



4, 6 POP. CULTURE. GOSSIP.

14 Art: Behind the scenes at the inaugural Dallas Art Fair

Henry Darger's *At Jennie Richee, Going out of Shelter as Storm Abates*, not dated, at Andrew Edlin Gallery



Kiki Smith's *Sitting with a Snake*, 2007, at Pace Prints

# FAIRGAME

CATHERINE D. ANSPON COVERS THE MAJOR CULTURAL STORY FROM TEXAS THIS SPRING: OUR STATE'S FIRST-EVER NATIONAL ART FAIR. FOLLOW HER PICKS FOR THE BOOTHS WITH THE BIGGEST BUZZ AT THE INAUGURAL **DALLAS ART FAIR**, UNVEILING FEBRUARY 6 THROUGH 8 AT FASHION INDUSTRY GALLERY. PREPARE TO COLLECT.



Gordon Matta-Clark's *Circus or The Caribbean Orange*, 1978, at Rhona Hoffman Gallery



Richard Diebenkorn's *Untitled # 17*, 1989, at Meredith Long & Company

## MOVE OVER, MIAMI

Today's art world mirrors the economy. Big and overblown is out. Edited, meaningful and intelligent is in. And while we love Miami Beach in December — the art, the hoopla, the parties at the largest convergence of art fairs on the planet that circles around Art Basel's main event — what we're seeking now is a significant experience condensed and much closer to home.

Enter Dallas Art Fair, the state's first (and long overdue) national entry into fair mania, but one that's smaller, smarter, infinitely more manageable and

refreshingly tailored to Texans who want to connect with important dealers while avoiding the frenzy of Art Basel Miami Beach. The time for civilized has arrived, returning to what a fair should be about — that "wow" encounter with art, hopefully followed by its accompanying acquisition.

Kudos to the hometown co-founders, independent art dealer Chris Byrne and real estate guru John Sughrue (Dallas Museum Tower partner and CEO of Brook Partners), for launching the boutique-sized Dallas Art Fair, which unfurls this month at Fashion Industry Gallery, Friday through Sunday, February 6 through 8. While we have spring's annual CADD Art Fair organized by the Contemporary Art Dealers of Dallas plus previous insertions of contemporary art into an antiques fair, surprisingly this is the first ever national art fair to happen in Texas.

While Houston has labored for years to put one into action, Dallas boldly stepped forth and realized it. Presenting sponsor Moët Hennessy USA and patron sponsors Neiman Marcus, Rosewood Hotels & Resorts and Sotheby's bring savor fare to this fair, while an insider-y preview fête the night before (benefitting Booker T. Washington School for the Performing and Visual

Arts) adds buzz. The fair also boasts symposiums to whet your art smarts. Headliners include: international curator Klaus Kertess; L.A.-based critic Michael Duncan, organizer of the Texas Biennial; Dick Solomon, Pace Prints honcho and three-time Art Dealers Association of America president; and Rebecca Hoffberger, founder-director of Baltimore's American Visionary Art Museum.

But what we like best about DAF is the *quality* of its offerings, as well as its dealer diversity — across geography, media, time periods and collecting fields. The 31 gallerists from 12 cross-continental art hubs — New York, Baltimore and Boston to Chicago, St. Louis, L.A. and San Francisco — possess strong, tantalizing stables stocked with talents not often seen in Texas. This intimate convergence also offers personal encounters with a range of respected dealers — a privilege seldom available amid the mayhem of Miami Beach.

Here are our picks for the fairest of the fair.

### DARING DARGER

We've read about **Henry Darger** (1892 – 1973) but never seen his works outside the American Folk Art Museum in Manhattan. This strange Chicago visionary filled his 15,000-page *The Story of the Vivian Girls* with hundreds of watercolor-collage paintings depicting hermaphrodite girls in battle. Visit **Andrew Edlin Gallery**, which represents the artist's estate, to see Darger's fantasy world first-hand.

### KEHINDE CAN

Chicago doyenne **Rhona Hoffman Gallery** is known for her legendary, of-the-moment stable, including art-star painter **Kehinde Wiley**, who depicts hip-hop heroes and other African-Americans in Baroque poses. Also investigate late conceptual master's **Gordon Matta-Clark's** pioneering merging of architecture and photography.

