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In Berlin, a Preview of What's to Come

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Courtesy WENDT+FRIEDMANN GALERIE

Moritz Schleime's paintings at Wendt + Friedmann Galerie's booth, such as "Dirty Nuckie" (2008), were some of the strongest at the fair.

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Photo by Chris Bors

Limited to just 58 galleries, the well-organized fair gave the booths, and the works, room to breathe.

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BERLIN—While the preview for **Art Forum Berlin** was marked by strong sales and large crowds, **Preview**, a smaller satellite fair that ran October 29–November 2, started out rather tame but picked up toward its conclusion.

Now in its fourth year, **Preview** aims to present emerging artists and younger galleries, in an effort to introduce new players into the mix and jumpstart their careers. Its venue, Hangar 2 of Berlin's historic, recently closed Tempelhof airport, lends itself well to the goal. Limited to just 58 galleries — 29 of which were from Germany and 16 from Berlin — the well-organized fair gave the booths, and the works, room to breathe.

"I've done 18 fairs and this is the most well thought out," beamed **Lynn del Sol** from New York's **Creative Thriftshop**, who also confessed a newfound love of Berlin. The gallery started off strongly, selling three pieces during the October 29 preview, including the sculpture *Money Makes the Man* (2006) by **Guerra de la Paz** for "just under \$10,000" and **Jack Balas's** *Susan Sontag* (2008) from his "Muse/Museum" series for \$2,000.

Priska Juschka from New York also reported successes, though in her experience "there were not many American collectors, and it was a very German affair." She was sharing a double booth with **Galerie Baer** from Dresden, which allowed her to show larger installation work, such as American artist **Jade Townsend's** sculptural installation *Of Alchemy, Dreams and Revolution; Ticking Like a Fucking Bomb* (2007), which sold to a European collector for €4,500. German **Theo Boettger's** raw, expressionistic oil on canvas *Echo* (2008) sold for €2,400, also to a European.

Miami's **David Castillo** was showing a series of bright, garish sculptures by Mexican-born **Pepe Mar** made from a collage of paper and found materials that resembled postmodern voodoo dolls. He also presented an attention-grabbing painting by American **Andrew Guenther** and sculptures by American **Wendy Wischer**. Nothing had sold at the preview, but on Friday Castillo sold Wischer's *Angels & Ancestors* made from cast plaster wrapped in metal and covered in Swarovski crystals for €7,000, an untitled Wischer sculpture for €3,500, and an untitled Pepe Mar work for €4,500 — all to American collectors.

Fair newcomers **Wendt + Friedmann Galerie** from Berlin, now in operation for three years, reported seeing collectors from both Europe and the U.S. in the early hours of the fair, though by the end of the preview they hadn't made any sales. Still, they offered some of the strongest paintings from any booth: young Berlin artist **Moritz Schleime's** wild, complex, oil-on-canvas paintings *Dirty Nuckie* (2008) and *Yuppie Du!* (2008).

Dealer **Kevin Kavanagh** from Dublin had a solo presentation by **Karin Brunnermeier**; the best work there was the sculpture *Hansi-Nummer (Ring Clown)* (2007), depicting the body of a small clown being crushed under a large steel hoop. Although it had not sold during the preview, it was one of the more memorable works at the fair.

Q Box gallery from Athens, Greece, offered American artist **Heide Fasnacht's** graphite drawings of explosions, priced at €7,000. *Bombing* (1998), *Burst* (2000–2001), and *Mayan Volcano* (1998–2008) evoked the post-9/11 world, where terrorist attacks are conducted around the globe weekly, whether in Iraq, India, or elsewhere. Fasnacht will be having a solo exhibition at Q Box in May.

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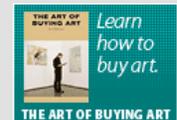
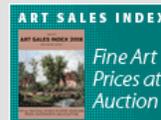
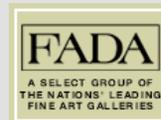
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THE FAIR'S PREVIEW SAW HIGH ENERGY, LOTS OF SALES, AND PLENTY OF BIG COLLECTORS, ALTHOUGH MOSTLY EUROPEAN ONES.

For better or worse, collectors often like to see an artist's resume to judge if a work is worth buying, even though it's not a true litmus test. **Mixed Greens** from New York devoted an entire booth to artist's resumes, but they were actually ink-on-handmade-paper drawings by American artist **Joan Linder** of the resumes of prominent female artists **Louise Bourgeois**, **Mary Kelly**, and **Suzanne McClelland**. The gallery reported three of the smaller works from the series sold for \$1,500 at the preview. A pricier work in the series, *Louise Bourgeois* (2008), valued at \$16,000 for four pages, would be a nice acquisition if you're not bourgeois enough to afford an actual Bourgeois.

As at Art Forum Berlin, the moneyed Russian and Asian collectors making waves at recent auctions seemed to be absent from Preview. It was their loss: They could have found plenty of cutting-edge work at an event that had all the atmosphere of the top-tier fairs, without all the frenzy.

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