



## **Aqua Art Miami Celebrates 14<sup>th</sup> Edition with Strongest Sales and Attendance to Date**

*Emerging Artists and Galleries Showcased Highly Sought-After Works at Aqua Hotel in Miami Beach*

(MIAMI, FL – December 14, 2018) – [Aqua Art Miami](#), a sister fair of Art Miami, marked an incredibly successful five-day event for their 14<sup>th</sup> edition at the Aqua Hotel (1530 Collins Avenue, Miami Beach, FL 33139), which took place Wednesday, December 5 through Sunday, December 9, 2018.

This year, the fair reported impressive attendance and sales with more than 11,600 collectors, curators, art advisors, artists and museum professionals attending throughout the week, of which more than 4,500 attended the VIP Preview on December 5, 2018.

**Grela Orihuela**, Director of Aqua Art Miami, carefully curated a selection of 52 international galleries that highlighted 135 emerging and mid-career artists from 12 countries in the intimate exhibition rooms that open into the beautiful courtyard of the classic South Beach hotel.

Numerous galleries reported strong sales throughout the fair, with works by **Tanner Lawley**, **Michael Albano**, **Valeria Krasavina** and **Elizabeth Guipe Hall** proving to be in high demand. Aqua Art Miami continues to solidify itself as a unique fair with mass appeal for those looking to procure works by young, emerging and mid-career artists.

"Aqua gives young artists and galleries the opportunity to engage with an international group of collectors and an enthusiastic audience through Miami Art Week," said **Orihuela**. "We curated an engaging variety of artists and galleries that show work by people who are thinking outside of the box and creating new art that pushes boundaries."

**Bridgette Mayer**, Director of **Bridgette Mayer Gallery**, said, "We usually exhibit blue chip artworks, but this year I decided I wanted to show our primary contemporary art program of emerging and mid-career artists, and Aqua Art Miami was fantastic. Besides being a fun and lively crowd and environment, I found many of the attending art patrons excited to engage in, look at, and purchase emerging and known artists from around the world."

**Steven Cohen** and **Curtis Cox** of **The Parsons Close Project** said, "We experienced an environment of creativity and inclusion in the art community at Aqua Art Miami that we would never have expected. It was profound for us. It is challenging at best for a pair of emerging artists to get our work out there for people to see and interact with, and Aqua launched us on a trajectory that we can only hope to live up to in the continued work we will aspire to produce in the coming months and years."

Sale highlights included:

- **BP PROJECT: MARYAM ALAKBARLI** placed 13 paintings by Maryam Alakbarli from between 2012 and 2017 for a total of \$34,000.



- **Space 776** sold 31 works for a total of more than \$16,000, including *Nine'1'*, 2018 and *The plural of five concentric circles*, 2017 by **Mao Yo Wen**, two untitled works from 2017 and 2018 by **Jongmin Joy Kim**, and 19 pieces from **Elizabeth Guipe Hall's** *Way finding* series, 2017-2018.
- **Gallery Quinze** placed five pieces by **David Ferreira**, including three large works, for a total of \$13,900 to one buyer, and another large piece for \$5,100.
- **Imlay Gallery** placed four handwoven textiles cast in concrete works by **Crystal Gregory**, including *Variation on a Theme 1* for \$8,700, and four paintings by **Heather Jones**.
- **The Lawley Art Group** placed 16 pieces from **Tanner Lawley's** personalized *Loving You Series* for a total of \$7,525, as well *This Heart of Gold*, 2018 by **Tanner Lawley** for \$7,500 and *Luminosity*, 2018 by **Peter Skidd**.
- **Uncommon Beauty Gallery** placed *The pipeline equation*, 2018 by **Taher Jaoui** for \$7,000, *Changing Experience*, 2016 by **Viktoria Sorochinski**, *Heartless*, 2018 by **Andrea Hurtarte**, *Mariana* 2015 and *HAPE*, 2018 by **Evelyn Sosa**, and *Sitting blue*, 2018 by **Nina Klein**.
- **EXHIBIT A** placed *Sinuous 35*, 2018, by **Jeremy Holmes** for \$5,600, and *The Squirrels – Green*, 2018 by **Angus M. Powers**.
- **The Parsons Close Project** placed six pieces by **Steven Cohen**, including *Gravity III*, 2018 for \$5,600, *Whitehouse of Mirrors*, 2018, *Internal – External*, 2018, *Gravity I*, *Badia Cotobuono*, 2012, digital print, and *Cuban Café*, 2012, digital print, as well as 24 pieces of jewelry and two vases by **Curtis Cox**.
- **Stella Ripley** placed three paintings by **Melisa Taylor Metzger**, including *in City and in Forest 23*, 2018 for \$5,000, *Frost and Decimals*, 2018 and *Mangata*, 2018, as well as *Hot pink*, 2018, *Gold Pyrite*, 2018, and *Electric Blue Folds*, 2018 by **Chloe Hedden**.
- **Elizabeth Clement Contemporary** placed several works from **Michael Albano's** new black and white series, created especially for Aqua Art Miami, for more than \$5,000 each, as well as **John Guthrie's** *Turn Me On*, 2018 for approximately \$5,000.
- **Ben Gallery** placed *Untitled: The Little Girl*, 2018 for \$5,000, and *Made in China no. 2*, 2018, both by **Pascal**, and two works by **Ben Chen** – *Fan wall No.06*, 2017, and *God's Kiss No.2 (small)*, 2018.
- **Alessandro Berni Gallery** placed six pieces.
- **ArtHelix Gallery/SHIM** placed *It's a State of Mind*, 2018 by **Cabell Molina** and *Marco*, 2018 by **Matty Davis**.
- **belenmorenoSTUDIO** placed the original painting *MIAMI*, 1984 by **Janene Gentile** and two limited edition prints from **Andra Douglas' Butchard Series**, *Ignited Summer* and *Double Dolly*.
- **Blackship** placed nine *Fine Frenchie* prints by **Valeria Krasavina** from 2018, *Not everything that shines is gold*, 2018 by **Keyser Siso**, and one work by **Marco Bracho** from 2018.
- **BoxHeart Gallery** placed two pieces.
- **Ceramic International Guild** placed fourteen pieces.
- **Gitter & Frasca** placed two works by **Michael Gitter** and **Alex Frasca**: *Blue Lagoon*, 2018 and *Seewater*, 2018.
- **John Sanchez Studio** placed *There She was Caffeine*, 2018 and *La Bodega Sketches* by **John Sanchez**.
- **reference: contemporary** placed *Fresh Prints* (3 pieces) by **Kal Mansur** from 2018.
- **RW Art** placed 35 pieces.
- **Skip Hartzell Gallery** placed six of **Skip Hartzell's** dog works, including four sculptures, one scarf and one small-format painting, all from 2018.
- **STEPHEN WILSON** placed three pieces.



