

BY PATRICIA MORA



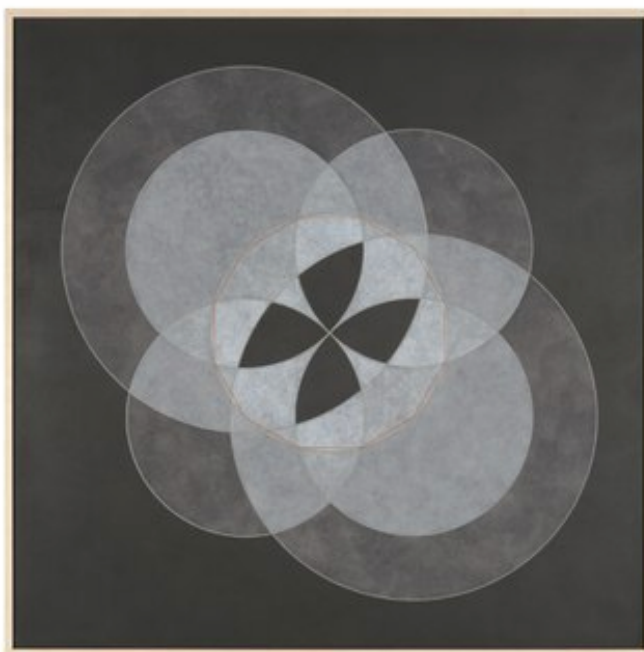
## THE BIG PICTURE

WITH A WEALTH OF TALENT, FROM ESTABLISHED ARTISTS TO FUTURE STARS,  
LOOK NO FURTHER THAN THE DALLAS ART FAIR FOR INSPIRATION AND HIGH-STAKES ART.

Dallas and Fort Worth are broadly envied for their unfettered economic optimism. After turning the area into an impressive hub of commerce with the completion of a sprawling airport in 1973, an already thriving economy became impervious to the torque of economic downturns. Upscale neighborhoods have never seen a shortage of luxury cars or haute couture—and, apparently, the city-as-cash-cow motif holds true for a booming art market. If you're looking for optimism in challenging times, you need only speak with Dallas Art Fair Co-Founders John Sughrue and Chris Byrne.

A well-spoken and elegant frontman for the fair, Byrne occupies an office behind Stephan Pyles's eponymous restaurant on Ross Avenue. He states that the Dallas Art Fair—still rapidly growing a mere five years after its inception—has steadily gained traction. Not only are there stellar galleries from all over the U.S. participating in the 2013 iteration of the fair, but there is also a special emphasis on both emerging artists and a burgeoning international scope. Says Byrne, "We're bringing in four galleries from the U.K., two from Paris, two from Italy, one from Japan, and one from South Korea. They're coming here for a reason. Everyone keeps their eye on Dallas because it's a vibrant center with important collectors and collections." Apparently the city's sky-high stacks of cash and serious buyers make good on the promise of an outstanding market for both art dealers and collectors. In Texas vernacular, the city has both "hat and cattle." It delivers on the notion that Dallas offers a robust venue for high-stakes art being shown and sold in an increasingly skyrocketing art market. Any naysayers (they are few and far between) should take heed and get on the lucrative bandwagon. The 2013 fair is making it easier to determine what artists are hot and what works are likely to morph into blue-chip items in prospering art portfolios.

Here's your chance to get the inside scoop from nationally recognized experts in diverse locations. While all the collectors offer impressive work, Byrne selected some experts on what's happening in the field of emerging artists. In other words, this is as close as you'll come to a crystal ball. Here are a few gallerists offering insight that is likely to be especially prescient:



Above: Christopher Badger, *Geometric Construction of Antiquity*, 12, 2012, chalk on panel, 62 x 62 in., Jessica Silverman Gallery, San Francisco. Opposite: *Study for Circuit Board #2*, 2012, laser-sculpted acrylic paint on canvas, 11 x 11 in., Thomas Solomon Gallery, Los Angeles.



