

The Art Daily News: 'Art Brussels shows all its trumps', by Roxana Azimi, April 20th, 2012

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ART BRUSSELS SHOWS ALL ITS TRUMPS

BY ROXANA AZIMI

— Brussels or Cologne? That is the question. Some collectors, mainly Germans, opted for the Rhineland fair's vernissage on Tuesday evening. As a result, there were less people when Art Brussels kicked off on Wednesday, at least for the first three hours or so. But galleries which decided to participate in Art Brussels rather than Cologne weren't necessary caught between a rock and a hard place. We spoke

to Ellen de Bruijne (Amsterdam), who is back in Brussels after an absence of five years: "I've done Art Cologne four times, but never really had all that much success there", she said. "The Belgian and French public have a more positive reaction to my conceptual programme. It's simple, you have to go where your audience is." For her return to Art Brussels, the gallerist is exhibiting a 2009 piece by Susan Philippz, a melancholy ballad telling a tale of sororicide. As for Jennifer Chert (Berlin), it was more a question of equity: "We are already participating in the Berlin Gallery Weekend so to balance things out, we thought it was only fair to come to Art Brussels." Anna Geuder, from Gallery Zink (Berlin), says: "We'll listen to what our colleagues



André Magnin at Art Brussels 2012.

have to say about Art Cologne, but we've been coming here for ten years and we have lots of Belgian collectors, mainly because we represent three local artists." Some galleries, such as Conrads (Düsseldorf) and Elisabeth & Klaus Thoman (Innsbruck), decided to be present at both fairs.

In spite of the absence of a few big names who deserted the Belgian capital because Art Brussels was too close to the upcoming Berlin Gallery Weekend or Frieze New York, there is a refreshing quality to the work on show this year. We particularly appreciated the panorama of Aurélien Froment's works

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FOLLOWING PAGE 1 presented by Motive Gallery (Amsterdam), a taste of things to come in June at Art Basel when he will be exhibiting in Art Statements. Some exhibitors went to a lot of effort with their presentation, take the example of Parisian gallerists Laurent Godin, Georges-Philippe and Nathalie Vallois or Michel Rein

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(who is presenting Michael Riedel's recent works). By choosing to devote half of his stand to Claude Rutault, Emmanuel Perrotin (Paris, Hong Kong) surely has one of the most beautiful stands in the fair. For his first participation, André Magnin has imagined a very stylish installation on

fluorescent yellow walls for Frédéric Bruly Bouabré's drawings and a magnificent Chéri Samba painting.

In spite of things taking a while to get going, some galleries, mainly local ones, met with success right from the off. On the first day Rodolphe Janssen (Brussels) sold a large drawing by Thomas Lerooy, four pieces by the two brothers Gert & Uwe Tobias, two works by Jean-Luc Moerman and a great Adam McEwen. For its part, Zink sold a piece by Rinus Van de Velde to an Austrian



Almine Rech Gallery at Art Brussels 2012.



François Morellet at Jean Broilly, Art Brussels 2012.

collector and another by Hannelore Van Dijck to a French art lover. The Parisian Alain Gutharc, who is back after a gap of two years, also started strong. "We have sold some photos by Vincent J. Stoker to collectors from Antwerp that we hadn't met before. And some small pictures by Marlène Mocquet", he confided to us at the opening. André Magnin also had some good contacts with an option on his Romuald Hazoumé sculpture. In the same way it got better as time went by for Michel Rein: "It's always like that in Brussels. It's slow and steady, but in the end the business gets done." ■

ART BRUSSELS, until April 22nd,

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www.artbrussels.be

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