

ARTNEWS

Independent New York Opens Second Edition in Tribeca With Solid Sales, Sun-Drenched Booths

BY *Nate Freeman* POSTED 03/02/17 7:07 PM



A view from above the Independent art fair at Spring Studios.

It's only Independent New York's second year at Spring Studios in Tribeca, but it already feels like its rightful home. Spring Studios—the members-only shared workspace and social club—is ideal for collectors, many of whom were overheard gushing about how they could walk there from their apartments—and then walk to NADA, [which was happening simultaneously](#), a quick bike trip away at Skylight Clarkson North, on Washington Street.

Also, the fashion-forward physical location (starting on the building's ground floor but most prominently on the fifth, sixth, and seventh floors) has an aesthetic that matches the approach perfected by Independent co-founders Elizabeth Dee and Darren Flook: a carefully selected, deeply international exhibitor list filled with galleries that are highly regarded and largely anti-expansion. Of the 46 galleries, only a handful have branches in different countries.

There's a lot of great work on display—we've [taken a look](#) at a few [choice booths](#) today—but what sold? Dealers this afternoon, a few hours into the opening, reported that the collectors who come to Independent New York are often

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looking to snap up quite specific objects—and that makes it easy to choose what you bring.

“This is a pretty low-stress fair,” said Mitchell-Innes & Nash director Bridget Finn. “We’ve done well enough that if it ended now, we’d be satisfied.”

The gallery had off-loaded several works by Pope.L, including nearly ten small sculptures priced at \$10,000 each. Modestly sized objects, with less sticker shock, were successfully sold at a few other booths. Gavin Brown’s Enterprise produced a book for a recent Udomsak Krisanamis exhibition, and then gave the books to the artist to do with them what he wished; they came back hacked-at and taped-up, strewn with glittery glue or bedazzled with plastic jewels. Each “book” was on sale for \$1,000, and many were gone a few hours into the fair.

Up on the seventh floor, Karma was selling work by the young Argentine artist Andrés Eidelstein, who had made tiny figurines of his favorite cartoon characters—The Simpsons, SpongeBob SquarePants, all the hits. He also made a self-portrait; it depicted a skinny guy wearing a T-shirt and a black button-down. Karma’s founder, Brendan Dugan, pointed the artist out to me, and he was wearing the exact same thing. Nice work.

The tiny sculptures were going for \$750, and most had sold, including one to an adorable little girl who saw one she really liked and started pleading to her father to get her one. Dad relented.

Dee has long insisted that the fair have a certain amount of turnover each year, just to keep things fresh and attendees on their toes, and this year, one newcomer is Galerie Perrotin, which is readying its huge new space on Orchard Street, right next to the current location of Lower East Side art bar Max Fish.

Perrotin director Matthew Wilkin said the gallery had sold a work by Tatiana Trouvé, from her 2017 “Tranquility” series, for an undisclosed price.

“We’ve seen a lot of great people, and I think it’s a stunning fair,” Wilkin said.

He was squinting in the sun, which would drench the booths in blinding light as it set throughout the afternoon, causing his colleagues to reach into their jacket pockets for their shades.

“Can they cloud it up a little bit?” Wilkin joked.

Clearing, which has galleries in the two cities that have editions of Independent (New York and Brussels), was showing sunny blue paintings by Loïc Raguénès, many of which had sold for prices between \$13,000 and \$15,000, and new sculptures by Zak Kitnick, which were also going to collectors, in the range of \$7,500 to \$8,500. The sculptures were beige structures of indeterminate use, a few of which had mounted on their sides a red telephone—which may cause one to think of a certain phone used to call Moscow from a certain oval-shaped office.

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“They were not meant to be so historically relevant,” Clearing director Olivier Baban said.

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