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## LONDON DISPATCH

by Laura K. Jones

Now that the seventh edition of the Frieze Art Fair, Oct. 15-18, 2009, is over, I don't know what to do with myself. The mini-world-in-a-tent in Regent's Park, and its myriad ancillary events that made up what I'd call "Frieze Fort-night," have come to an end. The real world truly doth seem stale, flat and just a little unprofitable. It has also just started pouring with rain, when nearly every day of the fair brought with it blazing sunshine. Out in the Frieze Sculpture Park, set up by David Thorp, visitors had basked in the sunlight, the rays of which bounced off Neha Choksi's mirrored A Child's Grove and Louise Bourgeois' silver entwined The Couple that hung from a tree like a caterpillar in a cocoon.

Iwan Wirth of Hauser & Wirth gallery later reported selling The Couple to a European collection for \$3.5 million. From the Sculpture Park, too, Wirth said that Paul McCarthy's Henry Moore Bound to Fail was on hold. The gallery also reported selling everything by 79-year-old New Yorker Ida Applebroog in its booth. A monumental orange painting, MonaL-isa (2009), went for \$350,000. A lot of galleries took a risk and showcased older artists, to great success.

More than 160 top leading galleries from 30 countries showed up, a remarkable global reach. Twenty-nine galleries under six years old made up the new, lively "Frame" section, the single-artist booths introduced this year to freshen up the proceedings. Here, the young Seventeen Gallery from London sold all of the works in its stand by Susan Collis -- objects that look like detritus from a building site but are in fact highly intricate sculptures made from gold, platinum leaf, diamonds, marquetry and intricate stitching. Most "Frame" exhibitors not only reported strong sales but new and welcome interest from international museums.

The atmosphere this year was without a doubt revived, with gallery owners admitting astonishment at the depth of the recovery. Most dealers reported to me sales of between half and all of the works. Gone was the buying frenzy of earlier years. In its place were steady sales and a sense of genuine relief.



“It’s not flat-out as it used to be but it’s a thousand times better than last year,” said Rodney Hill of Los Angeles gallery Marc Foxx on the second day of the fair. “Buyers are being more strategic; they’re taking a little longer to make a decision to purchase, but they’re definitely buying.”

Jake Miller, director of London’s Approach gallery, immediately sold Alice Channer’s *See Thru* (2009), a sweet, slight drawing of a kind of black-and-white polka-dotted möbius strip made with cigarette ash and gouache, to the Outset/Frieze Art Fair Fund -- a £120,000 pot that is put aside each year for four judges to choose new acquisitions for the Tate. Miller also reported strong sales throughout the week.

Mat Collishaw’s “Hysteria”  
The cross-London sprinting started in earnest on Wednesday, Oct. 7, 2009, with Mat Collishaw’s “Hysteria” show, curated by James Putnam specifically for the Freud Museum in Hampstead. It ended with Martin Creed’s ballet, *Work No. 1020*, on Sunday night, Oct. 18, at the Sadlers Wells Theatre in Angel, Islington.

“Hysteria” is the latest in a series of Putnam-curated solo shows in Sigmund Freud’s house, with Collishaw joining a long list that now includes Sophie Calle, Sarah Lucas, Ellen Gallagher, Tim Noble & Sue Webster and Oliver Clegg.

Collishaw is having a renaissance in Europe surely; he’s everywhere again. “Hysteria” includes, as if growing out of the carpet in Freud’s dining room, a number of life-like tree-stump sculptures that are in fact record decks that emit bird song. The grooves in the records are like the concentric rings of the tree.

At the afterparty in Mark Hix’s new restaurant on Brewer Street, Damien Hirst proudly displayed his *SpongeBob SquarePants* t-shirt, blissfully unaware (perhaps) of the unkind and ferocious drubbing he was about to receive in the British press for his “No Love Lost” paintings at the Wallace Collection later that week (about which more below).

The Museum of Everything  
Then came the late-night opening of “The Museum of Everything,” a “VIP affiliate” of Frieze, and Britain’s first space to show works by Outsider Artists, described here as “un-taught art-



Tomomi Sayuda's photocopy of the author's behind, at the Resonance 104.4 FM booth at the Frieze Art Fair



Artist Tomomi Sayuda



Richard Artschwager's *Pianofart* (2009) at Spruth Magers at the Frieze Art Fair



Artist Kim Coleman with her Frieze Project, *Players*, which videotaped actors pretending to be fair visitors, and projected the images inside a tent



At the Frieze Art Fair, the viewing platform for Kim Coleman and Jenny Hogarth's *Players*, a Frieze Project

ists who live or lived outside of modern society" (about two thirds are no longer alive).

