



The 20 Best Booths at Art Basel in Hong Kong

22 March, 2016 | Alexander Forbes and Frances Arnold

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Art Basel in Hong Kong opened to a select group of VIPs on Tuesday afternoon at the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre. The fourth edition of the Swiss mega-fair's Asian outpost welcomes 239 galleries, 50% of which, once again, have at least one gallery space in the region. Fifteen new Western galleries—Metro Pictures, Xavier Hufkens, and David Kordansky among them—join the fair for the first time in 2016. And an equal 15 galleries have moved up to the fair's main Galleries sector from either Discoveries (its section for young galleries and emerging artists) or Insights (its section highlighting both historical and contemporary artistic positions from Asia).

"When we first came to Hong Kong, we were afraid that we would be swallowed by it and disappear into the woodwork," says Art Basel global director Marc Spiegler, in a nod to the city's gargantuan size and scale in comparison to that of his show's other two host cities, Miami and Basel, Switzerland. "But we have managed in a short time to make a huge impact." In Art Basel's wake, international galleries have moved to Hong Kong in droves amid a rapidly growing appetite for collecting international contemporary art among the city's seven million residents.

Art Basel in Hong Kong, too, has grown tremendously in the five years since the MCH Group acquired ART HK. (Spiegler and his Director Asia, Adeline Ooi, are quick to point out that this is growth in quality, not quantity.) A move from May to March last year enabled a bigger and better cadre of European and American galleries to participate. It also saw the introduction of the fair's Film section, curated again this year by Li Zhenhua. Encounters, a section for large-scale works, curated by Alexie Glass-Kantor, actually shrunk from 21 to 16 pieces this year in order to accommodate particularly ambitious contributions from Lawrence Weiner and Pae White, among others.

Spiegler and, subsequently, Ooi have paid particular attention to aiding dealers from Asia to up the ante at their booths and present themselves on equal standing with their Western counterparts. That's reportedly led to a steady increase in the square footage taken by Eastern dealers and a tightening of the presentations within them. With so much to choose from, Artsy scoured the aisles to pick out the 20 stands you shouldn't miss.

Kukje Gallery

GALLERIES, BOOTH 1C13

WITH WORKS BY HAEGUE YOUNG, BILL VIOLA, KIBONG RHEE, ANISH KAPOOR, DONALD JUDD, KYUNGAH HAM, PARK SEO-BO, KWON YOUNG-WOO, LEE UFAN, HA CHONG-HYUN, GIMHONGSOK, AARON YOUNG, MICHAEL JOO, GHADA AMER



Installation view of Kukje Gallery's booth at Art Basel in Hong Kong, 2016. Courtesy of the fair.

WHY YOU SHOULD STOP

Major market interest in the work of the Dansaekhwa artists (Korean monochrome painters) that Kukje has long supported continues at Art Basel in Hong Kong. Particularly strong pieces by Ha Chong-Hyun, Kwon Young-Woo, and Park Seo-Bo exemplify the trend at the gallery's stand. The gallery also contributes to the fair's Encounters section with Kyungah Ham's *What you see is unseen / Chandeliers for Five Cities* (2014–2015).