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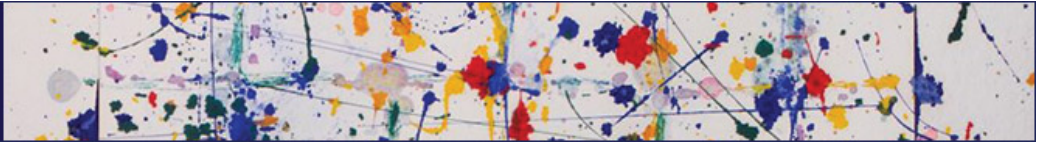
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Frieze Masters Skews Modern, Sees Swift Sales

BY SARAH P. HANSON | OCTOBER 17, 2014



Rembrandt's "Portrait of a Man with Arms Akimbo," 1658, displayed at Otto Naumann's booth at this year's Frieze Masters.

(BEN STANSALL/AFP/Getty Images)

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German Zero artists, 1960s Italians, and various flavors of abstraction from Brazil, Japan, and the UK were in heavy rotation at the stands at [Frieze Masters](#), the spinoff fair dedicated to pre-2000 art.

Masters, which made a splash in 2012 with museum-quality pieces and canny juxtapositions, is directed by Victoria Siddall, who, it was recently announced, will be taking the helm of the Frieze franchise. In its third year, the fair is skewing modern, partly to keep pace with what is now considered “historical” work, but perhaps partly also as a reflection of the relative ease of unloading a [Giacometti](#) over a [Guercino](#) in the kind of split-second decision environment of a fair. Dealers reported a handful of sales from the VIP preview on Tuesday, including a large [Sigmar Polke](#) canvas at David Zwirner and a small, exquisite red [Enrico Castellani](#) at Dominique Lévy, who fêted the opening of her new Old Bond Street location on Monday night. Of the fair’s first day, Lévy director Lock Kresler said, “I was pleasantly surprised how many people came prepared to make a quick decision.”

Alexander Platon, senior director of the secondary art market department and special projects for Marlborough Fine Art, added, “I have never seen the caliber of people come through as I did today.” The gallery chose to highlight its longstanding relationship with [Francis Bacon](#) with a knockout solo booth with five large-scale canvases and several works on paper.



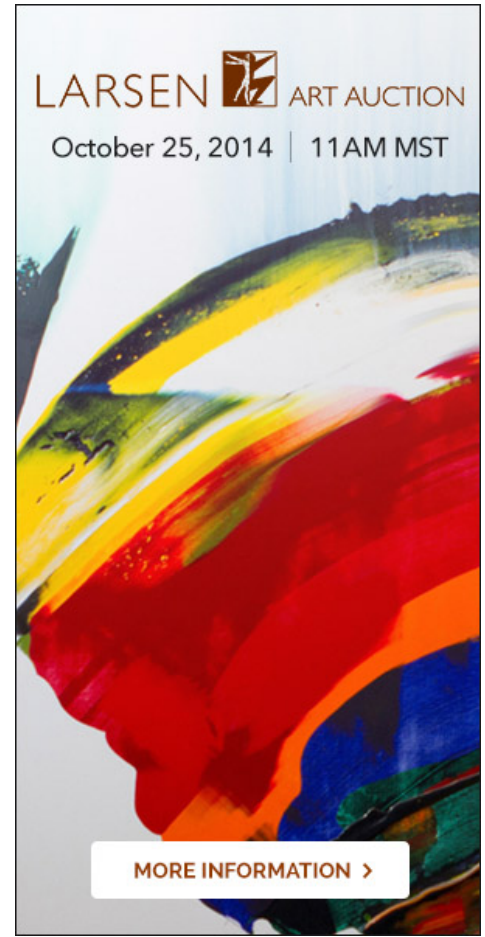
Two stands featured works by the recently in-demand Swiss bricoleur [Jean Tinguely](#): Hauser & Wirth with a solo presentation of works hailing from a single Swiss collection, and David Zwirner, with an early mechanical piece once owned by Robert Rauschenberg. Sculpture was strong in general, with a solo presentation of [David Smith](#) at Mnuchin and a trove of [Fausto Melotti](#) works at Galeria Elvira Gonzalez of Madrid being the highlights.


The aforementioned Italians — surely designed to coincide with this week’s sales of Italian post-war and contemporary art at Christie’s and Sotheby’s — included not only familiar names like [Lucio Fontana](#) and [Alberto Burri](#), but also deeper cuts like [Paolo Scheggi](#) and

Augusto Bonalumi, suggesting an expanding market for the clean lines of their post-war works. Robilant + Voena, of London, Milan, and St. Moritz had a particularly striking selection of all-white works, several of which had sold, according to Marco Voena.

Of the more antique works at the fair, Otto Naumann of New York boasted a [Rembrandt](#) portrait formerly owned by Steve Wynn, priced at £38 million. “I’ve had five or six Rembrandts in my career, but never a late one like this,” he noted. The 1658 portrait coincides with a presentation of late works by the artist at the National Gallery.

Roundly praised by dealers as a pleasant overall experience and a quality affair attracting a crowd on par with Art Basel or TEFAF, it remains a bit of an open question whether a fair devoted to historical works can deliver sales, as several specialists in older material noted. As of Wednesday, Naumann’s Rembrandt, requiring a very specific type of buyer, had not found a home.



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