THE AMERICAS | FRIEZE NEW YORK | MARKET NEWS | PEOPLE | EVENTS

Collecting FTWeekend

A fair case of FOMO

Emerging artists | Why young galleries

need art fairs – and art fairs

need them. By *Caroline Roux*

While the *raison d'être* of any art fair is for its organisers, and participants, to turn a tidy profit, those conditions are no longer enough to keep a fair in the top tier. Nowadays, the fair has to be an entertaining experience on every level, with fancy restaurants (both Locatelli and Umu pop up at Frieze Masters in London each October), excellent architecture (the Frieze New

York tent is designed beautifully by American team So-ll) and even unlikely interventions of performance art that might interrupt a collector's passage to a dealer.

At Frieze London in 2010, the artist Spartacus Chetwynd brought an anime

character the Cat Bus to life and had people compete for a place in it, while in 2007, Kris Martin called for a minute's silence in the middle of proceedings and – peculiarly – most gallerists and visitors obeyed. Complicated, even costly, but necessary, these are investments the organisers are bound to make.

Now, at the Frieze fairs in both New York and London, the directors are taking things one step further and

Continued on page 3



'Duo de Congas Gris y Plata' (2015) by Los Carpinteros, at Peter Kilchmann gallery in Frieze's main section

A fair case of FOMO

Continued from page 1

courting younger galleries with reduced rates to ensure the presence of seductive youthful energy.

"The young galleries, and the emerging artists they represent, are part of the ecology of the art world," says Jo Stella-Sawicka, artistic director of Frieze. "We need to have them at the fair to give a true picture of what is happening in contemporary art practice. And to nurture the strongest young talent, we subsidize them significantly."

The advantages of new blood — its ambition and unpredictability, and the interest it generates among the press and the professional curators — can be seen in monetary terms. At Frieze New York, a booth in the main section of the fair costs about \$850 per sq m. In the Focus section, dedicated to galleries founded in or after 2004, it comes down to \$678, and in Frame, for galleries under eight years old, it costs just \$420.

"It's difficult now to set up a gallery," says Stella-Sawicka. "Any potential for growth is stymied by real estate prices in cities like London and New York. So we feel it's right to make the fairs as supportive as we can."

But for all the reductions, it's still a gamble for a young set-up with limited capital. "It does feel like rolling the dice," says David Lieske of Mathew Gallery, which opened spaces in Berlin's Charlottenburg in 2011 and Canal Street in Manhattan in 2014. "You're putting so much investment into one spot, even if you're just taking a 25 sq m booth at Frame. Every unsuccessful fair puts a gallery's entire existence at risk."

And rewards, when they come, are not always financial. In 2014 Mathew Gallery showed an installation at Frieze London by Villa Design Group, who explore queer narratives through writing, performance and sculpture.

"It wasn't commercially successful, but a curator from MIT loved it and gave them an exhibition this May. That's a huge step in an artist's career," says Lieske.

Guillaume Sultana of Galerie Sultana in Paris and his two assistants will be moving into a rented apartment in the Lower East Side for 10 nights to take part in Frieze New York.

"I'm excited," says Sultana, who in his third year has moved from the Frame section to Focus. "But it's challenging because I'm paying more for my stand now and I'm bringing three artists." One of them, Jason Giordano,

is a young abstract painter based in Massachusetts, with no US gallery but a healthy number of American collectors. "So I'm hopeful," says Sultana. "Anyway I have to go to the fair for the visibility. A gallery in Paris isn't going to get you far internationally."

Sultana had a sellout booth with ceramic sculptures by Bettina Samson at Frieze New York in 2014. The following year, he tanked with the photography of Walter Pfeiffer. "I discovered that it doesn't work to show a classic photography booth in a contemporary art fair," he sighs.

This year, the Frame section has a new adviser in Fabian Schoeneich, a 31-year old curator based in Frankfurt, working alongside the existing adviser, Jacob Proctor.

"I wanted to think about greater diversity," says Schoeneich. "We approach younger galleries and then present them to the committee. They reflect what's coming up — like post-internet art." (The term refers to work produced by those who've grown up as digital natives, sometimes creating physical work that's derived from a digital viewpoint or experience.) "Aesthetically it's very mixed, but it brings new ideas of materiality."

Each booth in Frame shows a single artist, and Lieske has chosen to work with Cooper Jacoby, a 27-year-old based in Los Angeles who has created a new series of fibreglass sculptures for Frieze.

"For us, the artistic project comes first," says Lieske. "We talk to the artist and they choose their fair. We still ask ourselves why we do this year on year."

"But you almost feel you don't exist if you don't do the fair. It's the ultimate fear of missing out."

Frieze New York, May 5-8, frieze.com

'Bust Mask Copper' by Pia Camil, at Sultana Gallery

