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**11th ANNUAL SOFA NEW YORK FAIR
DRAWS RECORD OPENING NIGHT ART FAIR ATTENDANCE**

**MORE TOP TIER SALES TO ART COLLECTORS
WITH MUSEUMS SHOPPING TOO**

NEW YORK. The 11th annual Sculpture Objects & Functional Art Fair, best known as SOFA, at the Park Avenue Armory May 29 -- June 1, 2008 achieved unparalleled sales and crowds. With 2,600 packing the Opening Night party on May 28, Armory officials reported the crowds were largest ever for any art fair on their historic premise. Total attendance was 16,100.



The Galerie Besson booth at SOFA NEW YORK 2008

"While we knew from the recent spate of contemporary art auctions, the pulse of the market was feverish, we were a bit taken back that a similar frenzy of buying marked our 11th edition Opening Night festivities," said **Mark Lyman**, founder of the SOFA fairs in Chicago and New York, and vice president of dmg Art & Antiques which also owns and produces the prestigious Palm Beach fairs (www.ifae.com), among others. "Dealers reported solid attendance on the floor throughout the weekend and a considerable number of new collectors from here and abroad."



Hiroshi Suzuki
Aqua-Poesy
Silver 999
Clare Beck at Adrian Sassoon

"Astonishingly successful," said **Adrian Sassoon** of the eponymous London-based gallery. "This fair was really terrific." Sassoon said that most of the hand-hammered silver and gold **Hiroshi Suzuki** pieces sold including *Aqua-Poesy* going for \$155,000 on Opening Night. The largest piece on his stand, **Kate Malone's** ceramic *Succulent Mother Gourd*, sold for \$57,000. He observed that people in America wanted to buy the biggest and the best objects. "Clients from the financial world...filled the floor Opening Night," said Sassoon.

Dealers and management reported financial and corporate figures from **UBS, HSBC, Chubb, and AXA Fine Art** Insurance attending. Key leaders in the design world such as **John Barman, Holly Hunt** and **Suzanne Lovell. Geoffrey Bradfield** and **Betty Sherrill** of the legendary **McMillen Inc.** were shopping. And curators and trustees from more than a dozen national and international fine art museums including the **Museum of Modern Art** and The **Los Angeles Museum of Contemporary Art** were spotted Opening Night.



Guest in the browngrotta arts booth during the Opening Night Preview



Jack Lenor Larsen at the Designer Breakfast, Thursday May 29.

The excitement continued the next day with an invitation-only **Elle Décor** and **Cowtan & Tout** sponsored Designer Breakfast at which **Jack Lenor Larsen** spoke on his design inspirations, his career and **LongHouse Reserve**, the museum and sculpture garden in East Hampton, NY. Prominent designers such as **José Carlino** from **David Easton, Ronald Bricke** and **Joanne De Palma** attended, shopping at the fair before it officially opened to the public at 11:00 am.

Exclusive **Salon SOFA VIP events** enjoyed full attendance throughout the weekend and 450 persons attended six Lecture Series presentations on Thursday in the venerable Tiffany Room, helping to further establish the SOFA fairs as being on the forefront of what is happening in contemporary arts and design. View SOFA National Designer Committee list at sofaexpo.com.



Attendance was strong for each of The SALON SOFA lectures.



The work of Mihara Ken at Joan B Mirviss Ltd

"The level of interest and caliber of the visitors, has been higher than ever," said **Joan B. Mirviss**, New York, whose stand featured the work of **Mihara Ken** which sold out (one piece was bought by **Los Angeles County Museum of Art** and another by **Yale University**). "If we had double the amount of his work, we would have sold them all." Mirviss also said that there was a good balance between well established and new dealers, as well as the media represented on the floor.



Lauren Kalman
Tongue Gilding
Represented by Sienna Gallery

"Exceptionally strong sales," said **Douglas Heller** who heads up the Manhattan based Heller Gallery. His sales of glass artistry included a number of Venetian maestro **Lino Tagliapietra** vessels up to \$52,000 each.

Art jewelry sales were exceptionally brisk. **Sienna Patti** of Sienna Gallery, Lenox, MA said, "This is the best fair I've ever had." Patti noticed a younger crowd on Opening Night. She also reports that the Museum of Arts &

Design purchased pieces by **Gesine Hackenberg** and that a private collector bought pieces by **Lauren Kalman** for the **Museum of Fine Arts, Boston**.

Stefan Friedemann of Ornamentum, Hudson, NY said, "There's a steady stream of buyers." Friedemann added excitement to Opening Night by staging a catwalk through the fair by models wearing **Dan Jocz's** motorcycle jewelry.



Lino Tagliapietra
MANDARA HG5713
Heller Gallery



Models wearing motorcycle necklaces during Opening Night Preview

TOP SALES INCLUDED:



Red dots on all four of the figurative ceramic sculptures by **Akio Takamori** at New York's venerable **Barry Friedman's** stand indicated an Opening Night sell-out.

Pictured at left: Akio Takamori,
Sitting Mother in a Blue Dress and Baby, 2008
Barry Friedman Ltd



London's **Galerie Besson** reported strong sales of Spanish artist **Claudi Casanovas'** rugged ceramic block sculpture.

Pictured at left: Claudi Casanovas,
Large Open Form, 1992
Galerie Besson



Moderne Gallery, Philadelphia sold a 1978 oak Music Stand by **Wendell Castle**.

Pictured at left: Wendell Castle,
Music Stand, 1978
Moderne Gallery



Joanna Bird Pottery, London, reported a major sale of a large scale stoneware pot mixed with industrial waste by Chilean **Fernando Casasempere**.

Pictured at left: Fernando Casasempere,
Green Sculpture, 2008
Joanna Bird Pottery



Jane Sauer of Santa Fe sold *Isadora* of lotus pod tops, yellow cedar bark, sharlyn melon peel & waxed linen to the **Racine Art Museum**.

Pictured at left: Jan Hopkins,
Isadora, 2007
Jane Sauer Gallery



Leslie Ferrin, Pittsfield, MA said their big sale was **Chris Antemann's** *Lust and Gluttony*, purchased by the **Museum of Arts & Design** for inclusion in their opening show in September at MAD's new home at 2 Columbus Circle.

Pictured at left: Chris Antemann,
Lust and Gluttony, 2008
Ferrin Gallery



Donna Schneier, a private dealer from Palm Beach, reported excellent secondary market sales. "We had a very good show, selling top pieces by **Michael Lucero, Toshio Takeazu, and Adrian Saxe.**"

Pictured at left: Michael Lucero,
Pre-Columbus
Donna Schneier Fine Arts



Loveed Fine Arts, New York sold *Night and Day*, 1991 by the late Rudy Autio.

Pictured at left: Rudy Autio,
Night and Day, 1991
Loveed Fine Arts/New York

Lucy Lacoste, Concord, MA summed up the dealer experience at SOFA NEW YORK 2008: "This has been a beautiful show for us... We sold well across the board, including a number of significant works and multiple purchases. We are happy!"

Mark Lyman said, "Plans are well underway for the 15th Anniversary edition of SOFA CHICAGO, November 7 – 9 at Chicago's historic Navy Pier, with Opening Night on Thursday, Nov. 6. Save the date!"

View art sold and images from SOFA NEW YORK 2008 in the Live Updates section on sofaexpo.com.



Guests at the Opening Night Preview

Special thanks to Barefoot Wine for its generous support of SOFA NEW YORK 2008 Opening Night.

