



janvier 2018

ROBB REPORT SINGAPORE MAGAZINE

p. 111

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**THE ART ISSUE**

Robb Report

**FIVE TAKEAWAYS**



From left: Jeanne by Jean-Luc Moulene (foreground) and Still Life (Mermaid's Purse) by Wolfgang Tillmans; humorous drawings by David Shrigley.



**PARIS IS BACK**

Paris is no longer viewed as a city to avoid. Jennifer Flay, director of the FIAC, noted that an important Australian collector mentioned that he would come to Paris for the FIAC. The energy and enthusiasm at the latest FIAC were palpable and hadn't been witnessed in years. With that being said, the art market has slowed down and some medium-sized galleries in France have shut their doors, but more so in Berlin, London and New York. Flay told *The Art Daily News*: "The gallery market is following in the footsteps of auction market sales with 20 per cent less volume. We are going through a natural correction, yet business is being made in all fields, including emerging art... The overall slower

pace of the market still allows for success stories."

**OUTDOOR & OFFSITE ITINERARY**

Never has the FIAC presented so much art outside of the Grand

**The energy and enthusiasm at the latest FIAC were palpable.**

Palais, with over 70 artworks in public spaces in 2017, including at Place Vendome, Eugene Delacroix Museum and Centre Pompidou. Almost 30 sculptures and architectural pieces were scattered throughout the Tuileries Garden,

including Folkert de Jong's trio of patinated bronze statues of Henry VIII at different stages of life and Gilles Barbier's giant red die in thermo-coated aluminium set against a rock Avenue Winston Churchill was temporarily pedestrianised again with artworks by the likes of Jaume Plensa, Pablo Reinoso and Barry Flanagan, and a highlight in the Petit Palais garden was the 8 Gods series of partially or totally veiled antique and sacred figures in glazed stoneware by Johan Creten, a pioneer in the revival of clay in contemporary art.

**RETURN OF DESIGN**

The FIAC was the first contemporary art fair to exhibit works of design in 2004, but stopped six years later because it

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couldn't host them under the right conditions. Thereafter, Flay wished to bring design back via the 10 best galleries in the world. In the end, five internationally renowned, 20th- and 21st-century French design galleries – Jousse Entreprise, Kreo, Laffanour-Galerie Downtown, Eric Philippe and Patrick Seguin – displayed their wares in the latest edition in a new 300sqm exhibition room, giving the impression of being in a collector's apartment. By associating dance, music, poetry, theatre, cinema, architecture and now design with the visual arts, the FIAC encourages dialogue between diverse artistic disciplines.

### FRENCH TOUCH

Although the French art market only makes up three

### The FIAC encourages dialogue between diverse artistic disciplines.

*Mirror Balloons* by  
Jeppe Hein  
Inset:  
*Moon Howlers*, by  
Ragib Shaw.



per cent globally, and no French contemporary artist figures among the top 100 dominating the global market in terms of earnings from public sales, France still fights, defends its artists and obtains results revenue-wise. The FIAC gambled its reputation on the "French touch", with French galleries accounting for over one-quarter of the exhibitors.

### REFURBISHMENT PLANS

After its 2020 edition, the FIAC will move to a temporary location in central Paris until 2024, while the Grand Palais undergoes renovations, which include expanding its exhibition space. The 2024 version of the FIAC is likely to welcome 20 or 30 more galleries and larger booth sizes. [www.fiac.com](http://www.fiac.com)

