



Praz-Delavallade, Paris
gallery at Art Basel
Miami Beach 2010

miami heat

ART-LOVING CHICAGOANS WILL FLOCK TO ART BASEL MIAMI BEACH THIS WINTER TO CELEBRATE THE 10TH ANNIVERSARY OF THIS COUNTRY'S PREMIERE CONTEMPORARY ART EXPO.

BY SUE HOSTETLER

It's been a very good year for the folks behind the prestigious Art Basel contemporary art shows. This summer, record numbers flocked to the 42nd annual Art Basel in Switzerland. The company then purchased the Hong Kong International Art Fair—the leading show in Asia—giving them critical leverage on that ever-expanding key continent. And this December 1–4, Art Basel Miami Beach (ABMB)—sister event to the Swiss behemoth—celebrates its 10th anniversary.

After launching in 2002, ABMB quickly established itself as the most significant art show in the Americas. Dealers, collectors, curators and art enthusiasts of every type from all over the world descend en masse on Miami Beach for the extravaganza, which has grown to include an international selection of more than 250 galleries, cutting-edge exhibitions and performances featuring music, film, architecture and design. The show has also helped transform Miami into a leading cultural capital that boasts some of the world's most ambitious private collections. This, coupled with the tropical climate and South Florida's location at the social and economic nexus of North America and Latin America, make the city a perfect backdrop for the show and help draw an elite global audience.



Codirectors Annette Schönholzer
and Marc Spiegler

Local Chicago dealer Kavi Gupta—whose eponymous gallery showed in the Art Positions containers that very first year—took a few years off and is back this year. He thinks that the show's directors and committee have an especially discerning eye for what is new and groundbreaking in the art world. "The quality of the art stands out," Gupta offers, "and the additional programming and related events set the standard for other art fairs. I also appreciate that the fair is always looking to improve and add emerging galleries and artists—our gallery, case in point. I have consistently found the new 'big' artist at ABMB first."

Which begs the question: What has Gupta chosen to show this year? "We are featuring Theaster Gates in our booth and in the Art Public section in front of the Bass Museum of Art," he says. Gates is not only a celebrated artist and musician who was featured in the Whitney Biennial last year, but is interestingly also the director of arts and public life at The University of Chicago. Gupta clearly has high hopes for Gates, calling him "one of the most talked-about artists for contemporary collectors in the last year."

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Color Aditivo by
Carlos Cruz-Diez, 2010 Art Public

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Though details for this December's special 10th anniversary celebration remain a closely held secret, we were able to sit down with show codirectors Marc Spiegler and Annette Schönholzer for a little insider information.

MICHIGAN AVENUE: Art Basel Miami Beach (ABMB) has become the most important event in the US for the contemporary world. To what do you attribute this success?

ANNETTE SCHÖNHOLZER: There are many reasons, although the foundation of the success has been the galleries that return every year and bring fantastic pieces. Many also mount carefully curated exhibitions for Art Kabinett in their booths and participate in additional sectors such as Art Public outdoors. The programming of Art Basel Conversations and the Art Film night also make the week rich in content and ideas. Equally important are the city of Miami Beach—which has always been supportive—and Miami's private collections and remarkable museums, which enrich the experience by staging superb exhibitions every December. Seeing the cultural scene blossom in the Miami area over the last decade has been really rewarding, and we're proud to have been part of that renaissance.

MA: Has the quality or international makeup of the dealer applicant pool changed considerably over the years?

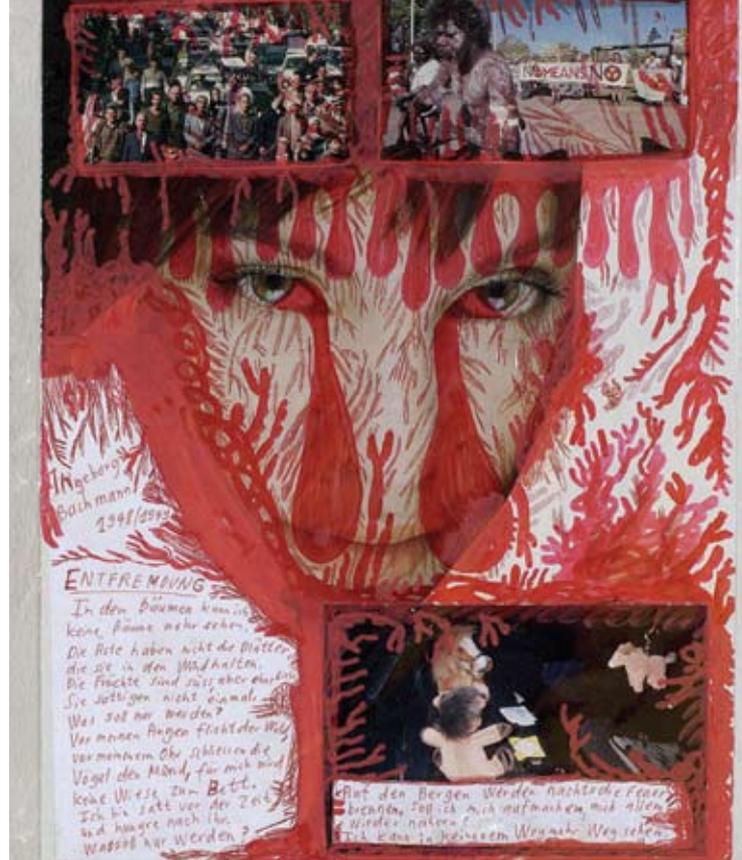
MARC SPIEGLER: We had very high application numbers and a high reapplication rate again this year. For European galleries, it is now the "must" show to do in America, and we have seen better and more Latin American galleries applying every year as the art scenes surge in places such as São Paulo, Mexico City and Bogotá. It's always a pleasure to see new dossiers coming in from places that used to be totally off the art world's radar.

MA: People have been wondering for years how the worldwide economic crisis would affect the overall art market. There has been attrition of galleries, smaller fairs, etc., and yet ABMB remains a dealer favorite and show-sale results remain strong. Have you employed a specific, strategic approach that is responsible for this continued success?

MS: We mainly kept doing what we have always done, which is to build the best possible platform for our galleries. Obviously, we also work hard to make every edition of Art Basel Miami Beach exciting for exhibitors,



Piquanteagle by
John Chamberlain,
2009, 2010 Art Public



Untitled by Thomas Hirschhorn, 1998

“The foundation of the success has been the galleries that return every year and bring fantastic pieces.”
—ANNETTE SCHÖNHOLZER

Kavi Gupta



museums, curators and visitors—and, of course, to bring the most important collectors and museum groups to the show. A huge factor on that front is the ever-growing collector bases from Brazil, Mexico, Argentina and Puerto Rico, who are all now regulars at Art Basel Miami Beach. During 2009, the most difficult year for the US economy, those collectors greatly compensated for the Americans who had slowed down their collecting.

MA: What is the best and most efficient way for attendees to tackle the immense offerings of Art Basel Miami Beach?

AS: Download the [ABMB iPhone, iPod Touch, iPad and BlackBerry] app, get a show guide, orient yourself, make a plan and start to walk the halls. Be sure to visit the Art Galleries sector for top-level modern and contemporary art, along with Art Nova for two or three artists showing new work, and Art Positions, which features 16 major solo projects by emerging artists. Then leave the halls to go to Art Public—newly focused within Collins Park area—and watch the Art Video program on the New World Center projection wall. **MA**