

Zilkha, Bettina. "The Armory Show Attracts Celebrities And Collectors, Opens With Strong Sales." *Forbes* (March 5, 2015).

**Forbes**

STYLE & DESIGN | 3/05/2015 @ 4:11PM | 558 views

# The Armory Show Attracts Celebrities And Collectors, Opens With Strong Sales

## The Armory Show Vernissage 2015



**The Armory Show**

Leila Heller, Alexander Heller

The Armory Show held its VIP preview on Wednesday, attracting celebrities and collectors including [Neil Patrick Harris](#) and David Burtka, Michael Stipe, Tamara Mellon and Michael Ovitz, Kelsey Grammar and Audrey Gruss. Sales were brisk, to the delight of exhibitors and collectors alike.

“We’re surprised at the strength of the art market, and the speed at which it has kept growing,” said Thaddaeus Ropac, who was showing for the second year in a row at the Armory. “It’s very solid. We are pleased because the Armory has had its ups and downs in the last few years, but this year it’s an amazing turnout despite the weather. In the last few years the quality has gotten better. Many people came and the interest is strong.”

Jean Gabriel Mitterand, whose eponymous gallery is based in Paris, agreed with Ropac's assessment.

"The Armory Show has improved a lot," said Mitterand. "This is a very strong year. We have many American collectors, from New York, the West Coast, Florida, and all over. We need to have contact with America once a year, and we get it thanks to the Armory Show. We are very happy to be exhibiting close to eighty Richard Pettibone paintings and sculptures."

Lisa Jackson of LJ Cross was walking the show with Helen Schifter, looking at bold, elaborate crosses (naturally) at the Laurent Godin gallery.

"We saw a piece by a Costa Rican artist. It was beautiful, it was very simple, it was \$19,000 – and it was sold," Schifter lamented.

Belgium based Axel Vervoordt gallery was exhibiting at the Armory for the first time this year.

"We selected artists from across three continents," said Boris Vervoordt, "Africa, [Asia](#) and [Europe](#). We're fascinated by artists who range from their forties to their late eighties.

It's about the discovery for us. We were instrumental in the discovery of Gutai, and everything that's happened around it. We feel it's very important to go in depth, which is why we've published this book on Shiraga with Dominique Levy. When the market gets into this state of excitement, it's important to go more in depth, to discover more, to study, and to not get carried away."

For six years the Armory Show has included Armory Focus, highlighting a specific geographic region. This year's Focus, curated by Omar Kholeif of London's Whitechapel gallery, showcases Middle Eastern, North African and Mediterranean art.

"With all the museums being built in the region – twenty two in Doha, the Louvre and the Guggenheim in Abu Dhabi, new museums, initiatives and foundations being built in Kuwait, in Bahrain and in the region – you have a lot of attention being paid to Middle Eastern art," said Leila Heller of the Leila Heller Gallery. "The region is fascinating, there is a lot of money, and they are supporting a lot of great art, artists and foundations, so it was relevant that the Armory did a focus this year towards the Middle East. For us, it's a dialogue. We bring Middle Eastern artists here, and we take Israeli artists to the Middle East."



















