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A Bridge to Younger Collectors



Courtesy Galerie LJ
Galerie LJ from Paris is featuring artwork by New York street artist Swoon. Above is "Alixa and Naima" (2008), a block print on tracing paper on offer for \$10,000.

By **Bridget Moriarity**
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NEW YORK— Next-generation artists, collectors, and gallerists turned out in full force for the opening night of **Bridge New York's** second edition, being held from March 5 through 8 in the Waterfront building at 222 12th Avenue. Sixty galleries representing 15 countries — up from 54 dealers from 12 countries at last year's debut — tightly packed the former grounds of the Tunnel nightclub. But while people were definitely talking numbers, sales weren't sizzling at the starting gate.

At the booth of Chicago's **Accomplice Projects**, the Brooklyn-based artist **Eduard Steinhauer** is showing his mixed-media, three-dimensional work *Gobblers and Swallows*, which he describes as an "entertainment console" — in reference, perhaps, to the spinning turntable at the piece's center, atop which bird-like creatures are perched. Steinhauer, who counts **Peggy Cooper Cafritz**, founder of the **Duke Ellington School of Arts** in Washington, D.C. among the collectors of his work, has priced the work at \$18,000.

"I think sales are going to be really good — people have held back for so long that they're starting to get more comfortable with where their finances stand," says an optimistic **Lisa Cooper** of **Elisa Tucci Contemporary Art**, which is featuring work by international artists, including the Taiwan-born painter **Amy Cheng**, for \$400 to \$1,800. The gallery, which operates out of a space in Riverdale, New York, but generates most of its business either online or at private events or art fairs, treats new collectors to special discounts and donates 5 percent of all profits to charity.

New York Dealer **Michael Petronko** handed over one wall of his booth to the artist **Koor**, who is known for his use of language, whether graffiti- or calligraphy-inspired, in his work. On opening night, Koor was actively making brightly hued canvases in spray paint and acrylic marker, priced between \$1,000 and \$5,000 each. The pieces overlap seamlessly with the larger canvas of the wall — which is also for sale — but function as stand-alone works as well. "The idea," the artist explains, "is to create a site-specific painting but to also work in small formats which are accessible to younger collectors."

Sharing Petronko's space are eight works in ink, watercolor, and rootbeer on paper by the Canadian it-boy **Marcel Dzama**. Among them is an untitled 1999 narrative triptych — three freestanding pieces each measuring 26 by 20 inches that Petronko asserts would be "a crime to break up" — portraying a superheroine in action. Of the series, priced collectively at \$26,000, Petronko says, "Works by Dzama don't come on the market in this size and dealing with this type of figurative subject." Two smaller Dzama examples, which measure approximately 12 1/2 by 10 inches and date to 2002, are priced at \$3,000 and \$4,000 each.

Ten artists run the show at New York's **Collective Gallery 173-171**, and four were on hand at Bridge to tout their work, which was priced between \$900 and \$15,000. One of the featured talents, **Virginie Sommet**, says Bridge is all about making valuable contacts: "I don't think about sales — we've already met four curators [including **Jean Barberis**, the artistic director of the Williamsburg, Brooklyn, nonprofit **Flux Factory**] within the first two hours of the fair."

Parisian dealer **Adeline Jeudy**, of **Galerie L.J.**, has been in business for two years and carries work exclusively by American and French talents, including the New York-based street artist **Swoon**, whose block prints on paper are priced between \$2,500 and \$15,000. Jeudy sees Bridge as a fair on the rise and the best means to reach her target audience: "The Amory Show wouldn't have been the right fit — I'm trying to attract younger collectors who are interested in edgier work." Her expectations are modest. "As long as I can reimburse myself for the expense of getting here I'll be happy," she says. Another first-time participant is **Jin-Zhi Gallery** of Taiwan, which has work valued between \$400 and \$20,000, the latter sum attached to an oversized portrait, outlined with calligraphic plant seeds, by the Taiwanese artist **Buh-Ching Hwang**.

And returning to Bridge New York for the second time is Mexico City-based **Ginocchio Galeria**. The gallery, which is selling pieces priced between \$4,900 and \$18,000, was last in town in November for the Latin American art fair **Pinta**, where gallery representative Paola Contreras notes they did excellent business before seeing a drop in interest at subsequent fairs in Miami and Los Angeles.

Given Bridge's somewhat overcrowded feel — a dealer who had shown at the fair's Miami counterpart said he missed the airier booths down south — it was perhaps no surprise that there was at least one casualty of the cramped quarters. At the booth of the newly formed PAC Gallery, of Cincinnati, Ohio, Korean artist **Mi-Hee Nahm's** work *Cultural Battle* — an installation featuring a wall-hung drawing of the historic Namdaemun gate in Seoul and a floor-level fleet of miniature soldier figurines — was accidentally toppled on more than one occasion. Each time, the gallery's **Cate Yellig**, in the breezy spirit of Bridge, laughed it off and dutifully reassembled the army.

Among the fair's special programming this year is a section devoted to the **Williamsburg Gallery Association**, which has gathered work by 12 artists from 12 of the organization's 26 galleries. Prices start at \$400 and climb to \$35,000. **Tracy Causey-Jeffery**, a representative of the WGA, notes, "We do want sales, but this is also a mission for exposure. That said, we have had a ton of price inquiries — we're encouraged."

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