

springtime in... los angeles?

PARIS PHOTO, PHOTOGRAPHY'S MOST PRESTIGIOUS ART FAIR, BYPASSES NY FOR LA. BY ANDREW MYERS

mages, literal and figurative, have long been part of LA's Big Picture. But with the inaugural Paris Photo Los Angeles, striking a pose April 26-28 at Paramount Studios, the city comes one click closer to being not only a global capital of arts creation but a vital marketplace for the fine arts as well.

What focused Paris Photo-the 17-year-old fair held annually in November that is arguably Europe's most important for work created "in the photographic medium"-on Los Angeles as opposed to, say, Manhattan, the well-established market mecca and a much shorter plane flight from Paris? Answer: a collusion of both location, location, location, and zeitgeist.

"LA is a creative hub with an amazing history in visual arts," says Julien Frydman, the fair's director, drawing a timeline from artists Man Ray to Ed Ruscha to Doug Aitken to illustrate how Los Angeles rejuvenates contemporary culture's understanding of images. "It is a city that questions the language of images, and specifically photography," he continues,

underscoring LA's coming of age as an "undisputed" international art capital by pointing to its collage of private and institutional collectors (LACMA and The Getty, in particular), galleries, working artists, and art schools, as well as the city's proximity to the Bay Area and relative proximity to Asia and South America (the former being the art market's current holy grail).

The catalyst, however, turns out to have been "Pacific Standard Time: Art in L.A. 1945-1980," the massive interinstitutional arts initiative celebrating postwar art in LA and spearheaded by The Getty. "The creative energy of the city, celebrated by 'PST,' convinced me to open a new fair,"

Then there's Hollywood, which as the maharaja of the globalized motion picture industry makes LA especially exciting to Frydman. "There is a need to get out of the ghetto and to reconnect still and moving images," he says, explaining how old borders between traditional categories have continued on page 78

HOTTEST TICKET





continued from page 76

diminished and how artists are incorporating photography into their practices. "We want to embrace the richness of artistic productions."

Toward that end, Paris Photo Los Angeles's debut will take place at Paramount Studios, where the approximately 80 local, national, and international galleries participating in the fair will exhibit in at least one or more of the fair's four sections. The New York Street back lot will host in the neighborhood of 20 solo shows (one gallery per "set"), and a nearby moving images section will showcase works in video by historical and contemporary artists. "From the soundstage to the New York Street back lot, or The Sherry Lansing Theatre, we are using various components of the Paramount studios to make the experience unbeatable," says Frydman. Additionally, independent curator Douglas Fogle, a former chief curator and deputy director of exhibitions and public programs at the Hammer Museum, will organize a series of special screenings of video and photo-based installations, contemporary moving image works, and talks as part of its Sound and Vision programming.

"The location at Paramount is really interesting," says Philip Martin of LA's Cherry and Martin gallery, who is both an exhibitor and a member of



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-PHILIP MARTIN



comprised of local and international dealers. "I am excited about an investigation of

image generation in a place of image generation," he adds, explaining that he too is interested in the blurring of the still versus the moving image. "We represent younger artists like Brian Bress, Erik Frydenborg, and Amanda Ross-Ho, all of whom are intimately concerned with photographic practice, and none of whom consider themselves 'photographers.' That's

Ultimately, however, after all the artistic, academic, and mercantilistic perspectives are explored, perhaps it's pure aestheticism that best promotes the new fair in the City of Angels, stemming from and coordinated with a fair in the City of Light. As Frydman says: "So autumn in Paris, spring in Los Angeles." Fade out. LAC

the fair's five-member selection committee

76 LA-CONFIDENTIAL-MAGAZINE.COM