

VENUS

MANHATTAN

Munro, Cait, "Independent Projects Hosts a Winning Mix of Galleries," *Art Net News*, November 6, 2014.

artnet[®] news

If you think November in New York is all about the auctions, think again. The Independent, a well-liked Armory Show satellite fair, has launched a spinoff called Independent Projects, opening with a vernissage tonight and continuing until the 15th. Touting booths from big-name galleries like Gagosian and David Zwirner, it's sure to capture the attention of seasoned collectors. And thankfully, it's a cut above the average art fair, more akin to a large, peppy gallery show.

So why the second fair? After five years of operating during Armory Week, Independent co-founders Elizabeth Dee and Darren Flook decided they wanted to build on the inclusive yet quality feel they have so deftly mastered with the original fair. Sensing a hole in the market and a desire from both artists and fellow gallerists for another platform to support their practices, they decided perhaps one fair a year was no longer enough.

"It makes sense that if we were going to expand our activity, which is a natural growth process, that we would do it in our city, and perhaps just take it a step away from being aligned with other fairs," Dee told artnet News. "And if we want to expand the concept of the exhibition within the fair, which is our core concept, it made sense to make that point a little more focused by developing a project where it was in Chelsea, in a space where it can truly be viewed as an exhibition."

"If you look at the exhibitor list, there's some overlap [from March] but it's really a whole new network," she continued. "If we were going to be here during the week of auctions, we should represent that in terms of who we are inviting. So that's why you see Dominique Levy or Skarstedt, who are not primary market galleries, but secondary market who are doing museum quality exhibitions."



Similarities to its Armory Week predecessor abound, including the Chelsea location, the high level of attention paid to curation, and some of the participating galleries. But it's certainly not the same. By mixing the secondary market with both emerging and established primary market galleries, Independent Projects achieves a textured feel that would be hard to strike during a big fair week. It's refreshing to see the behemoths like Gavin Brown and Venus Over Manhattan next to smaller, newer outfits.

Like any good art fair, there's a few strong conversation pieces (to give people something to Instagram, of course): Haroon Mirza's captivating sound installation for Lisson Gallery; John Giorno's incisive word art at Max Wigram, and David Medalla's foam fountain for Venus Over Manhattan seem to be prime contenders.

Of course, like any art fair worth its weight in Twitter followers, this one comes with a custom hashtag: #indyprojectsnov. Tweet away.

Independent Projects will run until November 15, 2014. It will remain after as an art show for an undetermined period of time.

- Cait Munro