Curator and filmmaker James Brett asked David Byrne, Grayson Perry, Nick Cave, Serpentine gallery co-director Hans Ulrich Obrist and others to select their favorite works from his comprehensive Outsider Art collection. The results were phenomenal, sometimes disturbing. Works by Henry Darger, the Rev. Jesse Howard, Madge Gill and George Widener form just a tiny part of this breathtaking exhibition. Brett said "if people come we'll stay open; if they don't, we'll have to close."

The museum should without a doubt be able to stay open indefinitely. Later in the week, the (superb) Art Newspaper daily edition -- free for the duration of the fair -- reported that part of the collection is destined for the Giovanni Agnelli Foundation in the Lingotto -- the former Fiat car factory in Turin.

Speaking of Obrist, he was named head of Art Review's Power 100 list on the first full day of Frieze. When the Art Newspaper asked him how he felt after finding out he'd reached the top spot, he gave an answer that no doubt explains all, viz.: "When I hear about lists, I always think about Oulipo and Raymond Queneau and Georges Perec. Oulipo is a literary group which functions like a permanent research laboratory for innovation and the invention of new rules of the game to produce literature which played with arithmetical ideas. François Le Lionnais, an Oulipo protagonist, emphasizes the importance of the term potentiality, which he prefers to experimental, potentiality meaning the attempt to find something which has not yet been done and which could be realized. This also leads to my obsession for unrealized artist projects and the permanent attempt to make them happen."

Werner Herzog, etc.  
I made a slight departure from fine art at the legendary film director Werner Herzog's talk, where he was asked the question "Was the 20th Century a Mistake?" on stage at the Royal Festival Hall as part of the "Legends Live" series. Psychoanalysis got a pasting, as did yoga, Twitter, MySpace, the "industrialization of mass murder," and not making journeys by foot.

Although Herzog loved Fred Astaire's films, Fred himself had "the most insipid face on God's wide earth."



At the Frieze Art Fair, Kim Coleman and Jenny Hogarth's *Players* projected scenes from the fair on the walls of a tent



Artist Cary Young with her "donor card artworks" at the Frieze Art Fair  
photo by Heiko Prigge



Ryan Gander's *We Are Constant*, a Frieze Project



Ryan Gander's *We Are Constant*, a Frieze Project, with his portrait of author Sarah Thornton



The filmmaker's father didn't come out well either. Paul Holdengräber, director of public programs at the New York Public Library and Herzog's interviewer for the night, asked him what his relationship with his dad was like. Not good, said Herzog. "He fled into his fantasies about writing a monumental and universal study of life. He refused to do a day's work and actually never wrote a single page of that study in his entire life. This haunts me. So much so that when I sit down at the first screening of a film of mine, I say to myself that my brother Lucki must have made it. Someone else has made this film -- I have talked myself into believing it is mine."

Holdengräber reassured him, "It's fair to say Werner, that it was you. You are in fact the person who has made quite a lot of films in your life."

Shoplifter at Trolley Gallery  
The New York-based Icelandic artist Hrafnhildur Arnardottir -- aka Shoplifter -- was invited to "burn" the Trolley gallery in her show "Burn." At the door of the space, visitors were invited to "enter into a ring of fire," or at least what turned out to be a ring of fiery red hair. A black bear rug with a flouncy bouffant hairdo, "a bear with a bad haircut," lay roaring silently on the floor.

For the dinner to celebrate the exhibition, Shoplifter -- obviously keen on hair both real and synthetic -- was wearing a hair cape that she'd made herself, and she'd made a smaller version for Trolley director Hannah Watson. Many a time during Frieze Fortnight did I bump into that caped pair on tube, on bus, on foot, trying to hail a cab, as we attempted to see all the art that was on offer in the city.

On "Burn" night we were served a version of a take on the Brit appetizer Devils on Horseback (prunes stuffed with chutney wrapped in bacon) -- Trolley's very own Devils on Beastback (prunes and black pudding) -- in honor of the vain floored bear. Bottles of Opal appeared, an Icelandic tippie that can only be described as black alcoholic mouthwash. Shoplifter got her nickname when no one, after she first moved to New York, could say Hrafnhildur -- pronounced "Raphilder" -- so they used to say "Shoplifter." (Bit of a leap there?) She told me she has recently opened a new artist residency for Icelandic and Polish artists in the middle of the Polish countryside, with her Polish husband Michal Jurewicz. It is aptly named the Arnardottir Jurewicz Art Foundation.

