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GuideSunday

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Fair a global experience

Dealers, collectors and artists to sell works; Warhol tribute planned

At the Dallas Art Fair, which rolls into its third year next weekend, the surprising, the unexpected and the tantalizingly different may end up more a question of who than what.

Take for example the documentary film, *Full Circle: Before They Were Famous*, a tribute of sorts to Andy Warhol. *Full Circle* is being shown at the fair, which opens with a gala Thursday night and ends April 10 at Fashion Industry Gallery on Ross Avenue. The who behind the screening is "Warhol superstar" Ultra Violet, who's slated to appear with photographer William John Kennedy.

Ultra Violet appeared at a screening of the film at Art Basel in Miami, where one critic chirped that it was "one of the best — and most surreal — evenings of Art Basel."

Surreal is good, especially when so much art, and for that matter art fairs, risk

ART NOTES



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being bland and boring. This is art that people want to sell, and not all of it oozes quality. At its best, an art fair offers some very fine art — to go with the not so fine — and gathers under a big tent dealers, artists, the socially curious and, of course, buyers.

Ultra Violet is just one marquee attraction showing up at a fair that has undergone ultra growth since its launch in 2009. About 5,000 showed up that year, followed by 6,500 last year. Organizers are hoping for 7,500 this year, and with a break or two, 10,000.

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Maple Shadow, 2010, a sculpture of cast resin and maple by Joan Winter



Fair hopes to draw 10,000

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Art dealer Chris Byrne, who co-founded the fair with developer John Sughrue, lays out the objective.

"Let's start with the audience, the collectors, the institutions, and build on those existing relationships," Byrne says. "That was always the working model. It allows people to get together during the year. And in Texas, it makes sense. It's a big state. The collectors are spread out all over the place, so it serves the purpose of bringing everyone — and everyone's energy — together."

The fair is a for-profit operation. The objective is to showcase and sell art. Byrne says the average price range of works being sold runs from \$1,000 into the high six figures.

"We've done consistently better as we've added exhibitors," Byrne says, noting that revenue and profit have escalated each of the three years. Neither he nor Sughrue will cough up exact figures, but Sughrue says the fair "has grown by leaps and bounds."

The fair has heightened its credibility by inviting not only 17 participating Texas galleries but also the Nasher Sculpture Center, the Dallas Museum of Art and Dallas Contemporary, all of which figure into the mix. (Thursday night's gala will benefit Dallas Contemporary and the Booker T. Washington High School for the Performing and Visual Arts.) In addition, each museum is using the fair to spotlight its own new shows, whose onlookers will undoubtedly include VIPs from the fair.

In addition to local invitees — Barry Whistler Gallery, Artspace III, Cris Worley Fine Arts, Conduit Gallery, Holly



David Woo/Staff Photographer

John Sughrue and Chris Byrne, art fair co-founders, show a painting by Aaron Parazette in their Dallas office.

Plan your life

The Dallas Art Fair runs 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. Friday and Saturday and 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. April 10 at 1807 Ross Ave., Fashion Industry Gallery, Dallas. \$20; \$40 for three-day pass. 214-220-1278. www.dallasartfair.com.

Johnson Gallery, Dunn and Brown Contemporary and Valley House Gallery & Sculpture Garden among them — the fair has imported Andrew Edlin Gallery from New York, Anthony Meier Fine Arts from San Francisco and Stuart Shave/Modern Art from London.

Byrne says what he and Sughrue sought to avoid is "a cookie-cutter fair." In celebrating contemporary art, the 2011 edition promises paintings, sculptures, drawings, prints and photographs by artists represented by 70 art dealers around the globe. The 2009 fair drew 35 presenters, followed by 55 last year and 75 this year.

Byrne is especially bullish on the panel discussions. The Art Dealers Association of America has lined up a "Collector's Forum panel" titled "Art Fair Power: How Art

Fairs Influence a Market and a Region" for 11 a.m. Saturday at the Nasher Center, which is opening "Statuesque" the same day. "Statuesque" features the contemporary sculpture of Pawel Althamer, Huma Bhabha, Aaron Curry, Thomas Houseago, Matthew Monahan and Rebecca Warren. Across the street, the DMA is showing "Concentrations 54," featuring the paintings of Matt Connors and Fergus Feehily.

At 1 p.m. Saturday, the fair turns its attention to "Collectors and Their Private Spaces for Contemporary Art," bringing to the stage such noted collectors as Howard Rachofsky, Mark Vanmoerkerke and Kenny Goss.

Rachofsky says he's "very upbeat" about the fair.

"It's a terrific event for Dallas, and as the Dallas Art Fair continues to evolve, it will help to reinforce the city as one of the very strong arts cities in the United States," he says.

And, of course, you can always hope to hang with Ultra Violet, who will be there at 5 p.m. Friday for a screening of *Full Circle*.