



## THE ART NEWSPAPER

**Art market // News**

# The Armory Show is ‘business as usual’ at first edition since Frieze acquisition

Sales were off to a bustling start at New York City’s largest art fair, even as questions remain about what changes the new ownership will bring

**Carlie Porterfield**

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Visitors at the 2023 edition of The Armory Show in New York City  
Vincent Tullo courtesy The Armory Show

While speculation abounds about what the acquisition of The Armory Show by British fair and media company Frieze could mean for the event that bills itself as “New York’s art fair”, dealers and collectors were all business on the Javits Center floor during the Armory’s VIP preview on Thursday (7 September).

Sales came swiftly as soon as the fair opened, with top prices in the upper six figures—a notably lower price ceiling than at Frieze’s other New York fair, which takes place in spring. London’s Victoria Miro sold out its stand of new works by New York painter María Berrío in the morning, with prices ranging from \$65,000 to \$200,000. A Lynne Drexler painting sold for \$800,000 and an Alice Baber painting fetched \$200,000 at New York gallery Berry Campbell’s stand. And London’s Ben Hunter Gallery sold a Kim Lim work for \$250,000.

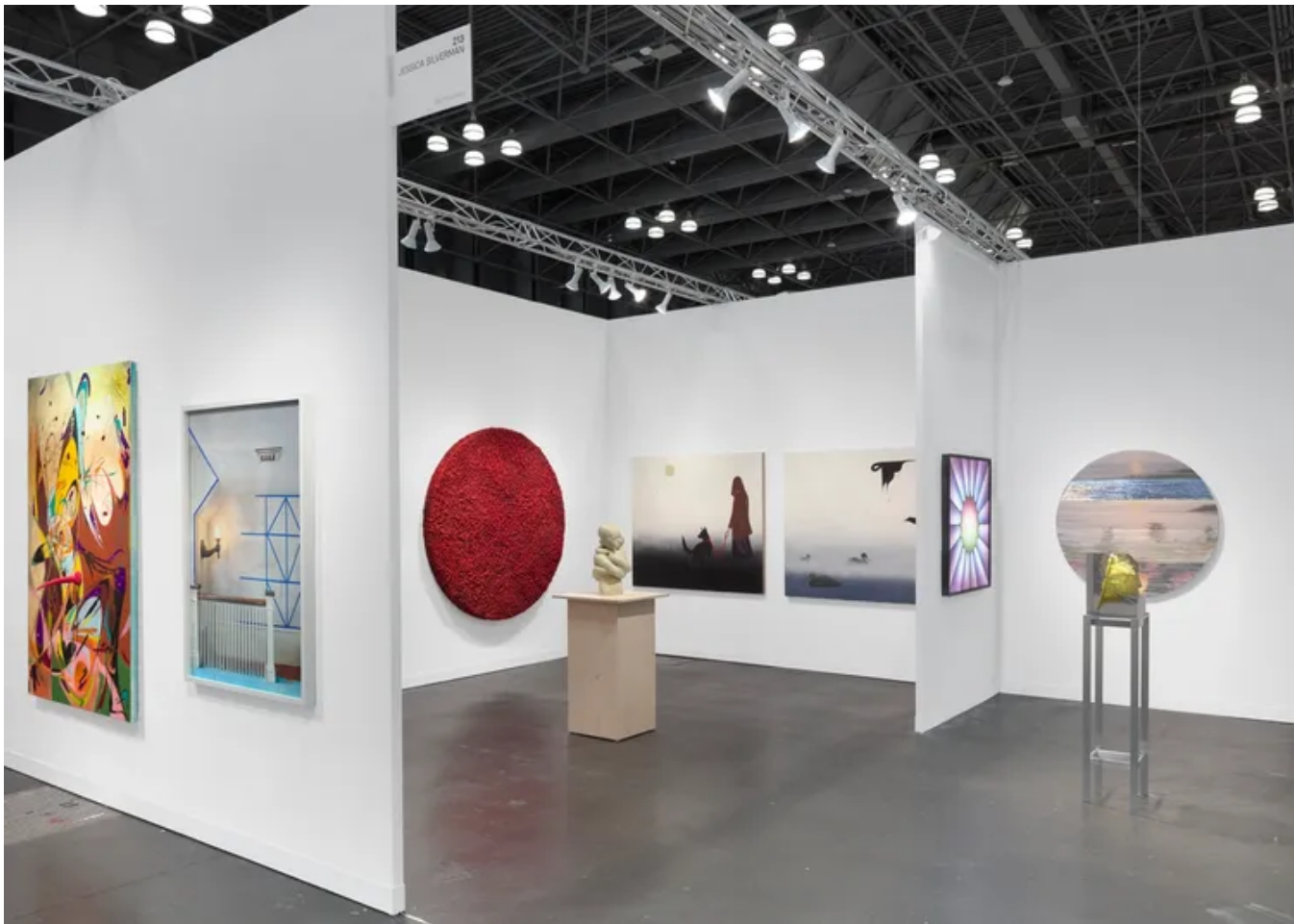
Chelsea-based 303 Gallery sold the 31-panel painting *A Month of Early Morning Fog Over Lake Montauk* (2023) by Rob Pruitt for \$175,000, plus pieces by Cassi Nomoda, Nick Maus and Alicja Kwadje for \$65,000, \$70,000 and \$37,400, respectively.



