

Live!

COMMENTARY

Dallas Art Fair raises the bar

By **GAILE ROBINSON**

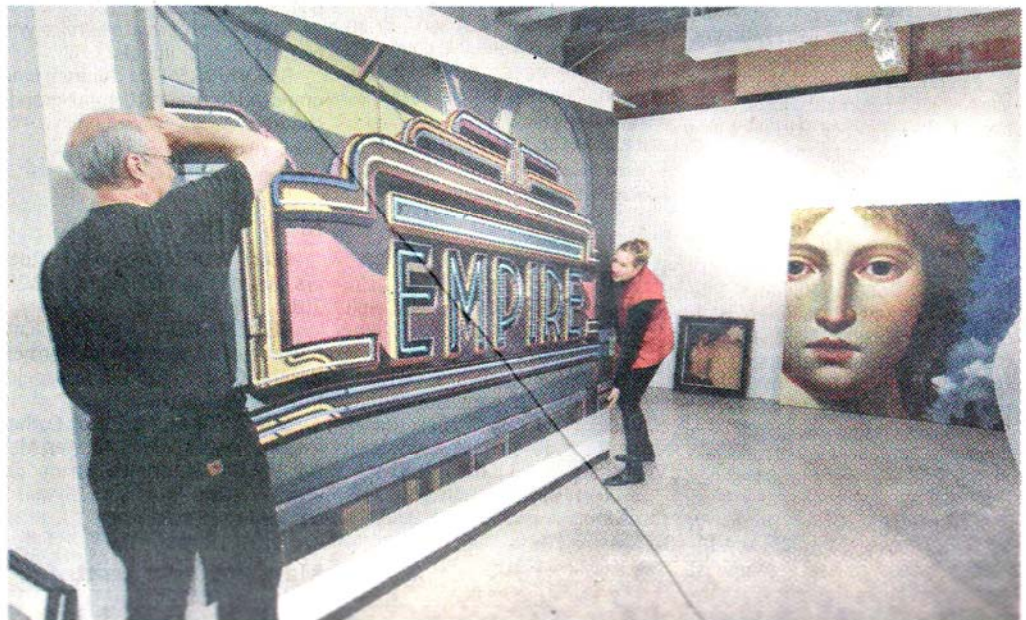
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Signs of economic recovery were offloaded in Dallas mid-week when the art arrived for the second Dallas Art Fair, a four-day event kicking off tonight with a \$200-a-head gala for severely serious art patrons. Then it gets down to the business of what it's all about: selling contemporary art.

Some of the pieces came from as far away as the United Kingdom as two dealers from London joined 53 other gallerists in gambling that the purse strings in Texas are looser than they are elsewhere.

Returning dealers were so encouraged by the turnout last year they brought more expensive art this time. When pressed to make their annual art-fair selections, some chose to forgo Art Basel Miami in favor of coming to North Texas. As the number of galleries has increased, so has the attendant swirl with satellite spaces setting up shop across the street in the Fairmont Hotel.

There is a great deal that is better on the second outing. There is a sophisticated sheen to this year's assemblage, and the layout inside Fashion Industry Gallery — the building of wholesale showrooms next door to the Dallas Museum of Art — is not as confusing as it



Robert and Cheryl Fishko of Forum Gallery in New York hang *Empire* by Robert Cottingham at the Fashion Industry Gallery for the Dallas Art Fair. In the background is *The City 7* by Carlo Maria Mariani.

Dallas Art Fair

- Fashion Industry Gallery, 1807 Ross Ave.
- Opens with a gala tonight
- Regular hours: 11 a.m.-7 p.m. Friday-Saturday; 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Sunday
- \$20, or \$40 for a three-day pass
- 214-220-1278; www.fashionindustrygallery.com or www.dallasartfair.com

was. Considering the first Art Fair came at the height of the economic doldrums, it is a tes-

tament to the commitment of organizers John Sughrue and Chris Byrne that there was a first Dallas Art Fair, much less a second.

The trans-Atlantic representation is all due to Richard Patterson, formerly lumped with the YBAs (Young British Artists), and now an MTB (Mature Texan Brit). He lives in Dallas, and his London-based gallery, Timothy Taylor, signed on for this fair.

The folks who were unpacking the Stuart Shave/

Modern Art crates, also from London, introduced themselves as "very good friends of Richard's," which summed up the small world of the global art community.

A one-day pass to the Dallas Art Fair is \$20, less if you are student or senior, and worth every cent. Should you go, be sure to mention you're a friend of Richard's.

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