

TOWN&COUNTRY

October 25, 2017

<http://www.townandcountrymag.com/leisure/arts-and-culture/a13086887/paris-premier-art-fair/>

The Best Things We Saw at the Premier Art Fair in Paris

Murakami, magnets, and Mrs. Macron invade the Grand Palais.



by [ADAM RATHE](#)

Last week, the Parisian art fair [Foire Internationale d'Art Contemporain](#)—FIAC for short—was held for its 44th year. This time around, the show brought together nearly 200 dealers from almost 30 countries to Paris's Grand Palais—as well as the nearby Petit Palais and the Avenue Winston Churchill between them—and was a hotbed of activity for both artists (talent both rising and established were represented) and galleries from around the world. *T&C* happened to be in town and spent time wandering the grounds as well as contemplating what might look nice on our own walls. Here, a brief rundown of the best things we saw.

THE GREAT OUTDOORS



PABLO REINOSO'S INSTALLATION "SIMPLE TALK" AT FIAC.

MARC DOMAGE

In addition to the work shown in the Grand Palais and Petit Palais, the fair offered a wide variety of exhibited pieces at pieces around the city as well as on the Avenue Winston Churchill. The weather was beautiful during, and being outside was a treat. We were particularly fond of Pablo Reinoso's installation "Simple Talk" (above), which looks like perhaps the world's prettiest park bench, and Yona Friedman's "Space Chains," a whimsical, pop-up sculpture made of a collection of colored hula-hoops. Another charmer: a 14-seat, site-specific movie theater to show the festival's cinema programming, which included works by Chantal Akerman among others.

THE INSTAGRAM MOMENTS



JEPPE HEIN'S "YELLOW, ORANGE, GREEN AND RED MIRROR BALLOON."
COURTESY 303 GALLERY, NEW YORK. PHOTO: MORTEN ILJAE

Does anyone really attend an art fair if they don't post about it on social media? At FIAC, there were plenty of pieces that seemed just perfect for a selfie—and while there's not much charm to attempting to move past people with their phones held at arm's length, we can certainly see the appeal in some of the fair's more photo-friendly moments. Chief among them was Jeppe Hein's "Yellow, Orange, Green and Red Mirror Balloon" (above), made to look like a series of 21 balloons "floating" (but really attached by magnets) to the ceiling of 303 Gallery's booth. Another winner was Takashi Murakami's "Flame of Desire – Gold," which haunted (or perhaps blessed) the Galerie Perrotin booth.