### RESPLENDENT RAFFAEL

The Technicolor watercolors of **Joseph Raffael** are among the best of show at **Nancy Hoffman Gallery**. These riotous works on paper defy the usually subtle medium and reflect the New Yorker's love for his adopted home in Antibes, France.

### PACE SETTER

**Pace Prints**, the graphics arm of the Pace Gallery empire, rolls out its big guns, including the quirky, often disquieting **Kiki Smith** and the grand master of Pop and portraiture, **Chuck Close**.

### WEGMAN AND FRIENDS

While **William Wegman** is best known for casting his pet Weimaraners in leading roles, the artist's oeuvre is much wider-ranging. One of his original dealers, **Texas Gallery**, showcases Wegman's inventive latest: droll oil paintings improvised on postcards.

### DELIBERATE DIEBENKORN

Consummate blue-chip dealer **Meredith Long & Company** packs its fair fare with a range of 19th- and 20th-century greats. Watch for an architectonic 1989 crayon, pencil and gouache on paper by West Coast master **Richard Diebenkorn** alongside contemporary offerings by **Kenneth Noland** and **Donald Sultan**, plus 19th-century luminaries **Mary Cassatt** and **George Inness**.

### BAVINGTON OR BUST

Santa Fe's best stop for today's important art, **James Kelly Contemporary**, brings voices such as Brit-born Las Vegas painter **Tim Bavington** (a fave of pundit Dave Hickey), whose large-scale, candy-hued striped canvases sample soundtracks and musical scores.

### CONFECTIONARY TALES

The painter with the sweet tooth, San Francisco's epic Pop master **Wayne Thiebaud**, is recommended at **John Berggruen Gallery**. The booth is also worth perusing because this West Coast gallerist stocks Bay Area painters from the grand abstractionist **Richard Diebenkorn** to senior realist

**Robert Bechtle**, plus important historic figurative painters **Elmer Bischoff** and **David Park**.

### TWOMBLY TIME

While known as one of **Donald Sultan's** main dealers (his "Wallflowers" series is on view through March 7 in her Chelsea space), Manhattan's **Mary Ryan Gallery** also carries such treasures as a classic **Cy Twombly** lithograph from 1970, alongside early 20th-century British and American works on paper and prints.

### NOTEWORTHY NOLAND

At Upper East Side Manhattan mainstay **Leslie Feely Fine Art**, post-painterly abstractionist **Kenneth Noland** unveils expansive, '60s-era horizontal canvases that still seem ahead of their time, while his recent targets tip toward the future. Another highlight here: **Frank Gehry's** design models — crumpled forms fashioned from felt, fabric, paper and string that reveal his creative process.

### MAN OF METAL

**John Chamberlain's** latest, flowering metallic blooms fabricated from painted and chromed steel, hold court at **Anthony Meier Fine Arts**, a respected San Francisco dealer whose stable also packs **Jim Hodges**, **Tony Feher**, and Texan **Matthew Sontheimer's** obsessive little drawings.

### HOMETOWN TEAM

Let's not overlook our Dallas denizens, **Dunn and Brown Contemporary** and **Valley House Gallery & Sculpture Garden**. The former fostered international talents such as two-time Whitney Biennial-exhibited **Trenton Doyle Hancock**, while the latter showcases notable painters such as rising Fort Worth star **Sedrick Huckaby**, classicist **Barnaby Fitzgerald** and **Lilian Garcia-Roig** (whose exquisite odes to nature are concurrently on view at the gallery). Also, place these fellow Texas dealers on your radar: Fort Worth's stalwart **William Campbell Contemporary** and promising Austin gallerist **Lora Reynolds**, who trained in New York and London before opening in the capital city in 2005.



William Wegman's *Red Bench*, 2008, at Texas Gallery



Wayne Thiebaud's *Donuts and Cupcakes*, 2005, at John Berggruen Gallery

Daily tickets from \$20, including symposium admission; [dallasartfair.com](http://dallasartfair.com)