

# NEWS

## United States

### Post-Fair delivers camaraderie

The new satellite fair in an Art Deco former post office provides a collegial atmosphere

Post-Fair, a new satellite fair in downtown Santa Monica, “is all about economy”, says the founder and Los Angeles-based dealer Chris Sharp: “Economy of presentation, financial economy and economy of production.” Conceived as a low-cost alternative to the increasingly expensive standard fair model, Post-Fair opened on Thursday with 26 galleries exhibiting single-artist presentations for the flat fee of \$6,000. The largely open-plan format of the venue, an Art Deco former post office built in 1938, helped keep expenses low, with portable lighting and the build-out of just a few walls between the load-bearing columns.

By keeping prices low, Sharp says, he sought “to create a context that is both collegial and encourages risk-taking and experimentation” — elements, he says, that are “missing from the entire art-fair calendar”. His namesake gallery is showing the work of the late German sculptor Lin May Saeed, who is “very well-known in Europe but still pretty unknown here. If we don’t sell anything, it’s not the end of the world.”

Sales were slow on the first day, yet exhibitors were enthusiastic

about the fair. Chris Scott and Cody Fitzsimmons, the founders of Tureen — a newer gallery based in Dallas that brought small-scale paintings by the young painter Lula Broglio, priced at \$2,500 each — reported no sales in the first days. But they were pleased with the quality of the audience, which has included curators from the National Gallery of Art in Washington, DC, the Contemporary Arts Museum Houston and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, as well as the actor James Franco, who was seen perusing Theta’s selection of



Chris Sharp Gallery (above) is showing work by Lin May Saeed, while (below) Cooper Cole has brought Sara Cwynar’s *Peony (Magenta/Red)* (2024) to Sharp’s Post-Fair

Hollywood-themed paintings by Nancy Dwyer. Scott and Fitzsimmons add that they were excited to show at the elegant former post office alongside galleries like PPOW and Sprüth Magers. “We knew it was going to be top-tier aesthetically,” Scott says.

Philomene Magers of Sprüth Magers, which typically shows at Frieze Los Angeles but opted to focus its efforts on Post-Fair this year, says the new fair’s “architectural setting inspires inventiveness and fluidity”. The gallery is showing *Cuppies*, a series of small-scale ceramics by the late Los Angeles-based artist Kaari Upson. Magers adds that “Post-Fair’s more intimate scale provides the perfect setting for this specific body of work by Upson. That said, we fully plan to join Frieze LA again.”

Sharp selected exhibitors “based on quality”, he says, inviting galleries he had existing relationships with, like PPOW and the Toronto-based Cooper Cole, both of which co-represent artists on his roster. “The vibe has been excellent,” says Cooper Cole founder Simon Cole, who brought five works priced between \$12,000 and \$16,000 by the conceptual film-maker and photographer Sara Cwynar. “We’re very big on

collaboration and community,” Cole says. “His vision for what an art fair is is really in line with ours. I’m very familiar with his programme and his eye towards exhibition design and curation, so I knew whatever we were diving into would be done elegantly.”

The New York-based dealer Laurel Gitlen, who is showing paintings by You-Ni Chae priced between \$4,000 and \$14,000, says “we have made sales”, but adds that the fair “was better for everything else. Chris did an amazing job hand-selecting great galleries and making the space beautiful, and his team has been fantastic. It’s a human pace and scale, and that works great for me and my programme.” She adds: “I have seen great clients, curators, writers, artists, and there’s time and space to connect with everyone.”

As a surprise add-on, the itinerant New York space Uhaul Gallery, which exhibits in a rented moving van, parked outside the post office and felt immediately welcomed by Post-Fair (in contrast to the larger fairs in town). “They understood our vision,” gallery co-founders Jack Chase and James Sundquist say. After receiving two parking citations, they framed and successfully sold both tickets.

