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Art Basel in Miami Beach 2023
News

Women come to the fore at Untitled Art fair

An inclusive curatorial theme sees works by older female artists snapped up

Anny Shaw

6 December 2023

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Jacqueline Utley, *Hidden daughters* (2022)
Courtesy: Niru Ratnam gallery

Reports of increasing gender equality in the art world have rarely, if ever, been matched by the data. But sales from the opening day of the Untitled Art fair on Tuesday reveal that 67% of works reported to be sold were by women artists.

The results are not altogether surprising. This year the fair took steps to cultivate a more inclusive platform through its curatorial theme, “gender equality in the arts”, with nearly 60% of all exhibiting artists and 35% of gallery owners identifying as female or non-binary.

At several galleries, older women are having their moment in the sun. The London dealer Niru Ratnam is showing three female artists from different generations, including the British painter Jacqueline Utley, who has only returned to painting now that her children are grown up.

Ratnam believes there is a “suspicion” among collectors when it comes to older female artists: “They might not have had solo shows with other galleries; there’s no precedent, there’s no algorithm,” he says. “You really have to trust your eyes; the same goes for us as gallerists.” On the opening day, Ratnam had sold two paintings by Utley (prices range from \$2,000 to \$6,000).

At its all-female booth, the Miami gallery Emerson Dorsch is showing several works by the US painter Elisabeth Condon, including one lattice piece inspired by the wallpaper of her childhood home (prices for her work range from \$2,000 to \$40,000). Gallery co-owner Tyler Emerson-Dorsch says Condon chose to embrace these motifs in her art rather than suppress them. “That’s what I love about women over 50; they are more inclined to say ‘fuck it, this is who I am!’”

Making its physical debut is Victoria Miro Projects, an online venture that the London dealer launched in January 2022 to showcase artists outside of the gallery’s stable. (Victoria Miro is also showing at Art Basel in Miami Beach.) Known for her large-scale installations at the Venice Biennale, Whitechapel Gallery and Frieze art fair, the British artist Emma Talbot is showing two domestically sized paintings on silk at Untitled (prices range from £16,000 to £20,000; one sold on the opening day).

Talbot has spoken openly about how bringing up her children as a single mother (her husband died in 2006) has affected her career. She broached the theme in her online presentation with Victoria Miro Projects earlier this year, noting that some paintings alluded to “the fictional protective world or galaxy of two that a mother imagines for a newborn”. The two works on show in Miami, *Nine Lives* (2023) and *Signs* (2023), deal with themes of magic, superstition and protection.

Art Basel in Miami Beach 2023

Untitled Art

Women Artists

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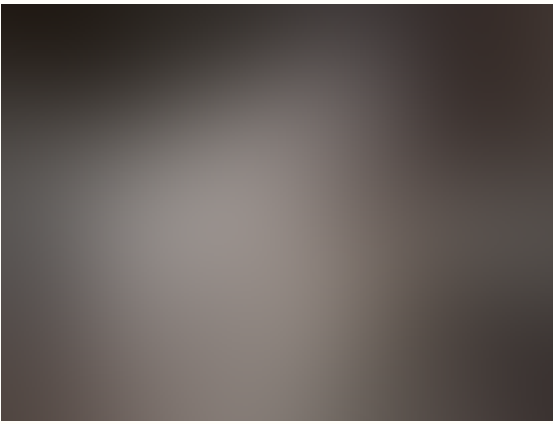
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