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## **AQUA ART MIAMI 2013 CLOSURES WITH RECORD ATTENDANCE AND SALES DURING FIRST EDITION UNDER ART MIAMI**

### **Top Emerging Art Fair Strengthens Reputation as One of the Must-See Destinations During Art Week, Spurring Record Sales Figures and More Than 10,000 Attendees**

MIAMI, Fla. (Dec. 18, 2013) -- Aqua Art Miami, long known as a top fair for showcasing emerging and mid-career artists, closed with record-breaking attendance and estimated sales at the end of its 2013 edition, its first under the Art Miami family of fairs. More than 10,000 international collectors, museum professionals, art world luminaries and enthusiasts visited the fair, with many galleries rehanging their walls throughout the weekend as works sold with record breaking sales.

Since 2005, Aqua Art Miami has been held in the eponymous South Beach art deco hotel, with spacious exhibition rooms surrounding a breezy, intimate courtyard. This year's edition showcased 47 dynamic exhibitors from North and South America, Europe and Asia, ranging from world capitals to burgeoning creative centers in the US; Aqua's new role as part of the Art Miami family was evident by the increasingly established galleries choosing to present at the 2013 fair, with both fair participants and visitors complimenting Aqua Art Miami's newly refined levels of production and audience reach.

Starting with the VIP Preview, which had a line of collectors waiting to enter the fair four hours after opening, interest in emerging and mid-career artists translated into record-breaking sales of works priced \$1,000 to more than \$50,000, a new achievement for the fair. Amidst the brisk sales, patrons engaged in dialogue with gallerists, artists, curators and fellow collectors in the sunny Aqua courtyard as SOUND VISION, produced by Lyons Wier Music and Audiophile Plus, provided a curated musical backdrop to the works on show. Visitors remarked that this dynamic combination of impressive and engaging work amidst the intimate hotel setting created a fresh and unique fair environment that wasn't constricted, contrived, or claustrophobic. By the Fair's close on Sunday, Aqua exceeded 10,000 in total attendance, a substantial increase from 6,000 in 2012.

Aqua's original co-founder Dirk Park, who exhibited with his Seattle-based gallery Prole Drift, remarked "[Director] Jennifer Jacobs did a great job taking over the fair; I was impressed with the big bump in the number of new collectors who came to Aqua this year. I also loved the musical events, and that Art Miami kept the Aqua vibe that Jaq Chartier and I established."

Throughout the fair, the classic South Beach hotel was filled with some of the most influential names in the art community. From art collectors to museum representatives, celebrities and bold faced names, Aqua Art Miami attracted a number of influencers, ranging from art world luminaries such as Anne and Graham Gund, Michael and Susan Hort, Laura Lee Brown and Steve Wilson, among many others, as well as a host of museum directors curators and trustees, wall street tycoons, entertainment executives, creative directors, and celebrities ranging from Sir Norman Foster to Adrian Grenier.

William Baczek, owner of William Baczek Fine Arts of Northampton, MA, who returned for his sixth year at the event, said it was his best to-date. In addition to selling a dozen paintings and drawings by Travis Louie, whose work Baczek had to rehang throughout the weekend due to overwhelming collectors' requests, the gallery sold four paintings by Margaret Withers to a Swiss collector and placed works by sculptor Anne Lilly, whose work is currently featured at an exhibition at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology entitled "5,000 Moving Parts". Baczek commented that "Aqua did an excellent

job in bringing in the right collectors this year and I anticipate that to grow exponentially as news of the quality and variety of the fair spreads.”

Other notable sales include a purchase of two Ramiro Gomez works from Charlie James Gallery for the Cornell Fine Arts Museum; collectors Laura Lee Brown and Steve Wilson of the 21C Hotel Museums purchased an installation by Julie Levesque at Rice Polak Gallery and a work by Joshua Haycraft at Hamiltonian Gallery; and artist Liu Wei, who in addition to showing at Beijing’s Being 3 Gallery was also on view at the Rubell Family Collection’s exhibition 28 Chinese across town, sold a \$50,000 sculpture to a private collector. VICTORI CONTEMPORARY moved a significant portion of inventory to institutions and museum trustee homes with prices ranging from \$1,200 to \$15,000 including Miriam Cabessa’s “Black & White” oil to the Frederick R. Weisman Art Foundation in the Holmby Hills district of Los Angeles; also placed in the Weisman collection was a piece by Ted VanCleave who had a number of 35 pound wall sculptures completely sell out from the VICTORI presentation.

Aqua’s solo installations and multimedia projects also garnered critical attention: Shulamit Gallery’s installation by Gary Baseman, Mythical Homeland, was a crowd favorite and garnered interest from four museums, in addition to two non-profit spaces. Two nationally recognized art museums have confirmed performances and exhibitions from Tim Youd over the next 18 months after seeing his performance piece at Aqua Art Miami, a durational performance tribute to Elmore Leonard’s Get Shorty, presented by Coagula Curatorial.

“Aqua has consistently offered a dynamic range of quality emerging and mid-career voices, and the affiliation with Art Miami has taken Aqua to the next level. Not only does being part of the Art Miami family strengthen Aqua’s ability to attract increasingly diverse and established galleries while continuing its role as an incubator in showcasing new talent, our expanded reach enables us to build an exciting and loyal audience of new collectors and serious art world influencers, capturing the excitement and energy of the increased activity on the beach” said Jennifer Jacobs, Aqua Art Miami Fair Director. “We were delighted by the extraordinary attendance, sales, and critical and audience response to the fair, and already have requests for 2014 applications from high caliber galleries and an extremely high percentage of exhibitors anxious to return. Aqua has tremendous momentum for the future, and we cannot wait to begin the programming for the 2014 edition.”

### **About Art Miami LLC**

Art Miami LLC is a partnership consisting of art and media industry veterans Nick Korniloff, Mike Tansey and Brian Tyler. The company annually presents a trio of fairs during Art Week: the 24-year-old flagship Art Miami – Miami’s Premier International Contemporary and Modern Art Fair; CONTEXT – Miami’s International Emerging and Cutting-Edge Art Fair, launched in 2012; and the recently acquired Aqua Art Miami – among the top fairs for emerging art since 2005. The Art Miami family also encompasses three international fairs of contemporary and modern art at other times of each year: Art Wynwood, over Presidents Day weekend in February, with an additional focus on the growing street art movement; the prestigious Art Southampton in July at the height of the cultural season in this legendary New York retreat for artists and collectors; and the innovative Art Silicon Valley/Art San Francisco that debuts in October 2014.



### **Sponsors & Partners**

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