## JESSICA SILVERMAN

SAN FRANCISCO  
[JESSICASILVERMANGALLERY.COM](http://JESSICASILVERMANGALLERY.COM)



Dashiell Manley, *object study (self-titled)*, 2012, gouache, ink, watercolor, canvas, wood, glass, and transparency film, 60 x 36 in., Jessica Silverman Gallery, San Francisco.

The West Coast city known for morning fog that burns off in the afternoon shines more brightly thanks to Jessica Silverman's gallery on Sutter Street. Moreover, Silverman lights up enthusiastically when talking about both the Dallas Art Fair and the city hosting it. She notes, "Dallas is certainly on the radar of curators, collectors, and dealers. It's a community that likes to learn and stay informed. In 2013 we plan to exhibit three or four artists, including Dashiell Manley and Christopher Badger. I think collectors in Dallas will be excited to learn about both of these new artists. Also, here's a roster of names I think Texas collectors—both novices and experts—should watch: Barbara Kasten, Alice Channer, Florian Schmidt, Ben Schumacher, Talia Chetrit, and Hayal Pozanti."

Silverman is known for representing up-and-coming and mid-career artists and comes from a background in fine art. In fact, her initial gallery was launched from her own working studio and subsequently grew into an influential powerhouse on local, national, and international levels. While Silverman may be a native New Yorker, her entrepreneurial spirit makes her a perfect candidate for becoming a new and welcome addition to Texas's art world cognoscenti.

## JAMES FUENTES

NEW YORK  
[JAMESFUENTESGALLERY.COM](http://JAMESFUENTESGALLERY.COM)

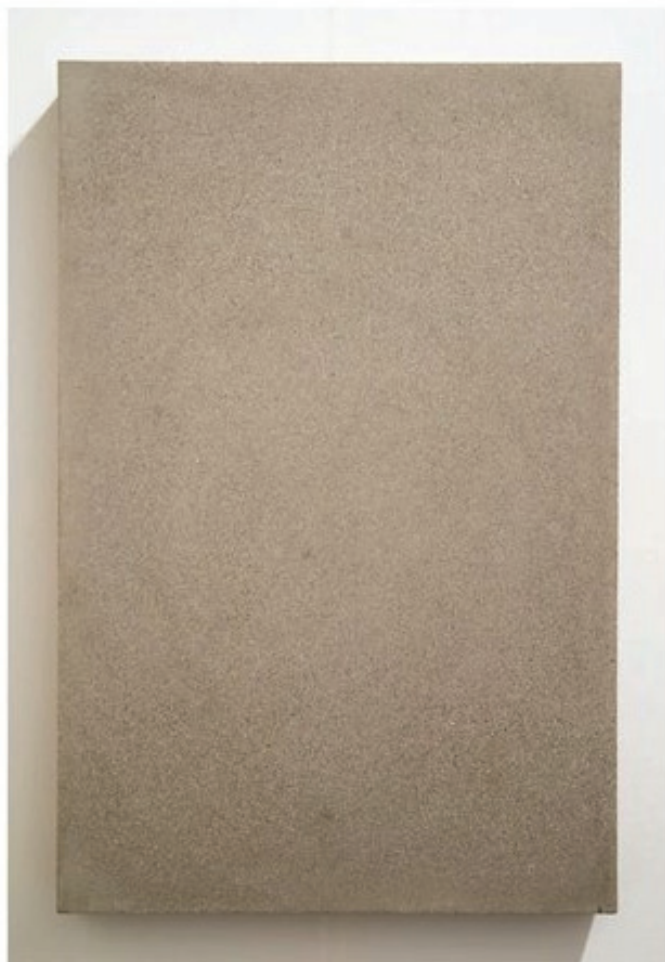
Although James Fuentes is located in New York, he confesses, "I've been working with collectors and advisors in Fort Worth and Dallas for years. It is the most welcoming environment in the U.S. It is far more collegial and pleasant than other fairs. Basel, Switzerland, and New York are extremely competitive. Dallas, however, engenders a nice and highly unique sense of community. People obviously pay attention to Dallas because there are so many active and important collections in the city." Fuentes specifically looks forward to introducing area collectors to two specific artists: John McAllister and Berta Fischer. The latter produces spiraling or streaming shapes out of unusual materials, including acrylic glass and polyethylene foil. Fuentes adds, "I think these are two exceptional talents that will appeal to Dallas collectors. Plus, this is my first year at the fair and I'm particularly excited about conducting business there."