Crowds gathered around Toronto gallery Patel Brown's stand to view *Efflorescence/The Way We Wake (detail)* (2023) by Rajni Perera and Marigold Santos. The work was still available Friday morning.  
Courtesy Patel Brown

The Parisian gallery Templon, which opened a New York outpost less than ten blocks from the Javits Center last year, sold a Will Cotton painting for \$150,000. It also found buyers for works by Chiharu Shiota for prices ranging from €60,000 to €100,000 and all of the stand's Philippe Cognée pieces for between €30,000 and €75,000 each. At Nara Roesler, Heinz Mack's *The painter's garden (chromatic constellation)* (2001) fetched €240,000, while two paintings by Fabio Miguez sold for \$15,000 each.

San Francisco-based dealer Jessica Silverman sold a large bronze sculpture by Woody De Othello for \$400,000 and a Julie Buffalohead oil painting for \$50,000 to a foundation based in Texas. The gallery also sold a Margo Wolowiec weaving for \$38,000, along with several works on paper by Clare Rojas and Rupy C. Tut, which sold in the range of \$12,000 to \$20,000 each. The gallery also sold five table-top bronze sculptures by Rose B. Simpson, including one to Rollins Museum of Art in Winter Park, Florida.



Jessica Silverman's stand at The Armory Show  
Photo by Lance Brewer



Wentrup, based in Berlin, sold out its solo stand dedicated to Jenny Brosinski, with prices ranging from \$40,000 to \$50,000. Lower East Side gallery 56 Henry sold out its solo stand of seven sculptures and reliefs by New York artist LaKela Brown, which ranged in price from \$9,000 to \$18,000.

While dealers at some smaller galleries reported a slow start to business and expressed trepidation that collectors may be split between The Armory Show and [Frieze Seoul](#)—the fair taking place in South Korea this week—others noted an increase in foot traffic on Thursday compared to VIP previews of previous years. While the massive scale of the Javits Center prevents bottlenecks of crowds from forming around popular stands, as often happens at other art fairs, a steady stream of visitors moved through The Armory Show all day on Thursday. Throngs of people weaved through the large-scale installations in the fair’s Platform sector, curated by Vancouver Art Gallery’s [Eva Respini](#) and featuring works by De Othello, Agnes Denes, Jean Shin and Teresita Fernández.



Work by American artist Consuelo Jiménez Underwood on display at Ruiz-Healy Art's stand.  
Courtesy of Daniel Terna

New York dealer Hollis Taggart, who has taken part in the Armory Show for nearly two decades, attributed some of the increase in interest to Frieze’s acquisition of the fair, [announced in July](#).

“It's going to add a lot of energy to the show. They have a broader arm, a much greater public relations capability and I think you're already seeing that in this 11am turnout,” he said, gesturing to people walking through his stand as the preview kicked off.

This year's edition of The Armory Show was already set in motion when the sale of the fair to British media and fair company Frieze was announced in July, Armory Show executive director Nicole Berry says, adding that any changes from new ownership are yet to be seen. The Armory Show will be held again in 2024, Berry confirms, noting it will be the fair's 30th iteration.

“There's a lot of discussions to be had moving forward with our new owner to talk about the future of the fair, but it's business as usual as far as we know,” Berry says. “We feel like this year our fair is incredibly strong and we're very proud of this edition”.

Berry says The Armory Show's organisers have “hit our stride” in the fair's third year at the Javits Center with 225 stands, a slight decrease from 2022 when around 250 galleries took part, which she said was a conscious decision. “It's a very big space and we didn't want people to feel overwhelmed by it. I have heard many collectors say they felt like this year it felt more manageable.” Berry says. “We feel like this is sort of the sweet spot of the floorplan, which is beautiful and flows and has lots of great sightlines for galleries.”



Charles Moffett's stand at The Armory Show  
Courtesy Charles Moffett

Some in the art world have speculated that Frieze will combine its springtime Frieze New York fair with The Armory Show, or shift the dates of either Frieze Seoul or The Armory Show to keep them from clashing. Kristell Chadé, the executive director of the Frieze fairs, said in a statement that the two New York fairs will “continue each with their separate identities” but noted there will be “organic synergies” that will benefit US operations.

“Obviously, having two fairs on different continents at the same time is a challenge,” Chadé said. “However any changes in dates depend on availability at their respective venues.”

One of a handful of galleries taking part in both The Armory Show and Frieze Seoul this year is the Philippine gallery Silverlens. Co-founder Isa Lorenzo says the gallery was able to do so because its Manila team is handling Seoul while staff at the gallery’s New York location handles the Armory Show.

“Both fairs are very different. They serve different purposes for us,” Lorenzo says. “For as long as those purposes are being served, then we will continue to do both.”

Glenn Scott Wright, a partner and director at Victoria Miro said the London-based gallery is “always really happy” to take part in The Armory Show, though he notes many people in the art world have their “loyalties divided” because of concurrent events—in this case not only Frieze Seoul but also the opening of the [São Paulo Bienal](#).

“We’re all being pulled in different directions, but historically we’ve always done extremely well at The Armory Show,” Scott Wright says. “New York is an incredibly important place for us, a lot of our best clients are here.”

- [The Armory Show](#), until 10 September, Javits Center, New York