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Trends

Standing out from the crowd

Experts impressed by the well-curated and coherent booths

LONDON. *New York Magazine* art critic Jerry Saltz, of recent US reality show "Work of Art" fame, traversed Frieze on opening day, jotting his observations in a small black notebook. Saltz was among the judges for the Frieze Stand Prize, a £10,000 award courtesy of Pommery champagne. "I don't need a lot of glitz," says Saltz. "I'm interested in the inner life, where I can look at objects and have an internal experience." London dealer Sadie Coles HQ (C15), who represents artists ranging from Urs Fischer, Elizabeth Peyton and Ugo Rondinone, took this year's top prize.

In a fair with 173 exhibitors (plus the 25 in the newer, younger Frame section), the offerings can overwhelm, and ferreting out the good from the bad can flummox even the pros. We went to the experts—Saltz among them—to find out what makes a stand-out stand.

Overall, Saltz was impressed with the fair. "Most of the stands are not big, messy, sprawling, come-what-may installations," he says. "About 85% are well-curated, complex exhibitions. There's not a lot of bling, but you can see dealers are trying to make sales."

For some, a clear presentation is paramount. Architect Zaha Hadid said she prefers an orderly booth that is "cohesive and coherent. Architecture can help



The Gladstone Gallery's (D7) large sculptures made an impact

to organise the messiness, but it all depends on what you exhibit." Others respond to a bold composition, gravitating to stands they remember after the fair has ended. Roselee Goldberg, founder of New York's performance art festival Performa, appreciates stands with "lots of drama and physicality", she says. "I think about how we get to look at the work, how we approach it, and there has to be some pleasure when you come out the other end." Among her favourites: Gladstone Gallery's (D7) array of large-scale sculptures.

Curators bring a studied eye to the fair, attuned to the nuances of thoughtful juxtaposi-

see a point of view, a lingua franca of the gallery."

Collectors focus on practical matters. Noted New York collectors Susan and Michael Hort, whose holdings are known for emerging artists, are annoyed by stands lacking wall labels. A hallmark of a good stand, in their view, provides an opportunity to get familiar with new names. "If you are looking at new artists, you gotta have more than one," said Michael Hort, who said he needs several works to get a handle on artists he is not familiar with. "It takes courage to show two or three artists instead of seven, but if you really want to show your artists off, you need more examples." The Horts cited two stands at Frame—Lisa Cooley (R3) and James Fuentes (R16)—as among their favourites, both solo shows for young artists.

Some fair-goers also rank décor as key. "You are taking a chance if you furnish your booth because everything is being scrutinised," says Sarah Medford, executive editor of *Architectural Digest*. She liked Sadie Coles' 1930s table and schoolchairs, and Paul Kasmin's (F1) Mathia Bonetti cabinet, which the gallery commissioned for use at fairs.

And what doesn't make for a good stand? Saltz, who is not known for his stature, admitted: "I get nervous at White Cube (F15). All the women are six-and-a-half-feet tall and wear heels for ten hours at a clip," says Saltz. "That is the art world we have just come out of." Saltz, who said Frieze is his favourite art fair, gets the last word on what makes a good stand: "If it makes me feel I am not in a showroom, but I am."

Lindsay Pollock