

# FINANCIAL TIMES

## Collecting

The Art Market: Africa's London fair, Emmanuel Perrotin's birthday suit



Daniel Firman's 'Nasutamanus' at Emmanuel Perrotin's 25th birthday show in Lille

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Fresh from his triumph at the Venice Biennale, where to almost everyone's surprise he won the Golden Lion, the Angolan photographer Edson Chagas was in

London this week at the new African art fair 1:54. His winning installation in the Palazzo Cini – stacks of photographs of found objects taken in Luanda, Portland and London – has been bought by Jochen Zeitz, director of François Pinault's luxury---goods group Kering, and will be displayed in a museum in Africa. In London, Chagas' gallery A Palazzo is showing prints of the photographs in editions of three, priced at €6,000 each: the first edition has also gone to Zeitz, and half of the second edition is already sold.

The small fair – just 15 booths in a wing of Somerset House – is a change from the heavyweight Frieze with its shiny, million---dollar Koons and Hirsts. One exhibitor, MIA, had come all the way from Seattle to show, among other works, a sculpture by Zak Ové (£8,500).

But Joost Bosland, director of the Stevenson Gallery in South Africa and currently showing at Frieze London, is ambivalent about the new event. “For a start, one of its sponsors is Christie's,” he says. “And I don't think auction houses should be backing fairs.” And, he continues, “while any opportunity for artists from the African continent to show is good, we have fought long and hard to get these artists into the mainstream, so I am not sure that a separate platform is the way forward.”

At Frieze, Stevenson is showing two large pieces by the leading Benin---born artist Meschac Gaba, whose 12---room “Museum of Contemporary African Art” (1997---2002) was recently acquired by Tate.

While on the subject of Frieze, Gagosian has rolled out its big guns for the contemporary part, with just five Koons pieces. The prices are hair---raising: around \$7m for an “important” lobster sculpture, \$5m for a duck piece and an astounding \$22m---\$24m for the candy---like “Sacred Heart (Blue/Magenta)” (1994---2007) – one in an edition of three.

The prominent French dealer Emmanuel Perrotin is celebrating 25 years in business with an exhibition at the Tripostal, a city---funded art space in Lille, northern France. Now aged 45, Perrotin started working at 16 and founded his own gallery at 21; the new show includes some of the artists he started out with, such as Hirst, to whom he gave one of his first solo shows. That was in 1991, but the relationship ended because “I just couldn't afford to produce his work,” says Perrotin now. In Lille he gives over a whole room to Hirst works, with a spot and a spin painting and anatomy tables, although just one small medicine cabinet comes from that original show. Perhaps Perrotin would like to tempt Hirst to show in his newly inaugurated Manhattan gallery ...



Emmanuel Perrotin in celebratory horse costume

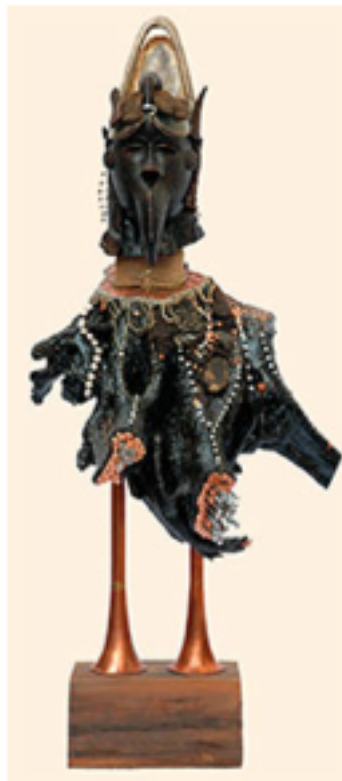
As a young and impoverished dealer Perrotin quickly made his mark, with the most enduring image being his six---week stint dressed as a bright pink rabbit/penis for a Maurizio Cattelan show in 1995. That sense of fun – or an acute awareness of the power of publicity – has never left him: last week he clambered into a horse costume made by the Austrian collective Gelatin to take visitors around his *Happy Birthday* show.

Among Perrotin’s good clients is Christie’s owner François Pinault, and parts of his collection were shown at the Tripostal in 2007, followed by some of Charles Saatchi’s holdings in 2009; surprising choices for the Socialist mayor of Lille, Martine Aubry. “I am not interested in who the collectors are, but what they collect,” she responded tartly when questioned about this.

→ Eugenio Re Rebaudengo starts out with a name in the art world: his mother Patrizia is the prominent collector behind the renowned Sandretto Re Rebaudengo Foundation, set up in 1995 in Turin. Now Eugenio has started his own online art site, Artuner.com. It will host curated exhibitions of works for sale and launches with landscape photographs by Luigi Ghirri. Prices range from £4,000 for modern prints to £17,000 for vintage ones. I asked Eugenio what distinguished his site from others also selling online. “The quality of the works!” he answered. “We are not a supermarket like some sites, and I am only selling works I like and believe in.” And he promises there is a “Chinese wall” between Artuner and the Foundation, with which he is also involved.

Auctioneer Simon de Pury was in his habitual cracking form at Sotheby's London this week when he auctioned eight works of art to benefit the Mimi Foundation, a cancer charity created by Belgian collector Guy Ullens and his wife Myriam. The sale, held during a big-name gala evening, raised over £1.35m with more to come when other donations are sold. The top price of £302,500 was given for Yan Pei-Ming's portrait of the Prince of Wales, and a Sterling Ruby painting created for the occasion made £185,000. Ullens collects Ruby's work, which he has already shown in his Beijing space, the Ullens Centre for Contemporary Art (UCCA).

Ullens revealed that UCCA will be shifting its direction next year. As well as showing Chinese art, it will be looking more at international artists, with Brazilian and Los Angeles artist shows programmed. "Everyone in the world is looking at new young artists," Ullens told me, "And I want to reflect that in UCCA."



Zak Ové's sculpture at MIA gallery at 1:54