



Winter Art Scene in West Palm Beach: Fairs, The New Norton and Murals Galore

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by Sandra Hale Schulman

The art scene in South Florida shifts to Palm Beach in January as two art fairs land in downtown West Palm Beach amid a (non snow) flurry of art events.

First up on the calendar is the **Palm Beach Modern + Contemporary Art Fair (PBM+C)**, presented by the people behind Art Miami and Art Southampton. Now in its third year, the fair literally pops up right in downtown West Palm Beach City's Tent Site (825 S Dixie Hwy at Okeechobee Blvd) on Thursday, January 10th through Sunday, January 13th, 2019.



General view of the venue at Palm Beach Modern + Contemporary VIP Opening Preview Presented By Art Miami in West Palm Beach, Florida, 2018. Photo: Dylan Rives. Courtesy of Art Miami.

The fair opens on Thursday evening with an exclusive VIP Preview benefiting the Ann Norton Sculpture Gardens and Joe Namath Foundation. The Fair takes place in a temperature controlled clear span tent pavilion, located behind Restoration Hardware, between shopping and arts district CityPlace and the Hilton West Palm Beach. The Fair has been a new found success with edgy exhibits and new energy for the city's art month.

The Ann Norton Sculpture Gardens will serve as a satellite venue and official cultural partner for the fair, this year presenting "Contours in Metal: Sculpture by Gino Miles," and "Murano Mosaics: Persistence and Evolution," which includes 20 works that highlight the beauty of the Venetian heritage of murrini and cane worked glass.

A frequent sight at the fair is Hall of Fame football legend Joe Namath, who lives near Fair owner Nick Korniloff. The Joe Namath Foundation that benefits children's charities and neurological research will be the recipient of art work donated by fair artists curated by Korniloff in a special section.



Nick Korniloff, Roger Ward, Pamela Cohen, Joe Namath attending the Palm Beach Modern + Contemporary VIP Opening Preview Presented By Art Miami, 2018. Photo: Dylan Rives. Courtesy of Art Miami.



Harry Benson and Joe Namath attend the Palm Beach Modern + Contemporary VIP Opening Preview Presented By Art Miami in West Palm Beach, Florida, 2018. Photo: Dylan Rives. Courtesy of Art Miami.

Casting a shadow over PBM+C is the controversial huge new mural that occupies the entire east side of the four-story Restoration Hardware “gallery” in the median of Okeechobee Blvd. Completed with funds from the city’s Art in Public Places program (1 percent of a projects cost must be earmarked for public art) the mural, by Los Angeles based artist Retna, is valued at over \$500,000, making it the most expensive mural in the city of West Palm Beach.

Restoration Hardware company has featured curated work by Retna previously. In their Los Angeles stores, Retna created a mural that features hybrid script in muted colors of white on the gray of the building with designed text: a system of hieroglyphs, calligraphy and illuminated script he gleans from Arabic letters, Egyptian hieroglyphics, Hebrew and Native American typographies. Retna says there are actual words and phrases in the mural but as usual declines to reveal the precise meaning.



Exterior mural by artist, Retna that covers the entire east side of the 4-story Restoration Hardware “gallery” in the median of Okeechobee Blvd in West Palm Beach, FL. Courtesy Restoration Hardware.

The following, **Art Palm Beach** comes to town. Now celebrating its 22nd Edition at the Palm Beach County Convention Center from January 16-20, 2019, the art fair kicks off with a preview on Thursday, January 17, 2019. Art Palm Beach was the only game in town for decades and the arrival of the PBM+C has pushed them to step up their game. This year, they emulate Art Basel Miami Beach with specially curated pavilions and art film screenings.

From the Hamptons, Quogue Gallery was selected to be featured in the KABINETT Section and features two historically-important female artists Fay Lansner (1921 - 2010) and Joan Thorne (b.

1943), along with work by contemporary artists Sally King Benedict and Harry Bertschmann. Click [here](#) for a preview.

Curation for Art Palm Beach is courtesy of guest curator Erich Weiss from Spain, where he is the curator-at-large for contemporary art at the [Picasso Museum](#) Barcelona.

Weiss will launch an all-new pavilion called FLOW. Tapping into this year's Turner Prize nominees, FLOW brings vintage videos from various artists. The central work from 1987, entitled *Der Lauf Der Dinge*, or *The Way Things Go*, is by artists Peter Fischli and David Weiss. At 30-minutes, the video will loop throughout the fair, so guests see the entire film or catch snippets as they go through the pavilion.

Participating artist Bruce Nauman's video, *Violent Incident*, will be the largest installation, stretching across 12 monitors, each projecting strong sound and movement. In addition, APB will be presenting a contemporary installation pavilion, as well as a section entitled EMERGE, to highlight new artists.

While Art Basel Miami discontinued their **Film** program this past year, ArtPalm Beach will be presenting two art films by director [Robert Adanto](#), a classically-trained actor. Adanto's compelling films draw from many disciplines while championing art's ability to transcend trauma. In recent years he has turned his lens on female artists living and working in America and beyond, particularly in *The F Word*, his 2015 film exploring radical "4th-wave" feminist performance in Brooklyn.

