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The Art Market **Collecting**

India Art Fair captures economic wave

Christie's offers Monet waterway for £18mn; Edward Enniful curates Mapplethorpe show; luxury brands court tattoo artists



Apnavi Makanji's 'Appropriation Disinformation — Nature and the Body Politic II' (2019)

Melanie Gerlis FEBRUARY 8 2024

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The mood was buzzy in New Delhi at last week's 15th edition of the India Art Fair (February 1-4), which took place in the midst of the country's stock exchange and property market booms. "People are paying top prices now, for apartments and for art," said Gaurav Karan, managing partner of New Delhi and Mumbai's Crayon Art Gallery. He brought a booth of work by the Indian Modernist MF Husain (\$100,000-\$1mn), an artist whose paintings have been soaring at auction recently.

Most works at the fair were priced below these levels, reflecting India's still emergent clientele for art. Mumbai's Tarq gallery brought 10 south Asian and diaspora contemporary artists priced between £1,000 and £20,000. Gallery founder director Hena Kapadia described this year's visitors and buyers as "quite fun, younger people, with new homes and walls to fill, so also more architects and interior designers". Her sales included delicate collages, originally made for the 2020 Dhaka Art Summit, by Geneva-based Apnavi Makanji.

The fair's mix of galleries has shifted through the years and is now deliberately dominated by those from India and south Asia, says director Jaya Asokan. She is committed to preserving an 80/20 split between these and the international exhibitors.



'Matinée sur la Seine, temps net' (1897) by Claude Monet (est £12mn-£18mn)

Claude Monet's "Matinée sur la Seine, temps net" (1897), which last sold in 1978 for \$330,000, will be offered by Christie's for between £12mn and £18mn next month. The almost square-format painting (32 by 36 inches), in hues of blue, purple and green, was made when Monet began to serialise his motifs and is one of 21 such waterway works. It hasn't been seen in public since 1990 in the exhibition *Monet in the '90s: The Series Paintings*, which toured from the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, to the Art Institute of Chicago and London's Royal Academy of Arts.

Michelle McMullan, Christie's co-head of the 20th and 21st century evening sale, says that the work "looks like it was painted in the early dawn — the light isn't high enough to penetrate the trees", noting contemporaneous reports of the artist getting up at 3.30am to work on his *bateau-atelier* (studio boat). The work is offered in London on March 7, its provenance suggesting from a US collection (though Christie's would not confirm), and is covered by a third-party guarantee.



'Ken Moody and Robert Sherman' (1984) by Robert Mapplethorpe © Robert Mapplethorpe Foundation



'Aira' (1979) by Robert Mapplethorpe © Robert Mapplethorpe Foundation

Edward Enninful, the new global creative and cultural adviser to Vogue and previously British Vogue's editor-in-chief, has turned curator for the first time with a solo show of the late photographer Robert Mapplethorpe at Thaddaeus Ropac in Paris (March 2-April 6). Enninful has chosen 46 works from an archive of about 4,000 and will present them in pairs, akin to a plush magazine's double-page spread. He describes the result as offering "[some works] which flow together, others which fight against each other".

These will be led by a 1984 photo of the contrasting black and white shaved heads of Mapplethorpe's friends Ken Moody and Robert Sherman, alongside a woman called "Aira" (1979), dressed to impress in a veiled hat and fur coat. Duos also include famous sitters but are not exclusively of people. One of the most arresting is a bunch of daisies (1978) next to a Dalmatian (1976). "I loved a beautiful delicate flower sitting next to something more masculine and grand," Enninful says.

Mapplethorpe, whom Enninful discovered when first on the fashion scene aged 16, is known for his more explicitly erotic portraits. The selection for Ropac is tamer, more about "the light, the lighting, the use of shadows, the subjects", he says. The exhibition is in collaboration with the Robert Mapplethorpe Foundation, with individual photographs priced at \$18,000-\$110,000.



Tattoo artist Delphin Musquet

Street artists and tattooists are in demand with brands that use art to differentiate themselves in increasingly guerrilla ways, says Josh Moore, director of London's specialist street-art agency Lawless Studio, recently bought by Freuds Group. "If you walk down any street in Shoreditch [east London] you'll see a commercial mural or fly posters, and often without a brand's logo," he says. His clients range from the UK's National Health Service to Adidas.

Tattoo artists are particularly in vogue, Moore says, though the tie-ups don't necessarily mean inking people. He cites the influence of Hublot's high-end partnership with Maxime Plescia-Büchi to design watches. But actual tattoos are not unheard of: Lawless works with UK-based Delphin Musquet who participated in an event for the wine brand 19 Crimes at which four artists tattooed more than 100 guests over a weekend.

Freuds Group chief executive Arlo Brady says the growing trend "goes back to the notion of artists wanting to be paid fairly and reach broader audiences, and brands wanting to cut through the noise".



Via della Spiga, one of Milan's prime shopping streets and now a pop-up art venue

Lehmann Maupin will have a pop-up space in Milan from April 12 to June 21, opening to coincide with the Miart fair (April 12-14) and then the Venice Biennale, which has previews from the following week and is a train ride away. The Milan space will be at Circolo, a non-profit on the Via della Spiga shopping street, in a building owned by the architect-collector Nicole Saikalis Bay. Lehmann Maupin opens in three connecting spaces with a group show of new works, including Mandy El-Sayegh, Catherine Opie and Nari Ward, who gets a room to himself. Ward also has a show at Milan's Pirelli HangarBicocca foundation (until July 28), while gallery artist Kim Yun Shin is one of the participants in the Biennale's main *Foreigners Everywhere* exhibition.

Pop-ups have worked well for the gallery to date, says co-founder Rachel Lehmann, who has tested the model in Aspen, Palm Beach, Taipei and Beijing, and comes to London's Cork Street this autumn. "Our artists like to experiment in different spaces. And while shipping costs aren't coming down, local collectors can buy work from their own town."

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