



ART

Frieze LA Report: A Downpour Doesn't Stop Brad Pitt

Despite inclement weather, Frieze LA's VIP collector's opening was an unequivocal success.

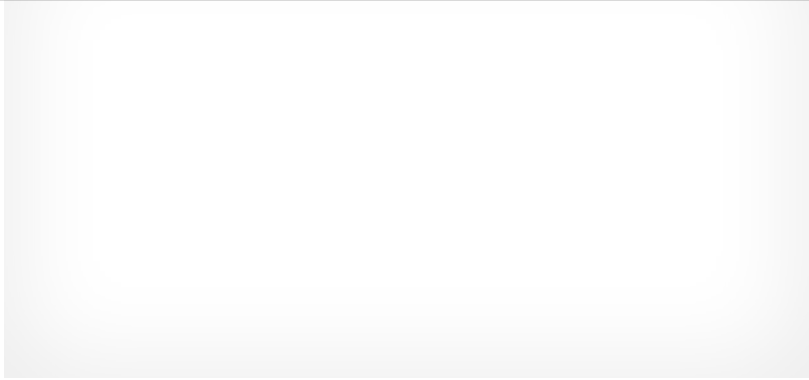
By [JEREMY HODKIN](#) | Feb 15 2019, 5:01pm

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Sandwiched in the week between the Grammys and the Oscars, Frieze LA held its inaugural opening for VIP collectors on Thursday at the Paramount Studios lot. An offshoot of its London and New York based sister-fairs, the Los Angeles iteration of Frieze has been a much talked about and highly anticipated event in the art world since it was announced last February.

While a few (mostly smaller) fairs have found moderate success in southern California throughout the years, even more have come and gone without making a lasting impact in the City of Angels – most notably, Paris Photo LA, which shuttered in 2016 after three years. FIAC LA, a subsidiary of the prestigious French art fair FIAC, never even managed to get off the ground.

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And still, when Frieze LA was announced, the expectations were, for the most part, overwhelmingly high. The organizers of Frieze had sold a majority stake in the company to the global talent agency and entertainment conglomerate Endeavor in 2016. With its new owners' deep roots in the entertainment industry, the rationale was to harness the collective communities of both the art and entertainment worlds and unite them, creating a must-see stop on the global art fair circuit.

The only problem was the weather. With "sunny" Los Angeles currently experiencing a bizarre cold front (53 °F), collectors and celebrities alike were met with a torrential downpour



Klaus Biesenbach and Hans Ulrich Obrist Are Hosting a Free Breakfast at Frieze
HALEY MELLIN

that seemed to peak right at the opening hours of the fair. Frieze might be weather-cursed: Last year's fair in New York took place during a heat wave that caused the air conditioning in the fair's famous white tent to go on the fritz, leading to pissed off, sweaty collectors. The year before, the fair was staged during thunderstorms that caused leaks in the tent, causing dealers to frantically scramble to move their art to safety and away from the perilous water. While no such disaster occurred yesterday, art collectors—not the most patient bunch in the best of conditions—were less than pleased that they were forced to make the five minute trek from their cars outdoors.

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Paramount Studios

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Taking photographs of clients on one's art fair stand is an absolute no-no in my opinion. But not today. Lovely Brad talking painting and creative process with lovely Secundino. All shapes fabulous. #art #artist #paramountstudio #secundinohernandez #sogorgeousinreallife #bradainthalfbadeither #bradpitt #painting #painter #contemporaryart #contemporarypainter #spanishart #acting #actor #film #cinema #victoriamiro #smilesformiles #love #friezela #frieze #friezelosangeles 📷 @olivermiro_ #secundinohernández #dontforgetthataccent

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Inside, however, everything went according to plan. The international mega-gallery Hauser & Wirth sold a 1999 Mike Kelley installation for \$1.8 million to a prominent European foundation in the first few hours of the fair. Marc Payot, a partner and vice president at Hauser told me that the fair provided a focused reason for the collective art world to descend on the city at a given point in the calendar. “We’ve seen some great collectors stop by our booth,” he said. “Given as this was the first year for Frieze LA, we wanted to make a statement with our presentation, and I think we accomplished that.”

Pace Gallery, another of the big four mega-galleries, sold a pin drawing by Tara Donovan for \$225,000, a video work by Israeli artist, Michal Rovner, for



Alex Israel Has Built A Gigantic Rimowa Suitcase on an L.A. Street Corner
GARAGE MAGAZINE

\$150,000, and a painting by Adam Pendleton for \$120,000 (amongst a slew of other high-profile sales). CEO of Pace Gallery, Marc Glimcher, himself was spotted glad-handing prominent collectors in the gallery’s booth—a strong demonstration of the behemoth gallery’s faith in the fair’s prospects for client development.

And David Kordansky Gallery, a Los Angeles-based gallery whose status amongst collectors has skyrocketed over the past few years, nearly sold out its booth exhibiting a solo presentation of Los Angeles-based artist Kathryn Andrews, selling eleven works each priced at \$40,000.

Indeed, at a time when an increasing amount of attention has been paid to the burgeoning Los Angeles collecting scene, many of the dealers—whether based in the city, or in from out of town—expressed delight both with the pace of the sales and the quality of the collectors who attended the fair on its first day. The only thing able to cause any break in the sales momentum throughout the day was when a celebrity was spotted prowling the aisles, causing VIPs to crane their necks and their phones in the hopes of a clandestine photo. Leonardo DiCaprio, Brad Pitt,

of advisers and friends in tow.

Frieze LA wasn't the only locus of celebrity attention throughout the week: UTA Artist Space (a subsidiary of the Hollywood talent agency, UTA) threw a wildly successful opening for its new show, "Dreamweavers," hosted in collaboration with Kasseem "Swizz Beatz" Dean, featuring prominent African American artists such as Kerry James Marshall, Kehinde Wiley, and Pope L. Jay-Z and Beyoncé themselves were spotted admiring the art, along with Pharrell and Jillionaire in what turned out to be a prime example of the unbridled potential when merging contemporary art with celebrity pop culture. The prospects for Frieze LA look considerably more promising than the fairs that came before it.

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