- **Wynwood 28 | Art Gallery** placed **Juan Del Balso's** *Escapando*, 2018.

At the fair entrance, viewers came upon *InkMinx Mobile Tattoo Tent* by artist **Shanzez Afzal**, presented by **ArtHelix Gallery/SHIM Network**. Afzal identifies as the only trained and certified female Muslim tattoo artist in the United States. Brazilian-American graphic performance artist **Claudia Vieira** wrapped the hotel's outer wall and entrance with a continuous line of black vinyl tape to create a "living" drawing. As part of the social hub, American photographer **Angela Strassheim** offered digital and Polaroid portraits to fairgoers.

On the upper balcony of the fair, **Katarra Peterson** offered a modern interpretation of the Rapunzel fairy tale with her *Uppity* hair braiding project, also presented by **ArtHelix Gallery/SHIM Network**. Visitors helped her weave lengths of braided hair into a rope, and the artist provided her "assistants" with crystal ball and palm readings, general wisdom, and spiritual consulting.

**The SHIM Video Collective** launched its inaugural exhibition in the hotel lobby, featuring an international group of emerging and established video artists, hand selected by a panel of video curators. The presentation included pieces from **X-Film Femmes**, the global video art collective dedicated to presenting new works from budding and recognized experimental female filmmakers. Represented in the XFF screenings were filmmakers **Taimi Nevaluoma**, **Dorottya Szalay**, **Gabriela Gaia Meirelles**, **Bonnie Rychlak**, and more. Multimedia performance artist **Bea Pernia**, presented by **Blackship**, provided a lively soundtrack on the evening of the VIP Preview.

Aqua Art Miami also hosted a selection of curated special projects and enchanting performance pieces throughout its duration:

- **Steven Cohen** and **Curtis Cox**, the longtime lighting and production directors for the biggest names in music, made their artistic debut as a collaborative presentation known as **The Parsons Close Project**, which featured Cohen's paintings and assemblages, and Cox's ceramics and jewelry.
- Military veterans who suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) shared their stories with New York-based artist **Susan J. Barron**, who honored them through her large-scale mixed-media portraits in *Depicting the Invisible: A Portrait Series of Veterans Suffering from PTSD*, presented by **HG Contemporary**. Barron's work shines a spotlight on thirteen American veterans who have survived the trauma of war or terrorism. The artist's oversized black-and-white photographic portraits are painted with the subjects' stories, in their own words.
- **Kevin Berlin** hosted a discussion on the Worldwide Premiere of *HOPE DIES LAST 2 - New Works of the Russian Ballet*. Berlin's paintings focus on the interior and secret lives of ballet dancers – depicting their hidden thoughts in sensual, mostly black and white paintings, sculpture, and works on paper.
- A book signing and cocktail reception was held with mixed-media artist **Stephen Wilson**, best known for his artistic explorations in embroidery work, supplemented with cutting-edge modern technologies, like laser cutting and 3D printing. High fashion influences are prevalent in his work, expressed through his use of designer-branded packaging and luxury fabrics including Hermès silk,



Chanel wool, and limited-edition Gucci boxes. The artist signed copies of his new book, *Stephen Wilson: Luscious Threads*, available from Scala Arts and Heritage Publishers.

Click [here](#) to view and download images.

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