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Art Market

What Sold at Frieze London and Frieze Masters 2021

Veena McCoolle Oct 18, 2021 1:27pm   



Oscar Murillo (b. 1986)

(untitled) ethics & aesthetics, 2020-2021

David Zwirner

Contact for price

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On October 13th, Frieze threw open the doors to its tents in London’s Regent’s Park and ushered visitors into the Frieze London and Frieze Masters fairs, with booths from 276 galleries representing 39 countries. The annual showcase—highly anticipated after a virtual fair in 2020 due to COVID-19—reported strong sales, especially towards the beginning, with some booths selling out within hours of opening to VIPs.

Frieze London’s artistic director Eva Langret said the pandemic had impacted the fair’s booking protocols and logistics, but had not interfered with the spirit and the DNA of Frieze. “It is so exciting to be back in the tents in Regent’s Park to see art in real life together again,” she said. “This fair has been two years in the making, and it was two years worth of bottled-up energy that came out with a big pop on the opening day.” Given the uncertainty during the planning process, Langret added that it “wasn’t written in the stars” that this year would live up to its high expectations, describing the fair as one of Frieze’s most successful yet.

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Virginia Overton

Untitled (double void), 2020

White Cube

US\$50,000–US\$75,000

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Dealers emphasized the undeniable energy of the fair, driven by a high caliber of international collectors and the opportunity to reunite with colleagues from around the world. Independent curator and art advisor Claudia Cheng commented on the fair's "prevailing spirit of diversity and inclusivity," noting that women artists of color in particular drove sales at established and emerging galleries alike. She also emphasized the impact of Frieze on London more broadly, noting that the outdoor sculptures in Regent's Park helped to widen accessibility and bring the city together. "Frieze feels like an international fair," she added, "but also a London affair."

Gina Beavers, *Chou Chou Matte Lip*, 2021. © Gina Beavers. Photo by Charles Benton. Courtesy of the artist and Marianne Boesky Gallery.

There was much to celebrate and take in beyond Regent's Park. Frieze opened No. 9 Cork Street, its new gallery hub in Mayfair that provides international galleries with monthly residencies to showcase exhibitions in the U.K. A little further afield, the 1-54 Contemporary African Art Fair made its long-awaited return to Somerset House. And Christie's, Phillips, and Sotheby's all held their major contemporary art sales, resulting in a slew of smashed auction records.

The Frieze tents, meanwhile, were abuzz all week, from emerging galleries' booths in the "Focus" area of Frieze London, to [Skip to Main Content](#) –a section curated by Cédric Fauq featuring works meditating on the undoing of the world.

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Mona Hatoum

+ and -, 2021

White Cube

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**Antony Gormley***TEST II*, 2017

White Cube

£30,000–£40,000

Global galleries and industry heavyweights reported overwhelming interest from the opening moments of the fairs' preview days (according to Clare McAndrew's "The Art Market 2020" report, galleries make some 15% of their fair sales before the fairs actually open). Notable sales by major galleries at Frieze London included the following:

- White Cube sold Mona Hatoum's kinetic sculpture *+ and -* (2021)—a central attraction in its booth—for £175,000 (\$240,000). Other notable sales included works by Antony Gormley for £400,000 (\$550,000); a Virginia Overton sculpture for \$60,000; and Isamu Noguchi's bronze sculpture *Squirrel, 1984* (1987) for \$60,000.
- David Zwirner sold a Kerry James Marshall painting for \$2.2 million to a major American collection, which director James Green described as "a testament to the collector level engaging with the fair." The gallery also sold all five Michaël Borremans paintings in its booth, each for prices between \$180,000 and \$300,000; and all three paintings by Oscar Murillo on offer, priced at \$300,000 each.

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Robert Longo, *Untitled (Arctic Wolf)*, 2019. Courtesy of the artist and Pace Gallery.

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Loie Hollowell, *The breastfeeding talk (Cambria and Loie)*, 2021. Courtesy of the artist and Pace Gallery.

