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Pro Choice

PARIS 05.29.14



Left: Publisher of *Matter Magazine* Olu Odukoya, artist Oscar Murillo, and David Zwirner's Rodolphe von Hofmannsthal. Right: Director of visual arts at the French Ministry of Culture Pierre Oudart, dealer and "Choices" founder Marion Papillon, with dealer Georges-Philippe Vallois. (All photos: Julian Elias Bronner)

"WAIT—there's a gallery weekend in Paris?" Marian Goodman's Nicolas Nahab seemed surprised when I mentioned last Friday's events. Around us, thirty others wined and dined under a heated tent on the rooftop of Le Perchoir, views of Montmartre and the white dome of the Sacré Cœur offering a dazzling backdrop.

Somewhere down in the City of Lights, Kim Kardashian and her maids of "honor" trampled through town for her bachelorette bacchanal, but up here the festivities revolved around Colombian artist Oscar Murillo, who was opening his first solo exhibition in France at Marian Goodman Gallery, the culmination of a trilogy of shows—including one at South London Gallery and another at the Mistake Room in Los Angeles—addressing "the aesthetics of shared labor." Goodman was not a participant in "Choices"—Paris's inaugural gallery weekend, organized and facilitated by art dealer Marion Papillon—nor was she the only abstainer: Chez Valentin's opening of Petra Cortright and Ed Fornieles as well as Benoît Platéus's opening at Jeanroch Dard carried on last Thursday evening like it was any other weekend. After last year's failure to create a synchronized gallery event (several galleries either pulled out or deviated from the agreed upon opening dates days before the weekend was meant to commence), many had discarded as quixotic the idea that a group of divergent Parisiens—forget art dealers—could agree on anything more than to disagree.

On Friday I caught up with many agreeable members of the Parisian art circle at the Palais des Beaux-Arts for the weekend's opening event: an exhibition consisting of thirty-five artists, each invited by one of thirty-five galleries participating in "Choices," and curated by students from the École des Beaux-Arts de Paris. At the entrance to the long nave where the exhibition was held, Venice regulars might have recognized Jeremy Deller's suspended textiles woven with lyrics by David Bowie, once displayed at the entrance to the British Pavilion and presented here by Galerie ART:CONCEPT.



Left: Director of the École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts Nicolas Bourriaud with art critic and editor-in-chief of *Paletten Art Magazine* Sinziana Ravini. Right: Dealers Frédérique and Philippe Valentin with artists Ed Fornieles and Petra Cortright.

"It's a bit like ABC," someone said, referring to the event in Berlin—a small art fair cleverly disguised as a curated group exhibition. Upstairs, I spent some time with Pauline Bastard's agonizing-to-watch video installation, presented by Galerie Eva Hober, of the artist exhaustively dismantling, with her bare hands, the structure of a house she purchased for one euro in rural France. Created—*not* destroyed—by hand were the much discussed and admired multicolored sculptures by Matthew Darbyshire, also on view at his solo exhibition at Jousse Enterprise in the Marais. At Beaux-Arts, Darbyshire showed a statue of Sophocles sculpted using polycarbonate bars and colored plastic sheets in the spectrum Roy G. Biv, endowing the lofty subject matter with Op Art effects and Pop colors. Nature itself seemed to approve, as a rainbow descending over the Louvre at closing hour became a popular Instagram subject.

Rainbows or sunshine, the shows must go on, and many of us found ourselves on Saturday trekking through the drizzle in the Marais to see them. Those who had taken a jade green umbrella from five-star Hôtel Le Meurice, where "Choices" affably accommodated foreign collectors, stuck out in the winding streets like loose dollar bills floating amid the euros. I stopped by Isabelle Gounod's gallery for brunch, where French artist Jérémy Liron's exhibition "Hypnagogies"—a neologism of the artist's combining hypnagogic and *rêveries* ("daydreams")—addressed Le Corbusier's 1952 Brutalist habitation complex La cité radieuse. As Liron told

me, dormant Modernist idealism, here, "remains a dream in waiting."

Next door at Claudine Papillon's gallery, I had the opportunity to meet her daughter Marion, founder and organizer of "Choices." "There are plenty of reasons to come to Paris throughout the year. I wanted to give one more international presentation outside of FIAC—and in springtime! Even if the weather's not great," she told me, holding a saucer and balancing a coffee cup with one hand. "Last year we were too pressed for time, and we couldn't coordinate with all the galleries. We lost some participants—especially some galleries in Belleville—but there will be more opportunities..." Suddenly, the cup tumbled off the saucer and smashed against floor. "Well, that's what happens when the gallerist is breaking ground!" offered London-based collector Jean-Philippe Vernes, standing nearby with a smile.



Left: Marian Goodman's Nicolas Nahab, curator Julie Boukobza, and artist Ross McNicol. Right: Jousse Entreprise's Philippe Jousse and Sophie Vigorous with artist Matthew Darbyshire.

