

GLADSTONE GALLERY

Nate Freeman, "Booths at Art Basel Miami Beach Take On Trump as Art World Reacts to the Election Results," *ARTnews*, November 29, 2016

ARTNEWS

BOOTHS AT ART BASEL MIAMI BEACH TAKE ON TRUMP AS ART WORLD REACTS TO THE ELECTION RESULTS

BY *Nate Freeman* POSTED 11/29/16 1:51 PM



Rirkrit Tiravanija, *The Tyranny of Common Sense Has Reached its Final Stage*, 2016.
MATTIA DE LUCA'S INSTAGRAM/GAVIN BROWN'S ENTERPRISE

At first glance, there's little sign of any political unrest here on the sun-dappled, palm-lined streets of Miami Beach, where the art world has decamped for this city's edition of Art Basel. On the opening night, there was a rosé-soaked picnic at the Standard Spa, an opulent ribbon-cutting at the Faena Forum, and a party for an art advisor on a yacht. While the art cognoscenti still in New York were protesting Ivanka Trump at the Puck Building, those already in Miami were trying to distract themselves from the political reality by having cocktails at the Versace Mansion.

But when Art Basel opens tomorrow at the Miami Beach Convention Center, some booths will jolt fairgoers back into reality, as *ARTnews* has learned that there will be a larger number of overtly political works than what's usually presented at this particular fair, which is often a frenzy of shopping for the big-ticket, market-tested stalwarts.

And while galleries usually plan out their booths months in advance, sending out feelers to collectors to see how much of the work can be pre-sold, some have decided to rip up the script at the last minute and comment upon this month's shocking election that vaulted Donald Trump to the presidency. Gavin Brown's Enterprise, for example, will feature work by Rirkrit Tiravanija that was actually *made* after the election, as well as work by Jonathan Horowitz, who hosted a debate viewing at the gallery in September.

It's rare that work at an art fair is made in the same month that it's held, and the Tiravanija work will make its immediacy known. It is one of his works that places gigantic block text on pages of newspaper laid out on a large canvas, and in this case, the newspaper is the *New York Times* on the day after the election, with the headline screaming "TRUMP TRIUMPHS."

(The front page of the paper is actually second in line on the canvas, when looking at the work left to right. The very first slot is given to a full-page ad for the new Netflix series *The Crown*, and the ad copy reads, "The reign begins.")

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The text that Tiravanija has placed upon the *Times* is just as direct—it reads, “The tyranny of common sense has reached its final stage.” The quote is taken from remarks that architect Aldo Van Eyck made to the Congrès International d’Architecture Moderne in 1947, and it’s already been used by Tiravanija for another, more modest work. After a talk the artist did with curator Hans Ulrich Obrist and Albanian prime minister Edi Rama at Marian Goodman on 57th Street earlier this month—which occurred as the gallery’s block was on lockdown by police and Secret Service protecting Trump Tower from protestors—Obrist loaded onto his Instagram an image of a Post-It note drawn by Tiravanija and Rama. Scrawled on the Post-It is “The tyranny of common sense has reached its final stage,” with the words coming down from a crudely drawn Trump Tower.



Jonathan Horowitz, *American Gothic*, 2002-2010.
COURTESY GAVIN BROWN'S ENTERPRISE

One of the works by Jonathan Horowitz in Gavin Brown’s booth may have been made over a decade ago, but it too resonates: *American Gothic* (2002–10), a version of the Norman Rockwell Thanksgiving scene with the title scrawled atop it in blood-red lettering. It was last shown at the gallery as part of a re-staging of Horowitz’s “Go Vegan” exhibition at Greene Naftali in 2002, and when Brown installed it in his gallery, it hung inside a former meat locker. The switch-up comes just two weeks after Gavin Brown, in a similar move, pivoted his post-election Rob Pruitt show at his space in Manhattan’s Chinatown, abandoning plans to show work that began as an Instagram series comparing art world figure to celebrities. Instead, the gallery showed Pruitt’s portraits of President Barack Obama—in a durational performance, Pruitt has awoken each morning since the president’s inauguration in 2009 and painted a new portrait based on a recent image.

P.P.O.W. didn’t alter its booth in the wake of the election, but co-founder Wendy Olsoff said the work there will “resonate, and have a lot more urgency” now. She pointed particularly to a piece by Martin Wong from 1988, of the Statue of Liberty crying, which Wong made in the aftermath of Tiananmen Square, and to paintings by Betty Tompkins that incorporate words used to describe women.

There are also David Wojnarowicz’s famous pictures of buffaloes, works about cultural extermination and the denial of certain groups of people, which she said would look relevant to the Trump election but also the Standing Rock protest.

Olsoff recalled walking through Art Basel Miami Beach in December 2010, when she’d just found out that a work by Wojnarowicz was being censored from his posthumous exhibition at the Smithsonian in Washington, D.C. “I remember walking through this fair—I was doing another fair in Miami at the time, called Seven—and thinking that no one knew what was happening [with Wojnarowicz’s work in D.C.]. There was very little political art [in the fair].”

This year, it’s a different story at Art Basel Miami Beach, she said.

“You are seeing much more [political art] now. Artists will respond.”

Alexander Gray Associates is inflecting its booth—and its booth-within-a-booth, under the banner of the fair’s Kabinett sector—with a pointed political bent. It’s showing paintings and drawings by Joan Semmel in the main booth, and while the decision to devote the booth to her was made before the election, Gray said the result has made it more poignant to see renderings of the aging female body in the nude—“without pantsuits, that’s for sure,” Gray said, referencing the item of clothing most closely associated with the former Democratic candidate.

“This election resonates deeply, and Joan was devastated when we spoke after the election,” Gray went on, speaking over the phone. “After the election, there is an added importance to giving real visibility to female artists, which took on urgency—especially a *female*figuration of an aging female body.”

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In his Kabinett booth, Gray has work by Hugh Steers, including one striking depiction of a gay couple embracing underneath an American flag. Though chosen before the election (and before the U.S. president-elect angrily tweeted about how he would throw flag-burners in jail for exercising their free speech), the image is sure to resonate on a higher level given the political situation, Gray said.

Elsewhere, the Metro Pictures booth will have one of Robert Longo's black-and-white politically charged works, this one of the five St. Louis Rams players who walked onto the gridiron doing the "hands up, don't shoot" pose to protest the shooting of Michael Brown in nearby Ferguson. And Susanne Vielmetter Los Angeles Projects sent out a note to its clients last week stating that, in response to the election, "We are now, more than ever, committed to focus on and to defend the values that this gallery was founded on." At the gallery's booth, there will be Karl Haendel's *Hillary Clinton* (2016), a portrait of the former Secretary of State made before the election.

And, in case anyone forgot exactly where we were, dealer José Freire—who, at his booth for Team Gallery, will be showing a number of artists including Banks Violette, who has a graphite drawing proclaiming "legalize crime"—uploaded to Instagram this morning a post he tagged, cheekily, #abmb2016. It's a map of the election results in Florida by county, showing Miami as a spot of blue in a sea of red.

Sarah Douglas contributed reporting.

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