

# What Sold at Art Cologne



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*Installation view of KÖNIG GALERIE's booth at Art Cologne, 2016. Photo courtesy of Art Cologne.*

The 50th anniversary edition of Art Cologne closed on Sunday, following five days of steady sales at the Koelnmesse. The art market is experiencing a global slowdown, at pace with the macroeconomic environment at large, and getting used to a new normal of sorts. Sales across fairs this year have been tempered in comparison to the past few, and slower to actualize. But for the sage Art Cologne, this new normal is more of an enduring and unceasingly successful status quo. The world's oldest art fair is, as ever, a slow and steady affair, with notoriously discerning German collectors disliking the pressure to purchase a piece within the first few hours of a fair. They come in droves—more than 60,000 people visited the fair last week—and they look, but many purchases come towards the fair's end or even months thereafter.

“It's the perfect fair for collectors to buy art because they don't have to decide if they will buy a piece within the first hour or two,” said Galerie Thaddaeus Ropac Salzburg's executive director Dr. Arne Ehmann.

“Overall, it's a different time in the market than three or four years ago. You can really feel that the collectors are taking their time to make a decision,” he continued, noting that the loyalty of the Rhine region's collectors to Art Cologne is what keeps dealers coming back. “German

collectors are so important for us. And they come back to this fair every year.” Though they noted that sales weren’t quite as fast-moving as in past years, the gallery sold a large solvent transfer by Robert Rauschenberg, *New Yoicks (Spread)* (1980) for \$1.55 million on the first day to a private collector from the U.S. Other sales included two sculptures by Antony Gormley for £350,000 and £150,000, respectively, and works by Marc Brandenburg, Georg Baselitz, and Erwin Wurm, who will represent Austria at the 2017 Venice Biennale.



Installation view of Galerie von Vertes's booth at Art Cologne, 2016. Photo courtesy of Art Cologne.

Zurich's Galerie von Vertes was the only other dealer to report breaking into the seven figures, having sold a painting by Joan Miró for over €1 million. Six-figure sales were relatively more prevalent, with Art Cologne Prize winner Galerie Thomas selling, among other works, a work by Alexej von Jawlensky for €220,000; Galerie Remmert und Barth selling Paul Klee's watercolor *Die Idee des Habns* (1918) for €270,000; Eigen + Art selling a painting by David Schnell for €140,000; and Pearl Lam selling Chun Kwang Young's *Aggregation 11 - AP030 Blue and Red* (2011) for €160,000.

Pearl Lam managing director Harriet Onslow reported that the gallery's repeat attendance at Art Cologne had brought forth this year's success. "It's the second year we've done the fair. Last year wasn't very good at all, but we have a three-fair rule," said Onslow. "This year has been quite good." The gallery is the only exhibitor based in Asia at what the director aptly characterized as "a very European fair," and it is still in the process of gaining exposure for its artists in the region. However, works by Pino Pinelli and Yuan Zuo were also reported as sold—for €17,000 and €20,000, respectively—by Friday evening.