His second film is on the Belgrade-based performance artist [Marta Jovanović](#) called *Born Just Now*, an intimate look into Jovanović art and life, as she seeks to confront and transcend the abuse that has ended her eight-year marriage.

Born Just Now will be screened on Friday, January 18, 2019, and Sunday, January 20, 2019 and *The F Word* will be screened Saturday, January 19, 2019.



Poster image of 2018 "Born Just Now" directed by Robert Adanto. Courtesy of Robert Adanto.

West Palm Beach Pop Ups

Outside the fairs there are art events within a few blocks worth checking out.

"**CONTINUUM**" is back, an exhibit that presents over 85 South Florida artists for a pop-up exhibition and performance space located this year at the former Mac Fabrics building, 426-428 Clematis Street, West Palm Beach. The event will be brimming with artwork, along with an array of

performances and events. CONTINUUM will also have a booth at ArtPalmBeach.

A block away from the fairs in CityPlace there is a touring exhibit of “**Downton Abbey**,” based on the hit TV series that ran for 6 seasons and was the highest rated PBS series of all time. It has taken over half of the former Macys space – the other half is an arts exhibit called Culture Lab.

The exhibit transforms the empty department store it into a guided tour maze of the mansion featured in the TV show. As you tour the rooms, tales of the shows family of upper class Brits come to life with interactive exhibits that detail the show’s elaborate sets and costumes by Emmy nominee Anna Robbins. The show won Emmys, Golden Globes and Screen Actors Guild Awards, and there is an upcoming feature film which started production in mid-September in London.

The exhibition, presented by NBCUniversal, runs through April 22, 2019. CityPlace, 575 S. Rosemary Ave, West Palm Beach, FL. www.downtonexhibition.com



Costume displays for Maggie Smith’s role of Violet Crawley apart of the touring exhibition of PBS series, Downton Abbey. Presented by NBCUniversal at Cityplace in West Palm Beach, FL. Photo: CAPEHART.



A view of the kitchen display apart of the touring exhibition of PBS series, Downton Abbey. Presented by NBCUniversal at Cityplace in West Palm Beach, FL. Photo: CAPEHART.

Downstairs next to the Downton Abbey show is “**Culture Lab**,” an art exhibit with work by Florida artists Amy Gross, Sarah Knouse and Phillip Estlund, among others.

The real knockout piece is Estlund’s *Like A Rock*, a salvaged Chevy truck he sawed in half at an angle, sinking into the morass. The truck leaves a trail of detritus or “post consumerist items” as the artist calls them, in its wake – a ladder, a shopping cart, various tools and ropes.

“On a pragmatic level I collect stuff all the time to use in my work,” Estlund said. “This is the largest piece I’ve ever done. The Palm Beach dealer I’ve shown with, Sarah Gavlak, reached out to the curators to see if this huge Culture Lab space would be a good fit for this full size truck piece. Nature is reclaiming this truck and its contents, I thought that would be an appropriate fit for the demise of this large scale retail.”



“Like a Rock” by Phillip Estlund, 2018. The sculpture is on display at the Culture Lab in Cityplace, West Palm Beach, FL. Courtesy of Phillip Estlund.

Public Art

There is more art on the outside of the large CityPlace building, a mural called *Palm Beach Parade* by Michael Craig-Martin. The mural features bright everyday images in candy colors - a soccer ball, thumb drive, French fries, sneakers, and sunglasses.

New Vero Beach Pop Up

Craig Martin will have a just announced solo show at **Gallery at Windsor in Vero Beach** about 2 hours north opening January 29, 2019 and remaining on view through April 25, 2019. Inside a sound installation on the second floor, *You Are the Magic*, was created by artist Stephen Vitiello.

The evolving exhibition is free of charge and open to the public. Art lovers better catch it now though, as the building is slated for demolition later this year to make way for residential mixed use development. www.culturelabwpb.com.



“Umbrella (yellow)” by Michael Criag-Martin, presented by Gallery at Windsor in Vero Beach, FL. Photo: Aric Attas.

Norton Museum of Art

The big art news in West Palm Beach is the reopening of the **Norton Museum of Art**. After a nearly two-year, \$100-million dollar massive renovation, the art museum reopens on February 9, 2019.

The Norton, which opened in 1941, was a small but elegant series of Art Deco-inspired pavilions organized around a central courtyard. As the art scene in West Palm Beach grew, the size and layout of the museum became too constrained. The huge new plan changes the whole orientation of the building with the main entry facing west, giving the Norton a stronger presence on main thoroughfare South Dixie Highway while recreating the symmetry of the original design.



The reopening of the Norton Museum of Art after 2 years of renovation on February 9, 2019. Courtesy of Norton Museum of Art.

There will be new interior exhibit spaces with high ceilings, a state of the art theater, and bright new lobby areas. The new Heyman Plaza facing Dixie Highway will welcome visitors with a cool white 43-foot high entrance that will feature *Typewriter Eraser, Scale X*, a 19-foot Claes Oldenburg pure pop sculpture standing up in a new fountain pool. Also unveiling at the grand opening are two site-specific artworks commissioned from Pae White and glass artist Rob Wynne.

With 35% more gallery space, major new facilities for education and public programs, a welcoming entrance and a public garden, the museum can now better accommodate bigger shows and also highlight its permanent collection. www.norton.org

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