THE BIG-DEAL PIECES

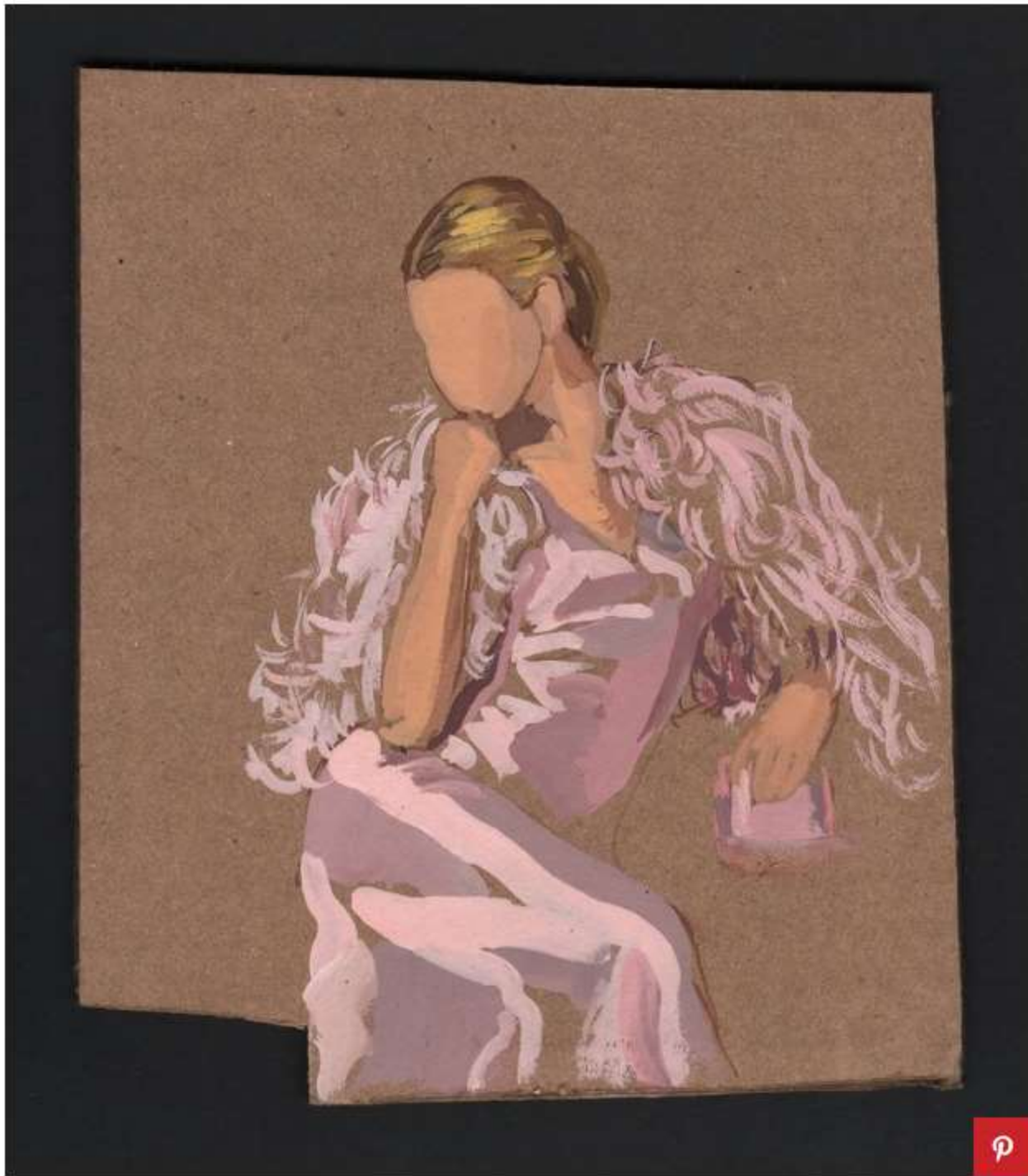


JEAN-MICHEL BASQUIAT'S "UNTITLED (HAND ANATOMY)."

COURTESY

While looking is all well and good, the real purpose of an art fair is, of course, to sell art. And the galleries that came to FIAC to do just that weren't playing around. New York's Van de Weghe gallery offered a trio of paintings by Jean-Michel Basquiat—the subject of a documentary that recently screened at the New York Film Festival and, as of earlier this year, the creator of the most expensive work by an American to ever go to auction—including one (above) that went for a reported \$10 million. At the Thaddaeus Ropac booth, a piece on bronze by Robert Rauschenberg—who's having a big year himself—boasted a price tag said to be over \$1 million.

THE WORKING ARTISTS



"UNTITLED" BY GIDEON RUBIN.

©GIDEON RUBIN STUDIO, COURTESY GALERIE KARSTEN GREVE PARIS, KÖLN, ST. MORITZ

Sure, seeing important pieces by big names that were previously in private hands is a thrill, but there's something equally exciting about taking in work from artists who haven't yet become household names. Aficionados were buzzing about works by photographer Mr. Baloji and the painters Etel Adnan and Eliza Douglas, among others. *T&C* was awfully fond of the small paintings by the Israeli-born, London-based painter Gideon Rubin, whose small, faceless, dreamy works (as seen above) would have been more than welcome to come home with us.

THE CROWD



**BRIGITTE MACRON WITH ART
DEALER EDWARD TYLER NAHEM
AT FIAC.**

COURTESY EDWARD TYLER NAHEM FINE ART

Most of the time, our go-to way to pass the time at an international art fair is to look at the work.

When that's over and done with, we like to take in the outré apparel that the global art crowd sports and assign the more eccentric members of the crowd Bond villain identities. It never fails to amuse. Very little imagination was needed, however, to appreciate the crowd that packed FIAC.

In addition to the usual well-dressed hordes of global billionaires, scruffy art hipsters, and blue-suit clad, rakish dealer types we were treated to the site on one evening of the fair of [France's own First Lady Brigitte Macron](#) (seen above with art dealer Edward Tyler Nahem), roaming the booths and taking in the sites. It was the rare viewing that gave pause to even the most seasoned fairgoer, and underscored the enduring glamour and importance of a fair like FIAC. We can't wait to see who turns up next year.