Berta Fischer, *Molki*, 2012, Acrylglass (gryn), 14 5/8 x 29 7/8 x 27 1/2 in., James Fuentes Gallery, New York.

## THOMAS SOLOMON

LOS ANGELES  
[THOMASSOLOMONGALLERY.COM](http://THOMASSOLOMONGALLERY.COM)



Analia Saban, *Slab Foundation #7*, 2012, concrete on canvas, 30 x 24 x 2 3/4 in., Thomas Solomon Gallery, Los Angeles.

Located in Los Angeles, Thomas Solomon Gallery represents work in a broad range of media, an attribute that will be splendidly conveyed during his presence at the 2013 fair. He states, "I expect to present a very strong group of artists and work that shows a diversity of media and generations. However, there will be a theme that ties the work together in an interesting way." Solomon enthusiastically lauds the cutting-edge nature of art in Dallas and cites the Nasher Sculpture Center, the Rachofsky Collection, the Goss-Michael Foundation, and Dallas Contemporary as preeminent epicenters of contemporary art.

He is especially enthusiastic about the work of Analia Saban, an artist from Argentina who works and lives in Venice, California. Says Solomon, "She has recently shown at the Hammer Museum in a group show titled *Made in Los Angeles*. She makes hybrids of painting, sculpture, photography, and drawings. Her work pushes subjects with a unique perspective. In fact, she constructs and deconstructs ideas and materials unlike any other artist working today."

Solomon also exhibits unabashed enthusiasm about the art venue in Dallas. He says, "Watching the innovative and unique way people collect art in Dallas has been mind-blowing—historical as well as contemporary art, diverse in quality and scope, are bought and displayed in ways that are unparalleled anywhere in the world. Also, Dallas's museums and passionate collectors continue to make leaps of faith. Collecting art of its own time is difficult—but it sends a message. It tells the international art world that DFW is a community that is serious and knows how to collect with depth and knowledge." In addition to an abundance of praise, Solomon adds a note about the transformative nature of art: "Collecting art is a way to give back to the culture. Living with art is a privilege and a great pleasure. It makes us smarter and wiser. And it makes the community a better—even happier—place." At this juncture, one has to ask if the role of art could be described more eloquently than what Solomon offers? His observation is penetrating and succinct.





Top: Michelle Grabner, *Untitled*, 2010, flashe and black gesso on canvas, 80 in. diameter. Bottom: Tony Matelli, *Arrangement*, 2012, painted bronze on wooden pedestal, approx. 14 x 14 x 64 in., courtesy of the artist and The Green Gallery, Milwaukee.

## JOHN RIEPENHOFF AND JAKE PALMERT

MILWAUKEE  
THE GREENGALLERY.BIZ

Jake Palmert makes many astute observations, one of which is that Dallas is comparable to Chicago with regard to its situation in the art market. He notes, "It's outside the major hubs of New York and the West Coast. But it has very good institutions and an interesting and active audience. The DMA, the Contemporary, the Nasher, Goss-Michael, and the Power Station are structured very differently, but each of them is nicely orchestrated." Palmert adds that Chicago has much less of a communal feeling than does Dallas and, additionally, he observes, "The collectors in North Texas are great. They're focused and they work with excellent consultants." Palmert also lauds Byrne for curating a terrific group of artists for the fair. He states, "All the galleries are top-notch and it's a chance to meet both collectors and fellow gallery owners in an unusually friendly environment." Palmert is especially enthusiastic about bringing the work of Tony Matelli to the fair. "He's had shows in Berlin, Denmark, and Russia and has been in New York for a long time, but he's under-appreciated and under-represented. Also, Michelle Grabner is very exciting to watch. She's an artist, teacher, and curator and I think she's one of the more engaging artists to follow."

