



Cracking the code to art sales in Silicon Valley

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From Art Miami, the United States' most frequented fair, director Nick Korniloff has gone on to found a legion of art fairs across the country. His latest development popped up in Silicon Valley just one year ago, and the second edition takes place this weekend.



With 267 international fairs taking place throughout the year, “fair-tigued” is an oft-overheard term among attendees, but Korniloff has placed himself at the center of a new source of potential collectors with his latest fair. “By positioning ourselves in Silicon Valley we are offering the most creative community in the world the opportunity to educate themselves about the possibility of collecting high-end contemporary art,” he says. “The most wonderful thing about this region is the potential for the development of a new local art market.”

Yet despite the glaringly obvious appeal of new wealth in the high-tech heaven, “we never wanted to create a fair that aimed just to create new collectors,” maintains Korniloff. “Many of the collectors in the area, we are aware of through our relationships at Art Miami. There are a lot of collectors from San Francisco that come to Miami,” he explains.

The aim is also to recentralize the market in Northern California. “We want to confront this thing where collectors from the west coast go to New York or Europe to buy their art,” says Korniloff. “There is a network of galleries in the bay area that are facing all kinds of challenges. There are districts where the rent has gone up so high that the gallery scene is becoming unstable,” he explains. The fair is “about trying to understand what has been created in Silicon Valley, whilst respecting the artistic heritage of San Francisco.”

The location of the event dictates more than just the space, it defines the identity of the fair and Korniloff is enthusiastic about the technology culture of Silicon Valley. “It is interesting to look at the globalization of technology, and compare it with the globalization of the art market. A lot of it goes hand in hand,” he says. The first edition of the fair was in partnership with LISA (leaders in software art), a “society of creative thinkers” composed of software and digital artists. “If you look back at artists like Hans Hofmann or Alexander Calder,” says Korniloff, “they were engineers and architects who became artists. There is a huge amount of synergy between these artists of the previous generation and the technology generation artists.” Calder is indeed represented at the fair, his work is on display at New York’s Jane Kahan Gallery. Robert Rauschenberg, famed for his E.A.T. experiments (Experiments in Art and Technology), can also be found at the fair, represented by Cleveland-based Contessa Gallery. More contemporary still, Chul Hyun Ahn, the South Korean light artist is on display at C. Grimaldis Gallery.

However, Korniloff himself admits that “nobody has cracked the code for a successful west-coast art fair yet,” so with this, the crucial second edition, will Art Silicon Valley succeed?

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