



Hamptons Expo Group Sold to Urban Exposition

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by Pat Rogers

As the doors shuttered on the Houston Fine Art Fair's fifth edition on September 12, 2015, the closing meant more than the wrap up the art fair; it meant the execution of the sale of Rick Friedman's fair production company Hamptons Expo Group to Urban Expositions for an undisclosed amount.

Urban Expositions will continue to produce all four of Hamptons Expo Group's art fairs including ArtHamptons, ArtAspen, Palm Springs Fine Art Fair and Houston Fine Art Fair. Friedman continues as a consultant to ensure the transition is a smooth one. By all accounts, the change is a win-win for all parties.



Art Hamptons 2015. Photo: Adriel Reboh Photography, ©Adriel Reboh. Courtesy of artnet.com.

"The Hamptons Expo Group fairs are in desirable cities that are important to galleries and the art community, and we believe we can leverage our activity across the fairs to deliver dynamic and high-quality events," stated Urban Expositions CEO Urban Expositions in announcing the deal. "Urban Expositions will manage and produce all fairs from this point forward with the next fair being the Palm Springs Fine Art Fair, February 11-14, 2016."

President of Hamptons Expo Group Rick Friedman, who has served as founder and director of the four art fairs and will remain involved in a consulting capacity, according to Urban Expositions. Friedman said the move was a good one, noting the art fair sale meant the fairs he founded have the opportunity to grow with Urban Expositions at the helm.

"This is a win-win-win for everyone," said Friedman. "The art fair business has changed since I first started Art Hamptons...Urban Expositions has the experience and the resources to continue to grow the fairs. I'll remain involved with the fairs in whatever capacity makes sense."

Friedman continued, "The timing of the sale is a good one. I'm able to turn over fairs that are successful and thriving and I can start to look to the future and the opportunities that may come up next."



Rick Friedman, founder and executive director of Hamptons Expo Group who produced ArtHamptons at the art fair. Behind him are photographs by Sophie Delaporte, exhibited with Sous Les Etoilles Gallery.

Urban Expositions, a leading event organizer, recently partnered with UK-based Clarion Events and now manages 36 shows in the United States. The final iteration of HFAF under Friedman proved both critically and commercially successful, reported the art fair with 85% of exhibitors reporting sales by the fair's close, according to Urban Expositions.

Urban Expositions was founded in 1995 and presents events that go beyond art and include the gift, souvenir, aviation, foodservice, pet and gaming industries. They produce SOFA CHICAGO, Chicago's longest continuously running gallery-presented art fair. They have offices in Shelton, CT and Boca Raton, FL. www.urban-expo.com

Clarion Events originated in 1947 and is one of the oldest independent event organizers in the UK. They have developed an international portfolio of brands and present around 200 events in over 20 countries. www.clarionevents.com

The Hamptons Expo Group produced ArtAspen, ArtHamptons, and the Palm Springs Fine Art Fair. The company was founded 9 years ago by art collector Rick Friedman. It is based in Southampton, N.Y.

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