

FT WEEKEND

Plus *Stephen Sondheim has Lunch with the FT*

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Energised by youthful chaos

Jackie Wullschlager reports on the emerging talent at this year's Frieze

"If everything's blue chip, it becomes kinda dull," dealer Larry Gagosian told me on the eve of Frieze. He was talking about his own empire – blue-chip artists spiced up with a few less tested talents – but his words echoed through Regent's Park. For though there are fresh works to die for by established figures – Alex Katz's shimmering white, flat, mint-cool portrait of his daughter-in-law, "Walking", at Thaddaeus Ropac; Zhang Enli's vertiginous, lyrical, grid painting of green leaves on pink, "Sky Number 5", at Hauser and Wirth – without the lightness of being and self-mocking energy of its younger players, Frieze would sink under its own success.

Most resoundingly popular of these is Simon Fujiwara, whose fabulous intervention "Frozen", a fake excavation of a decadent art-crazed ancient city, has made him the outstanding new name of 2010. Frieze rarely facilitates such break-throughs, yet a pleasure this year is several mini solo shows of quietly confident, emerging artists in their 30s.

Lesley Vance featured in the 2010 Whitney biennial but is new to London. Los Angeles gallerist David

Kordansky is showing a dozen smallish oil-on-linen compositions whose pressured, wet, long, heavy strokes fold in and out of each other, creating abstract forms of terrific sculptural density.

Sombre colours – browns, blacks, greens, occasional lemon or pink – and a backlit, inner luminosity recall 17th-century Spanish still-life painting, which Vance cites as an influence. Kordansky mentions "a European vibe to the work", though Vance plays tradition at one remove: she photographs items such as rocks and shells then works from the image, abstracting, compacting: a cerebral riff on still-life history.

In method, abstract/figurative tension and the acceptance that all imagery is filtered second-hand, Vance shares much with

English painter William Daniels, showing at Vilma Gold and Mark Foxx. His taut, silvery paintings evoke vanitas motifs, in an art of fake excavation as delicious as Fujiwara's. Daniels works by making

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laborious constructions, sometimes his own designs, sometimes based on Old Masters, from cereal packets, masking tape, torn paper; he then depicts his models in oil on board, eliminating figural elements to emphasise form, light and shadow.

Another maker of deliberately antiquated models is Marcel Dzama, born in Winnipeg and a rising international star. David Zwirner's installation of his wooden and glass dioramas peopled with elaborately drawn, cut out balletic paper figures and a graphite scroll featuring naked dancers brandishing revolvers, medieval jesters and chess pieces, is a mixture of charm and horror, caught conceptually between Bosch and Duchamp. "Later the Delights of Damnation Will Be More Profound" is the title of Dzama's society whirl: surely a portrait of Frieze itself.

At Frame, the fair's chaotic youthful section, the single opportunity for reflection is at James Fuentes, exhibiting New Yorker Jessica Dickinson's pared-down abstractions, mostly monochromes in blues, turquoises, pale grey, white. Building thin washes of paint over plastered grounds, erasing, scrubbing, sanding, re-painting or working in delicate gouache, pastel and graphite, Dickinson is concerned with surfaces and how we read traces of mark-making. Her rootless works are classically American, bringing to mind painters from Ad Reinhardt to Agnes Martin but also the skimming, endlessly changing patterns of screen life, the 21st-century's visual backcloth.



'Untitled' (2010) by William Daniels

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