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Doing Miami, Again

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Well, it happened. It got even bigger, this Super Bowl of the art world. With some dozen and a half fairs, Miami in early December is the art world. And everyone was there, catching up with art aesthetics, theories and achievements that seemed endless and bright. As I took in the first day and a half with friends Betty (art shipper and curator), Robert (galler-

here, he expressed definite opinions and valuable insights as we bounced from booth to room, and fair to exhibition. The second day ended with another old friend, Gae, and a new one, Rupert, who both, as exhibitors, brought even more insights to my already overflowing plate.

And there is one more, big reason to smile here. You see, there are so many who have made it to this point, who deserve this stage, that you can't help but feel good about it.

It is a given that Basel is grand, even stupendous—the heartbeat of a core that feels like the energy stored up in a volcano. And it was great to see works like Michael Anderson's mesmerizing collages at the Marlborough booth, which are painterly and potent. And in the other perennial show to see, Scope, with galleries like Ricco Maresca offering up magical life forms in ceramic by Christopher Adams; the gutsy and fresh group show of contemporary Polish artists at Kasia Kay Art Projects; the creepy and cool works on paper by the Icelander Sigga Bjorg Sigurdardóttir at Galerie Adler and the crisp cross-section of new realist art at the booth of ADA gallery were all show stoppers.

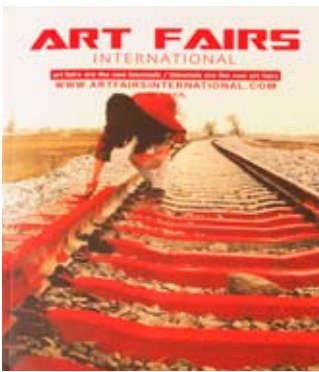
Surprisingly, I found two fairs to be so strong and so vibrant that they alone held all of my allotted attention. The first is Flow, which was put together and run by Matt Garson of M%, who managed to amass just the right 18 institutions. Among these, Arthur Roger Gallery, which featured stirring, post-Katrina, Louisiana portraits by David Bates and Marcia Wood Gallery, which showed the anime-looking photo portraits of fab-female nubile by Chris Scarborough were sheer



ist and projects person) and Carl (artist and dealer, who I found the most fascinating since this year was his first time seeing this fair extravaganza), I quickly became simultaneously entrenched in and overwhelmed by the events. And, despite Carl's newness

knockouts, to name just a few.

Then there was the Bridge Fair—with its edgy, funky out aesthetic most noticeable in the over the top, Billy Shire Fine Arts Gallery. Bleu Acier Inc., from nearby Tampa, was another



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great find—a gallery that displayed discerning taste and vision, featuring a unique combination of styles and media. Here, I found the paintings of Elisabeth Condon to be particularly fine and compelling, while Marie Yoho Dorsey's stitched fabric paintings were quite beautiful. Then there is Runert Ravens Contemporary with its amazing constructions by James A. Brown, which present a down and dirty, sweet darkness that continues in the paintings of German Pitre.

I also managed a gander at the local art scene in the Wynwood Art District, finding it world class on many levels. Kevin Bruk Gallery had a show of Fabian Maraccio's works which were as twisted as painting can get. The gallery also featured the elusive, yet solid works of Richard Butler and the quirky and sexual narrative drawings of Su-en Wong, which rounded out that program nicely.

Then there is Praxis, another fine gallery featuring, among others, a number of sculptures by Ruben Torres Llorca that were well delivered conceptually and incredibly well-crafted.

Over at the Design District, I took a long look at Design Miami, a multi-leveled fair featuring incredible examples of modern and contemporary design. There, I found the objects comprised of reclaimed and reoriented ceramic statues in David Gill Gallery by Barnaby Barford to be quite profound and funny in this sea of high design steeped in pivotal works and potent trends.

Next year... □