Janelle Zara

### News in brief



L.A. Louver’s directors Peter Goulds and Kimberly Davis, pictured at 55 North Venice Boulevard in 1991

#### L.A. LOUVER’S GOLDEN ANNIVERSARY

L.A. Louver is celebrating half a century in Los Angeles with a major look back in *L.A. Louver Celebrates 50 Years, 1975 to Now* (until 14 June) at its Venice gallery, plus a focus on five of its Los Angeles-based artists at Frieze. Four joined shortly after graduating: Rebecca Campbell and Ben Jackel from the University of California, Los Angeles; Gajin Fujita from the University of Nevada, Las Vegas; and Heather Gwen Martin from the University of California, San Diego. The best-known, Alison Saar, graduated from Otis College of Art and Design, moving to New York before returning to Los Angeles. L.A. Louver’s winning strategy? “We were looking for people who were clear about what their work was,” says Kimberly Davis, a gallery director, “and bringing something fresh to the table.”

Scarlet Cheng



Joe Minter’s work *Free Labor* (1996) features in Parker Gallery’s show

#### JOE MINTER LANDS FIRST WEST COAST SHOW

While it moves into spiffy new digs on Melrose Avenue, Parker Gallery is putting on the Alabama-based artist Joe Minter’s first solo show on the West Coast (until 29 March). The exhibition includes both Minter’s newer paintings and his signature sculptures incorporating found objects. His works comment on the US’s history of slavery and racism. The gallerist Sam Parker was drawn to Minter’s art for its “very authentic approach to artmaking, not informed by art history but just as consequential”. S.C.

### Gallery with focus on South Asian art opens in Hollywood

**RAJIV MENON CONTEMPORARY, AMONG THE FIRST COMMERCIAL GALLERIES** in the US to focus on art from South Asia and its diaspora, this week held an opening for its debut exhibition in the gallery’s new space in Hollywood. *Exhibitionism* (until 30 March) explores the relationship between privacy and attention through the lenses of intimacy, domesticity and the operations of the art world, according to the gallery’s founder, Rajiv Menon. The show features more

than 20 works by 19 artists of South Asian descent, including established names like Chitra Ganesh, Sunil Gupta and Jagannath Panda, and rising artists like Tarini Sethi, Mustafa Mohsin and Raghav Babbar, making his stateside debut in a commercial gallery.

The exhibition is the first at the gallery’s new permanent space at 1311 North Highland Avenue; Menon initially opened the gallery last year as a pop-up. “I felt incredibly inspired by the depth of talent I was seeing coming out of the South Asian diaspora, but I started to get really frustrated, because there weren’t a lot of outlets in North America to see the great emerging work,” Menon says.

Since opening last year in a temporary space in Silver Lake, Menon says, the gallery has had an “incredible” response from collectors. “We had



Artist Shyama Golden with Rajiv Menon, founder of Rajiv Menon Contemporary

huge support from within the South Asian diaspora and collectors in India, but we also saw really strong interest from just broad collectors with global sensibilities,” he adds. The Western market for South Asian art continues to grow — last year, a Christie’s sale dedicated to contemporary and modern South Asian art fetched \$9.3m

(with fees) with a 98% sell-through rate.

Menon says he opted to open his gallery in Los Angeles in part because of the city’s diversity and wide range of creativity. “I felt it was really important to tap into so much of the energy that was happening surrounding visibility in Hollywood and other mediums, and to bring that into conversation with contemporary art,” he says.

Opening a gallery just weeks after deadly wildfires is not ideal for any dealer, but Menon says that “more than anything, the gallery being a place of community gathering is really important. I think people want to come and celebrate the city.” The gallery plans to donate at least \$10,000 to wildfire-relief efforts through the philanthropic groups SevaSphere and the California Community Foundation.

Carlie Porterfield

## BLACK ART AUCTION

Historically Important  
African-American Art



Spring Signature Auction  
March 8

Featured Artist: Sam Gilliam (1933-2022)

Richard Mayhew  
Barkley Hendricks  
Norman Lewis  
Martin Puryear  
Jacob Lawrence  
Ernie Barnes  
Ed Clark  
Beauford Delaney  
Benny Andrews  
Charles White  
John Biggers  
Doyle Lane  
Romare Bearden  
Walter H. Williams  
Elizabeth Catlett