Later that evening we indulged in a few pastis at the Fondation d'Entreprise Ricard for the Neil Baloufa-organized "Supernaturel," then everyone went back to Le Meurice for the weekend's gala dinner in an expansive "late-Louis-XV-slash-early-Louis-XVI salon," as it was described to me. In the foyer, flutes filled with Perrier-Jouet were the must-have accessory, while *gougère au fromage* were presented on silver platters by waiters in white coats. "It looks just like the Ministry of Culture in here," said my neighbor, Marie Cecile Burichon of the Institut Français, as we sat down to dinner. Sure, Pierre Oudart, visual arts director of the Ministry of Culture, was there, as well as Ministry habitués such as Delphine Levy, head of the museums of the City of Paris, and Marie-Aline Prat, head of the committee of the Prix Jean-François Prat—or was she referring to the décor?

After dinner and the obligatory speeches, I set off for the bar with curator Vincent Honoré for a digestif, only to be detoured when collector David Roberts—in town from London for the weekend—invited us to his table. There we found delightful company—Lithuanian artist Indre Serptyte, collectors Anabel Zamora and Manuel Alvarez de Estrada from Madrid, and Paris-born collector Frédéric de Goldschmidt with dealer Chantal Crousel—in the midst of ordering drinks. Some wanted more than a few whiskies, and someone introduced the idea of heading to members club Silencio, for which we had been mailed a temporary membership for weekend entry. "Are you going out?" Honoré asked Crousel. "I am going to *silencio*," she said softly, tilting her head and placing hands together under her chin in the international indication that it was time for bed.



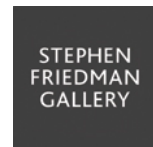
Fondation d'Entreprise Ricard director Colette Barbier, artist Jérémy Liron, and dealer Isabelle Gounod. Right: Centre Pompidou's chief curator of contemporary art Sophie Duplaix, founder and artistic director of 40mcube Anne Langlois, director of David Roberts Art Foundation Vincent Honoré, and Piasa director of contemporary art Timothée Chailou.

"Choices" officially ended on Sunday evening with a finissage at neo-Renaissance palace and fashion institution Musée Galliera. On view was "Papier glacé," a selection of fashion photography from Condé Nast publications dating back to the 1920s. After a quick turn of the show, I joined the others on the Musée's terrace where people were discussing the 25 percent of votes won by the National Front—France's far-right, protectionist, and anti-EU party—while on our phones Facebook flooded with open letters of discontent from the more liberally minded.

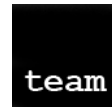
"I especially want to thank the artists, without whom none of us would be here," Marion said to a round of applause and raised glasses.

"Bravo, Marion!" came from numerous members of the crowd, preferring to end the weekend in anticipation of next year's "Choices," as opposed to ruminating on the choices made by the French electorate. Either way, here's to hoping that Paris will, once again, offer the present something the future can be proud of.

— Julian Elias Bronner



links





Left: Dealer Jeanroch Dard with artist Benoît Platéus. Right: General secretary of Musée Galliera Bénédicte Breton, head of the Paris Film Commission Sophie Boudon Vanhille, and head of museums of the City of Paris Delphine Levy.



Left: Art advisors Sacha Zerbib and Étienne Macret with collector Frédéric de Goldschmidt. Right: Artists Pauline Bastard and Ivan Argote.



Left: Artist Claire Tabouret with art historian Marie-Aline Prat. Right: Participating artists in "Supernaturel".



Left: Dealer Jocelyn Wolff, collector David Roberts, and artist Indre Serpytyte. Right: Dealers Natalie Seroussi and Chantal Crousel.



Left: François Pinault collection curator Caroline Bourgeois with Marian Goodman's Johanna Wiström. Right: Le Monde's Emmanuelle Lequeux with curator Marc-Olivier Wahler.



Left: Director of visual arts and architecture at Institut Français Marie Cecile Burichon with dealer Suzanne Tarasieva. Right: Dealer Guillaume Sultana, Galerie Perrotin's Clara Ustinov, and interior designer Pierre Beucler.



Left: Collector Galila Barzilai Hollander with Le Minotaure's Alexandra Lantz. Right: Curator Nadia Candet with Cynil Candet.



Left: Artist Frank Perrin with dealer Barbara Polla. Right: Collectors James Keith ("J.K.") Brown and Eric Dieffenbach.



Left: Artist Daphné Navarre. Right: Collector Frédéric Brière, curator and critic Frédéric Bonnet, and editor-in-chief of *Art Press* Anaël Pigeat.



Left: Dealer Laurent Mueller. Right: Collectors Florence and Ralph Kattan with artist Jean-Michel Pancin and dealer Odile Ouizeman.



Left: Artist Tim Eitel. Right: Collectors Mimi and Filiep Libeert.



Left: Director of the Agnes B. art collection Elodie Cazes with artist Mélik Ohanian. Right: Artists Chrystele Nicot with Yoann Paouloff.



Left: Artist Julia Cottin with collector Jean-Philippe Vernes. Right: Dealer Hervé Loevenbruck.



Left: Dealer Bertrand Grimont with artist Vincent Mauger. Right: Collectors Marion Le Breton, Mohammed Al Thani, and art advisor Veronica Fernandez.



Left: Collectors Thierry Gasnier, Colette Tornier, and Isabelle Bourgeois. Right: Collectors Enea Righi and Lorenzo Painsi.

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