As Green Gallery co-partner John Riepenhoff says, "We plan to bring quality fresh art to Dallas and place it in good hands there. We look forward to meeting other gallery owners from around the country and the world and, of course, meeting private collectors. I'm enthusiastic about Swiss artist Tobias Madison, who's been very active in Zurich and Basel. He's had major shows in Europe and is gaining traction in the States as well." Riepenhoff is especially interested in cultivating new artists who consciously use their art to build and contribute to their own art scenes. Those artists include Margaret Lee, Nicholas Frank, Kerstin Brätsch, Emily Sundblad, and Matthew Higgs.

## LISA COOLEY

NEW YORK  
[LISA-COOLEYGALLERY.COM](http://LISA-COOLEYGALLERY.COM)

Lisa Cooley and her husband are both natives of Texas, and those deep roots give her a unique perspective with regard to the Art Fair. She is proud of her long history with the area and says, "In the last 15 years I've spent a lot of time in Dallas and Fort Worth. Both the Modern in Fort Worth and the DMA are very important to me. Museums aren't able to grow and do the exquisite things they do without avid collectors." She adds that she's acquainted with what it's like to live in a city that's not a central hub for art, like New York or Los Angeles. Cooley notes, "The psychology is different when there's less to go around. Commitments really stand out. It makes me want to go to Dallas and be there and build relationships. It's a very personal motivation."

She also notes that North Texas offers an atmosphere that's very different from other fairs. "There's nothing worse than having no one come by and talk to you. It's like a special brand of existential punishment. But Dallas—and especially Chris—is very hospitable. It's a huge difference because of little things. They bring peach iced tea to the exhibitors. Small things like that make a huge difference and gives personality to the whole experience," she adds.

Cynthia Daignault is one artist Cooley is particularly enthusiastic about introducing at the fair. Plus, according to Cooley, Dallas is poised for tremendous growth and, in fact, she compares the metroplex to the remarkable explosiveness of Miami years ago. Cooley adds, "I don't want to sound immodest but we really

do have one of the best young galleries in the city." She refers, of course, to New York.

Consequently, Dallas can be assured it will be squandering its considerable enthusiasm on the best of the best when the Art Fair opens its doors in April. Cooley is one of our own, so to speak—someone who knows the turf as well as anyone. Obviously this bodes well for a fair that's not just a contemporary showstopper in its own right but the beginning of something very, very big. To re-phrase and re-frame a contemporary mantra, "Apathy is not an option." No kidding. Just ask Chris Byrne. He's not just burning the candle at both ends. He's making it shine with such impressive radiance that the international art world will take notice. That's what happens when you bring highly astute gallerists to an art scene that's already thriving and dynamic.

Byrne states, "I really enjoy the fair and all of the concurrent events. For me, they reveal the depth and richness of the arts community and it's great to share a common bond—we're honored that the proceeds from our preview gala will benefit the DMA, the Nasher Sculpture Center, and Dallas Contemporary. The Dallas Art Fair offers a wonderful opportunity for art enthusiasts, both novice and seasoned, to experience the newest work alongside historical pieces, together in the same space." Byrne's enthusiasm is palpable. He exhibits sufficient wattage to light up the entire fair himself. And it's easy to see why. It promises to play a leading role in Dallas's ascent in the international art world. **P**



Left: Cynthia Daignault, *One half of me is yours*, 2012, oil on linen, 40 x 27 in. Center: Cynthia Daignault, *the other half yours*, 2012, oil on linen, 40 x 27 in. Installation view of both works. Right: Cynthia Daignault, *when we say love?*, 2012, oil on linen, 24 x 15 in. All three: photos by Jason Mandella. Images courtesy of the artist and Lisa Cooley, New York.