

ART MATTERS

## Highlights from Frieze London, Where New and Old Commingle

CULTURE | BY KEVIN MCGARRY | OCTOBER 20, 2014 5:00 PM



This year's Frieze week in London provided plenty to see, both in the tent and out of it — including the installation pictured here, Andro Wekua's "Some Pheasants in Singularity," which opened at Sprüth Magers. Credit Stephen White, courtesy of Sprüth Magers, London

An unseasonably warm and not-too-rainy **Frieze** week wrapped Sunday in London. By now, a few thousand members of the extended art-world apparatus have Channeled to Paris for **FIAC** or returned to their respective homes (though plenty show little evidence of having a permanent address). But there's still much to digest as the dust settles on what is arguably Europe's busiest — and almost certainly most sprawling — art week.

While the conventional victor of an art fair is anyone who needs to book a forklift for a run to the bank, Frieze also singles out one gallery each year for innovation, bestowing a Stand Prize of 10,000 pounds. This year, this distinction fell to **the Box**, Mara McCarthy's space east of downtown Los Angeles, for its presentation of Barbara T. Smith's Xerox works from 1965–68. It's a good endorsement of what anyone who regularly attends these events already knows: Any discovery is a good one, and "old" and "new" are not mutually exclusive.

The sheer density of art on display in the Frieze tent was, of course, remarkable, but the wealth of work swelling from every other corner of London far outweighed what was on view at the fair itself. One of the highlights among Monday's gallery openings was the Georgian artist Andro Wekua's solo exhibition at **Sprüth Magers** in Mayfair, on view through Nov. 15. The window of the gallery is occluded by large blocks, the floors are carpeted in a clinical, cotton-candy hue and the space's primary inhabitant is an androgynous cyborg suspended from the ceiling. The being's chin is precariously hinged upon a glass plate and its toes hover above the ground, but its uncannily creepy punctum is a finger that irregularly quivers just as viewers consider whether the creature is animate. The post-opening dinner was held on the ground floor of 33 Portland Place, a mansion built in 1775 that has seen its share of action — from pulpy headlines to on-screen appearances in a Kate Moss lingerie ad and an Amy Winehouse music video.







Of all the swish goings-on Tuesday, the day the fair previewed, it was shisha that prevailed. By nightfall, all roads led to Edgware Road, central London's epicenter of Middle Eastern culture and cuisine, where **Bidoun** celebrated its 10th anniversary. The tiled walls and ceilings of Shishawy's dining rooms and dance floors twinkled for the many admirers — including the artist, writer and filmmaker Sophia Al-Maria, the MoMA curator Stuart Comer and the Artforum publisher Knight Landesman — who came out to toast the art quarterly and nonprofit devoted to bringing discourse on art and culture from the Middle East to the rest of the world.



Left: "Los Oceano Son Carne," a performance piece by Raúl de Nieves that accompanied the exhibition "Lizzie Fitch/Ryan Trecartin" at Zabludowicz Collection. Right: The scene last Tuesday evening at the London restaurant Shishawy, where the art quarterly and nonprofit organization Bidoun held its 10th-anniversary party. Credit From left: Ollie Hammick/Limner Studio; Jon Stanley Austin

Midweek was an opportunity to check out some of London's newest galleries, including two beacons of the blue-chip Manhattan scene that put their footprints on British soil this week. **Dominique Lévy** opened a historical show of works by Enrico Castellani, Donald Judd and Frank Stella, co-curated by Linda Norden, at Old Bond Street; while at Golden Square, **Marian Goodman** unveiled more than 40 new and recent abstract canvases by Gerhard Richter. Steps away, **Herald St** gallery, a stalwart of the comparatively scrappy East London gallery scene, inaugurated a pop-up space with loopy paintings by Ida Ekblad. Seeking edgier digs, Sylvia Kouvali opened a second chapter of her Istanbul-based gallery **Rodeo** above a sex shop on Charing Cross Road. The centerpiece of Banu Cennetoğlu's show on the top floor, titled "Gentle Madness," is an indexical expression of something like that: tables laid out with every print periodical distributed around England and the Channel Islands on Sept. 9, 2014.

The unofficial end of the week came on Friday with an annual dinner held the quintessentially British whole-animal restaurant St. John, thrown by the local galleries **Sadie Coles HQ**, **the Modern Institute**, the aforementioned Herald St and the expatriated impresario Gavin Brown of **the eponymous enterprise** in New York. As guests managed their fists full of champagne flutes and pork sandwiches in order to get to the dance floor, a younger set gathered a few miles north at the **Zabludowicz Collection**, where Lizzie Fitch and Ryan Trecartin's "Priority Innfield" installation had been co-opted as an immersive stage for an evening of performances. Organized by the artists' longtime collaborator Ashland Mines, known in music circles around the world as DJ Total Freedom, the night's events culminated with a flash mob courtesy of Rachel Lord and inspired by the "Damned for All Time" number from "Jesus Christ Superstar."

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