- Thaddaeus Ropac reported 18 sales on the first day of the fair, including Antony Gormley's nearly 800-pound cast-iron sculpture *WATER II* (2018) for £400,000 (\$550,000), and Georg Baselitz's painting *Zimmer mit Dusche* (2021) for €1.2 million (\$1.4 million) to a private museum in Berlin.
- Pace Gallery's sales included Robert Longo's large charcoal drawing *Untitled (Arctic Wolf)* (2019) for \$650,000 to a private U.K. collection, and Loie Hollowell's mixed-media piece *The breastfeeding talk (Cambria and Loie)* (2021) for \$175,000 to an [Skip to Main Content](#) um. And ahead of Latifa Echakhch's solo show at Pace's London gallery in March 2022, her work *Sun Set Down (diptyque 01)* (2021)—made from acrylic paint, concrete, vinyl, and fiber on canvas—sold for €150,000 (\$174,000).

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President Trump, which described the fair as a “catalyst moment,” with collectors
“seeking out outstanding caliber.”



Charles Gaines

Numbers and Trees: Palm Canyon Watercolor Series 3, Set 4, 2021

Hauser & Wirth

While major galleries with prime booth locations captured visitors’ immediate attention, serious collectors found their way to the full range of booths, including those of smaller and mid-size galleries from a variety of regions. New Delhi–based gallery Nature Morte had a sprawling installation featuring dozens of Tanya Goel’s “Botanical Studies,” but buyers inquiring about them at the end of the first day learned they had all been sold.

“After such a long period of lockdown and people being afraid of socializing—or not socializing at all—I was surprised at how many people came,” said Rakeb Sile, co-founder and director of Addis Fine Art, which exhibited in the “Focus” section of Frieze London. “It’s been great to speak with collectors that haven’t seen our program before, as well as those who have been following us for a while.”

Sales highlights from small and mid-size galleries at Frieze London

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Merikokeb Berhanu, *Untitled LIX*, 2021. Courtesy of the artist and Addis Fine Art.

- Addis Fine Art, which simultaneously had a booth at 1-54, sold out its “Focus” presentation on the first day of its Frieze debut. The solo booth of works by Ethiopian-born artist Merikokeb Berhanu featured prices between £8,000 and £22,000 (\$11,000–\$30,000), with three works going to institutions.
- Xavier Hufkens sold several Tracey Emin works, including the large bronze *There was so much more of me* (2019) for approximately £350,000 (\$481,000) on the second day of the fair; two neons priced in the range of £100,000 (\$137,000) each; and five gouaches priced between £20,000 and £35,000 (\$27,000–\$48,000). Other notable sales included works on paper by Paul McCarthy and Louise Bourgeois, priced around \$200,000 and in the range of \$100,000 to \$250,000, respectively.



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- London-based Lisson Gallery’s solo booth devoted to Garrett Bradley marked the premiere of her film *AKA* (2019), the first in a trilogy of films about relationships between women. The gallery sold an edition of the film to a private institution for \$35,000.
- Marianne Boesky Gallery nearly sold out its solo booth of works by Gina Beavers on the first day, with pieces ranging from \$20,000 to \$60,000.

Across the park, Frieze Masters saw steady activity stretched across the entire week. With a generally slower cadence of sales, dealers in the Masters booths were more reticent about disclosing details of works sold and buyers’ identities. Many reported being in serious conversations with prominent collectors, and hoping to place major works before the end of the fair.

Nathan Clements-Gillespie, the artistic director of Frieze Masters, highlighted in his introductory remarks the fair’s diversity of presentations, ranging from old books to medieval sculpture, Egyptian antiquities to Old Master paintings. A new section at the fair, dubbed “Stand Out,” united disparate objects across eras and media; it was curated by Luke Syson, director and curator of the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge, England.

