

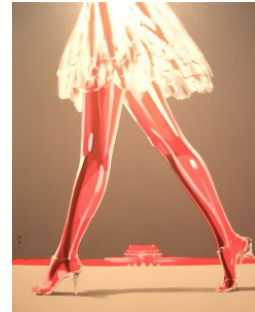
Art | Basel | Miami Beach

December 5-8, 2007

Blue Tangerine Art's founder and art advisor, Trudy Montgomery, provides insights and highlights direct from Art Basel Miami Beach (ABMB) and its satellite fairs.

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- **Trends:** quality remains high and demand strong despite slowdown elsewhere in the economy; 21 shows cause art fair fatigue; size matters in the search for paintings; photography phenomenon.
- **Highlights:** what's hot: Chinese supermarkets and artists selling direct to buyers at Geisei.
- **Best of the Rest:** Art Miami, Scope, Pulse, Red Dot and Flow.
- **News & Views:** The number of fairs and dilution of foot traffic raises questions over the proliferation of art fairs this year.



Feng Zheng-Jie (2007)

ART BASEL TRENDS

- **Quality remains high & sales brisk:** Art Basel Miami Beach (ABMB) continues to be the main attraction for serious collectors due to the quality and variety of work available and where collectors snapped up quality works from the opening bell. However, the rush was not quite as frenzied as in previous years, and this was particularly true in the satellite fairs where collectors took their time to pick up gems at more affordable prices.
- **Fair Fatigue:** Selection is tight for a booth at ABMB: only 1 in 3 galleries that apply for booth space receive committee approval. The rest opt for a venue in one or more of the satellite fairs located across venues of variable quality - marquees, warehouses and converted hotels (and even a yacht this year). Comfortable shoes were essential for getting the most out of the Miami art scene this year, but even the most energetic collectors found it impossible to see all 21 fairs. Galleries and visitors alike complained of art fair fatigue and, with collector foot traffic being diluted across multiple venues. A contraction in the number of satellite fairs seems inevitable in 2008.
- **Size matters:** demand for very large, ambitious works, especially painting, was strong. Several buyers also wanted whole installations and series, rather than individual works.
- **Photography phenomenon:** there was noticeably more photography on view. San Francisco's own Fraenkel gallery secured a booth at ABMB for the first time reflecting the growing attention on the medium. The Association of Photography Art Dealers' staged its first Miami fair, Aipad, while collectors also enjoyed Photo Miami.

HIGHLIGHTS (What's Hot)

The talk of ABMB was ShanghART's Supermarket, a full size replica of a 24 hour convenience store by Chinese artist Xu Zhen, complete with shelves displaying candy, nuts and cigarettes. Everything was for sale, including store franchises at a cool \$20,000.

(Surprisingly, given the recent sky-rocketing auction prices for Chinese painting, Chinese art seemed thin on the ground elsewhere in Miami.)



Xu Zhen, Shanghart Supermarket (2007)

Meanwhile Takashi Murakami, a Japanese artist whose work is currently being exhibited at Los Angeles' MOCA, launched *Geisei*, a new art fair concept to an international audience. 20 young artists selected by jury received booth space free of charge, cutting out the middle man / dealer by allowing artists to sell their work direct to the public. While the work was somewhat quirky or immature, prices started at a few hundred dollars and the concept was generally welcomed for allowing direct artist-to-buyer relationships in an otherwise dealer-driven market.

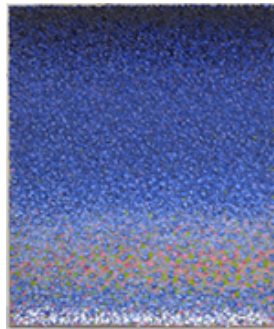
BEST OF THE REST

There was quality work to be found at the satellite fairs including:

- **Scope** and **Nada** remained favorites as the two leading satellite fairs selling blue chip works while the more affordable **Pulse** also gathered fans.
- **Art Miami**: a favorite with Blue Tangerine with representation from strong local and international galleries including Haines, Sundaram Tagore, Stefan Stux, Kahya Hildebrand and von Braunbehrens.
- **Flow**: best of the art hotel venues, although **Red Dot** was strong on painting and sculpture
- **Art Now**: despite the dire state of the hotel hosting this fair, urban art from White Walls in San Francisco was a highlight.



Hung Liu, *Untitled*, 2007,
mixed media
(Nancy Hoffman Gallery)



Kuno Gonschior, *Novatis
Laguna*, 2007, oil on linen
(Stefan Stux)



Andy Denzler, *Urban Figures 3*,
2007, oil on linen
(Ruth Bachofner)

NEWS & VIEWS

- **New territories**: 3 year old Design Miami came of age at ABMB this year, receiving backing from Art Basel's owners who will expand the increasingly popular fair into other territories such as China.
 - **Russia**, a curated exhibit of contemporary Russian Art, was presented for the second year care of sponsors RI Group.
 - **Balelatina** presented contemporary art from Latin America. **Visitor tips**: Keen collectors conducted several viewings of ABMB as art hangings are changed daily. However, securing early access and a VIP pass is key to scoring the best work: prized pieces are snapped up at the VIP preview with galleries displaying lesser works towards end of the week.
 - **Innovation**: Art Fair directors are becoming more creative in attempts to attract collectors. *SeaFair* is 18 year old ABMB's first floating art fair on a custom designed yacht offered more traditional art, leaving contemporary art to the land-based fairs.
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Trudy Montgomery is an art advisor who leads and hosts clients on private tours at select art fairs. Contact trudy@bluetangerineart.com
