



Visual Diary - The Armory Show Contemporary

April 11, 2012

by Pat Rogers

DISPATCH - Mar 21, 2012 (8:34 a.m.) (Part II)

NEW YORK, NY

After visiting The Armory Show Modern, the Contemporary section was next. The fair was high energy and visually-popping with 157 exhibitors to choose from. Sometimes, it felt like I was at an art carnival, with choreographed booths, art spectacle and blazing neon leading the way. Searing through was art worth noticing.

Here's some of the booths (and art) that made me stop and stare:

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Tang Contemporary Art (Hong Kong, Bangkok and Beijing, China). Exhibited in the center of the booth is "Stranger than Paradise - the Origine" by Yang Jiechang, 2011. 140 ceramic sculptures (each 15 x 20 x 10 cm), 150 glass pedestals and wooden table.

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Looock Galerie booth (Berlin, Germany). "Drift 01" by Natalia Stachon was the commanding art piece. The work includes Plexiglass pipes, cords, hooks, tension belts and stainless steel pedestal.

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Ambach & Rice (Los Angeles, CA). Exhibiting artists included Eric Yahnker, Grant Barnhart, Abigail Reynolds and others.



Galerie Jerome De Noirmont booth (Paris, France). The entire booth was devoted to a Special Project by Fabrice Hyber.



Mendes Wood booth (Sao Paulo) at The Armory Show Contemporary.



Galerie Loevenbruck (Paris, France) presented "Ghost Arcarde 1- VII" by Borre Saethre, 2012.



galerie bob van orsouw (Zurich, Switzerland) at The Armory Show Contemporary.

There were two pieces that drew me inside galerie bob van orsouw's booth. Grabbing my eye first was a sculpture on the floor that looked like a racetrack for toy cars. "Imagine you are driving (sculpture 4)" by Julian Ople is made of concrete. The weight of the artwork could be felt just by looking at it. Danger felt imminent: Matchbox cars would not be welcome.

Suspended from the ceiling was the piece "Flu, Bo, Genx, Landy, Scap, Egg, ou, ti, pris, me" by Ernesto Neto. The intriguing artwork is made from polyamide stocking, Styrofoam balls and glass beads. The longer I looked, the better I liked it. The stocking was translucent allowing the colored material inside to entice. The artwork shifted gracefully with a breeze I didn't feel. It also implied more vigorous motion of the swinging and the bouncing kinds that would further transform the piece.



"Flu, Bo, Genx, Landy, Scap, Egg, ou, ti, pris, me" by Ernesto Neto, 2009. Polyamide stocking, Styrofoam balls, glass beads. 215 x 180 cm. Exhibited by galerie bob van orsouw.

Clusters of people at Galerie Michael Janssen had me wondering what was going on...



Galerie Michael Janssen (Berlin, Germany) booth at The Armory Show Contemporary.

The attraction was a series of large glass heads upon pedestals. The ability to peer inside to “find” the objects stuffed within provided layers of meaning and kept me thinking about the works.



Exhibited by Galerie Michael Janssen (Berlin, Germany).

Besides booths curated to draw attention, there were individual pieces that were knockouts. Here are a few artworks that I spied at The Armory Show Contemporary:

Ricardo Rendon’s ongoing art project is called “Forced Labor.” He uses material and methods of “common labor practices to his art production, mining the aesthetic from the workaday,” according to his website. Rendon’s sculptures and installations stem from the “conceptual touchstone of the work being executed by...chain gangs as being work without meaning, performed as a filler for idle time,” he writes. He’s equally interested in the creation and artistic processes used in making art.

Rendon has exhibited internationally. He lives and works in Mexico City, Mexico. Here’s the single artwork I was able to see:



“Area de Trabajo (Multiple 5)” by Ricardo Rendon, 2010. Industrial felt, unique. Exhibited JGM Galerie (Paris, France).

“Alas, Hellas” by Vlassis Caniaris (1928-2010) was exhibited at Kalfayan Galleries of Athens, Greece. The mixed media sculpture is part of a series Caniaris made inspired by the plight of immigrants and migrant workers.

Caniaris is known for his socially-conscious assemblages, inspired his homeland of Greece but made

while living in Germany, according to the gallery. Caniaris was born and died in Greece but spent time living and working in Rome, Paris and Berlin before returning to Athens, where he stayed until his death in 2010.

Here's the work I felt lucky to see:



"Alas, Hellas!" by Vlassis Caniaris. Exhibited Kalfayan Galleries (Athens, Greece).

Immediately afterwards, "Dawn of new Century" by Rob Voerman pulled me in. Voerman is currently making a body of work in which he creates "the architecture of fictitious communities living in remote areas or occupying existing city-landscapes," according to his website.

These communities are a mix of "utopia, destruction and beauty, a symbiosis of hippie-communities from the seventies, with their often highly decorated self-built structures, the cabin of the Unabomber hidden in the Montana forests, art-deco and other influences," Voerman writes.

His work is currently exhibited in the group show "Kaleidoscope" at C24-Gallery in New York City from Mar 10 to Apr 21. At The Armory Show, Voerman exhibited with Upstream Gallery from the Netherlands, where he was born and continues to work. Currently he's in residency at ISCP (International Studio and Curatorial Program) in New York.



"Dawn of new Century" by Rob Voerman. Exhibited Upstream Gallery (Amsterdam, Netherlands).



"Dawn of new Century" by Rob Voerman. Exhibited Upstream Gallery (Amsterdam, Netherlands).



Inside view of "Dawn of new Century" by Rob Voerman. Exhibited Upstream Gallery (Amsterdam, Netherlands).

Here's a few fun artworks that I enjoyed seeing:



"Bed for Human Use" by Marina Abramović, (2012). Reenacted live. Exhibited Luciana Brito Galeria (Sao Paulo, Brazil).



"Stray Dog" by Tony Matelli, 2000. Painted Bronze, 20 x 45 x 15 inches. Exhibited Leo Koenig Inc (New York, NY).

While getting my vote for the 'Most Uncomfortable Title,' the next piece was subtle and a lot of fun. At first glance, it appears to be a mirror. Closer examination revealed what appears to be a dust film. Somehow, the artist had drawn lines and a partial oval into the "film" that dirties the reflection. Since it's a mirror, this means the work always changes with the scenery around it and reflects back on its viewers.



"Pussy" by Tony Matelli, 2012. Urethane on mirror. 36 x 24 inches. Exhibited Leo Koenig Inc (New York, NY).



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BASIC FACTS: The 14th edition of The Armory Show was held from Mar 8 to 11, 2012 in New York City. There were around 228 exhibitors in the art fair, divided between Modern and Contemporary Art, according to a release. The Modern presented 71 exhibitors from nine countries. The Contemporary had 157 exhibitors, which included 19 invited exhibitors for Armory Focus: The Nordic Countries. This year saw the premiere of the Solo Projects edition.
www.thearmoryshow.com/

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