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Obiora Udechukwu

Mourning Family, 1972

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Sold



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Deborah Roberts

True believer, 2020

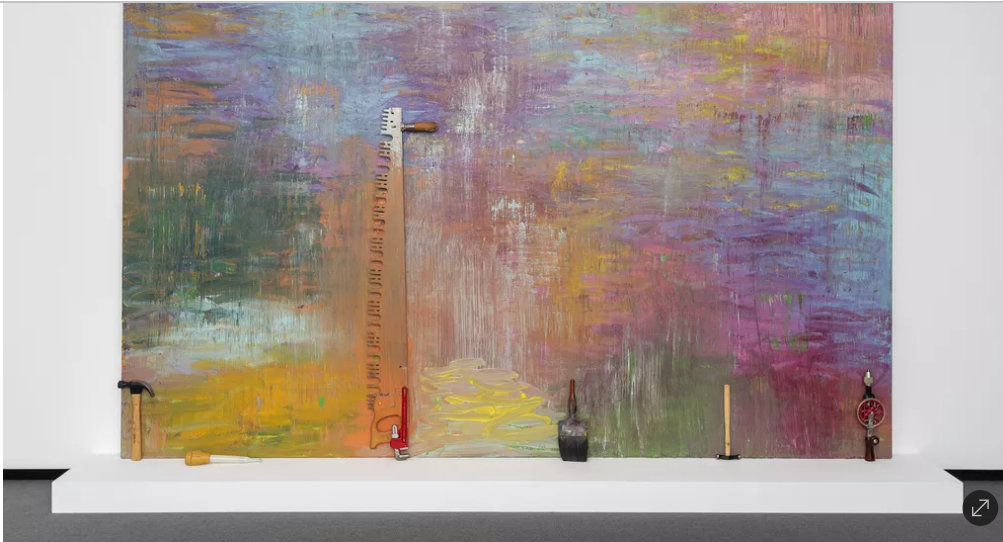
Stephen Friedman Gallery

Contact for price

Notable sales from Frieze Masters included the following:

- Stephen Friedman Gallery (which also sold out its Frieze London solo booth of works by Deborah Roberts) sold a work by Jirō Takamatsu and a work by Anne Truitt from its Frieze Masters booth, where prices ranged from \$35,000 to \$2 million.
- Paris-based Galerie Templon debuted at Frieze Masters with a solo booth of works by American artist Jim Dine, selling sculptures and paintings in the range of \$75,000 to \$350,000, including Dine's acrylic-on-wood sculpture *Venus on Chair* (1993).
- London's Robilant and Voena sold a Pablo Picasso drawing priced at around €500,000 (\$580,000) and a Giosetta Fioroni painting priced at nearly €100,000 (\$116,000).

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- Lagos-based kó reported selling one oil painting and three works on paper by Nigerian artist Obiora Udechukwu, which were acquired by Tate through the Tate Gallery Frieze Fund.
- David Zwirner sold works by Ad Reinhardt, Josef Albers, Paul Klee, and Yayoi Kusama, priced between \$500,000 and \$1.1 million.
- Tristan Hoare and Lyndsey Ingram—two London-based galleries that collaborated on their first physical presentation at Frieze Masters—exhibited early works by Ellsworth Kelly alongside pieces from Kim Yikyung’s “Moon Jars” series, the latter of which were all sold in the £15,000 to £20,000 (\$21,000–\$27,000) range.
- Berlin- and London-based Bastian Gallery sold a painting by A.R. Penck with an asking price around £300,000 (\$412,000) and a painting by Ulrich Erben priced around £80,000 (\$110,000).

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Obiora Udechukwu

Twin Heads 1981

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**Deborah Roberts***Delilah, 2021*

Stephen Friedman Gallery

Contact for price

- Dr. Jörn Günther Rare Books sold a selection of books of hours priced between €600,000 and €1.3 million (\$696,000–\$1.5 million), and placed two significant books by Albrecht Dürer with private collections.
- Thaddaeus Ropac sold a work by Emilio Vedova for €600,000 (\$696,000) and a Robert Mapplethorpe print for \$14,000.

While the international art crowd departs to Paris for the FIAC fair and major auctions beginning later this week, Londoners can still enjoy Frieze's new outpost on Cork Street, with its monthly rotation of exhibitions and future programming under the purview of newly appointed director Selvi May Akyildiz.

“Between our fairs, membership, digital programming, and this new space, this is what the new Frieze looks like,” said Langret. “We’re thinking about new models for art and how we can connect our galleries with our audiences, and No. 9 Cork Street is a product of that.”

Veena McCoole