



Confidence at Scope, Chutzpah at Art Asia

By Sarah Douglas

Published: December 5, 2008

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Luo Brothers, "Welcome
Welcome" (2007) at Art Beatus
Gallery's Art Asia booth

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MIAMI—Despite the gloomy global economic conditions, things seemed to be chugging at the Art Basel Miami Beach Scope fair and its Art Asia.

Scope, whose 60–70,000, are in this year among the Midtown from last year's Clemente Park in ere reported The centerpiece angeles-based

Courtesy Art Beatus Gallery gallery **Rhys Mendes's** booth is a platform on which are arrayed colorful biomorphic sculptures by Japanese-Brazilian artist **Rogério Degaki**, who was recently in a group show with **Takashi Murakami** at the **Museum of Modern Art São Paulo**. Three of Degaki's works, priced from

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names written across them as though they are photographs of the artists themselves, and come in editions of 3. The **Jackson Pollock** and **Robert Mapplethorpe** pieces had sold out all three editions, at \$2,000 apiece, and a number of others had gone as well.

Another New York dealer, **Eli Klein**, said he was “off to a quick start” at the fair.

And yet another New Yorker, **RARE**, reported pre-selling two paintings by **Jean-Pierre Roy** for \$22,000, each to a Miami collector.

While dealers were reporting a lot of buying, collectors have apparently been keen on getting discounts. **Jung Bong Lee**, director of New York’s **Gana Art**, said, “We’ve been giving more discounts. People expect it.” At the gallery’s booth a wall-mounted sculpture in the shape of a dragon made from car tires, by artist **Ji Yong Ho**, went for \$24,000 after a 20 percent discount, and a sculpture of **Elvis Presley** that artist **Yoo Young-Wun** made from magazine pages went for \$10,800 after a 10 percent discount.

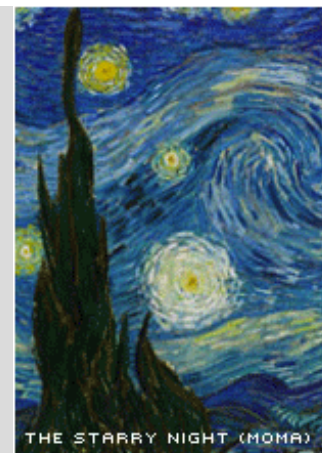
“We’re going to give discounts because people know they can get them,” concurred another dealer who asked not to be named.

Kansas City dealer **Byron Cohen** has booths in both Scope and Art Asia. He is showing more established Chinese artists like **Feng Zhengjie** and **Wang Huaxiang** in Scope, and emerging talents in Art Asia. Cohen sold a large painting by **Wang Huaxiang**, *Tied Up Slave* (2008), and a monumental work by **Ma Baozhong**, *Rise and Fall* (2008), which was on view recently at the **Shanghai Biennial**. The dealer is not revealing prices of sold

\$5,000 to \$12,000, sold at Scope, and a few others are on reserve.

London gallery **Fine Art Society** also reported selling a number of works, including a painting by **Keith Coventry** for \$40,000 and another by **Steve Goddard** for \$27,800, as well as a handful of figurative paintings in oil on paper by **Annie Kevans**, all priced at \$4,300.

At Brooklyn gallery **CTS (Creative Thrift Shop)**, a series of works with a pointed sense of humor were flying off the walls. They are photographs by **Victoria Campillo** showing men’s midsections, some of their clothes paint-splattered, with famous artists’



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work but will say that he has done “over a million dollars of business” at Scope, which is impressive for a satellite fair.

Among the 44 dealers in Art Asia, some appeared to have seen quite a bit of action from collectors, while others were relatively red dot-less. Amsterdam dealer **Willem Kerseboom** sold an early painting by Japanese artist **Yoshitomo Nara** — whose works fetch large sums at auction — for \$120,000 to a German collector, as well as a painting by Chinese artist **Zhang Haiying**, whose work is owned by tastemaker **Charles Saatchi**. The latter work, which depicts one of the women cleared off the Beijing streets before the Olympics, also went to a German collector, for \$2,900.

Clearly dealers’ expectations have gone down since June. “I’ve sold four works here,” said Kerseboom. “Compared to Scope Basel, that isn’t great, but for now it’s just fine. I’m lucky my costs are covered. But I don’t think anyone should complain.”

At least one dealer in Art Asia showed quite a bit of chutzpah. **FPA Gallery** of Jakarta never received an expected shipment of artworks by artist **Haris Purnomo**. But Purnomo, who had come to Miami to see the booth, overcame this difficulty by painting pictures of babies — his main motif — directly on the walls of the booth. “Several people have asked for the price of the walls,” said a representative of the gallery. “Others don’t know if this is a happening or a joke.” He hopes the works will still arrive.

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