Sophie Calle, on a quick break from preparing her



San Francisco artist Stephanie Lyjudo's bootleg version of Richard Artschwager's Planofart



Larry X Ball's "Purity" sculptures at the Salon 94 booth at the Frieze Art Fair



Erin Shireff's "Knives" photographs at the Lisa Conley booth at the Frieze Art Fair



Shawn Mellor's "Vile Affections," paintings of bloodied film stars, at the Team gallery booth at the Frieze Art Fair

mammoth Whitechapel Gallery show, turned up and professed her own obsession with hair. She wears Victorian memento mori -- rings made from the hair of the original owners' relatives and loved ones.

Tim Mitchell, Simon de Pury Trolley's other Frieze-week event, running concurrently with "Burn," is Tim Mitchell's temporary installation, a special the carpeting of Arnold Circus, an old bandstand atop of a green island in the East End. The incongruity of the star-shaped geometrically patterned carpet with the recent history of the place -- it's become a meeting point for somewhat feral kids and drug addicts -- was what made We Shall Meet on That Beautiful Shore so strange and beautiful. It was made, said the artist, "to introduce the idea of something like a crop circle appearing overnight."

An unlikely occurrence in early October, but a Father Christmas and his missus turned up the next day and stood at a distance from the installation. No-one knew what he was doing or who he was, but the image will no doubt end up as the gallery's Christmas card.

I was equal parts pleased and bemused to receive a catalogue from the Phillips de Pury auction house with an accompanying letter from chairman Simon de Pury. It reads, "NOW is what counts. In a life where we have a tendency to obsess over our future and dwell on our past, the ultimate talent is to put all our energy and focus on now." An odd accompaniment to a sales catalogue. But perhaps not as odd as the video I found on izo.com, originating on YouTube, of de Pury singing "If I Had a Hammer."

I've asked a Phillips pr rep what this was all about, but no answer was forthcoming. Probably best just to watch it. No more need for words.

Baldessari in London To the first John Baldessari event of the week, his Art Deco-inspired Ear Sofa, Nose Sconces with Flowers (In Stage Setting) (2009), a white and silver tableau vivant in the window of Sprüth Magers gallery that opened on the eve of his retrospective, "Pure Beauty," at the Tate Modern. A girl in a blonde 1940s wig and a tiny white poodle with painted claws and a silver bow on its head sat on the ear sofa. The nose sconces held flowers. The girl read magazines. The dog -- whose name was Pebbles -- looked nervous. "I want to strangle that dog; it's scaring me," said one spectator. Actually, it did look like it was on the wrong side of mania.

So many ears and noses by Baldessari all week, at



Polly Morgan's *Departures* (2009) at All Visual Art's "The Age of the Marvelous" at Holy Trinity Church



David Gryn of Antropix, flanked by Nicholas Abraham (left) and Jeremy Deiler, makers of *The Posters Came from the Walls*, a look at Depeche Mode fans



Laura K. Jones and artist Bruce McLean at Bernard Jacobson Gallery



Alastair Mackie's *Mud Hut* (2005), in "The Embassy" courtesy All Visual Arts

his retrospective, and at Frieze. His Beethoven's Trumpet (with Ear) Opus 133 on the Sprüth Magers stand sold on Frieze Friday for \$400,000.

At the "Pure Beauty" press view the morning after the tableau vivant, I saw plenty of examples of Baldessari's long life making art, laid out and hung admirably. The Tate's accompanying wall text also pleasingly avoids being patronizing. I loved Baldessari's Floating Color from 1972, a series of images of a house with rectangles of color popping out of the top window. Underneath, Baldessari has written, "A majority of my work arises from a single word, a chance phrase, or an overheard comment, or part of one."

This remark made me feel better about choosing (the majority of) the art shows I go to see for pleasure purely because of the name of the artists or the title of the show. A prominent London dealer -- who I'd better not name -- once told me that he did the same thing, but more importantly, that he'd never consider even viewing the work of an artist if they had a bland name. Now that seems unnecessarily cruel.

It was a treat to listen to Baldessari's talk with White Columns director Matthew Higgs as part of the exceptional series of "Frieze Talks" this year. The Sasquatch Santa took some questions from the audience. What's an average day like? "I read the papers and magazines until about 8; I work out from 9 till 10; I'm at the studio until about 6. I try to avoid all the social obligations and then, I'm embarrassed to say, I go to bed at about 9 o'clock."

He was asked why there are so many noses and ears in his work this week. It was partly to do with the fact that his friend used to make the adverts for billboards and give him the left-over lithographs. "That large, a nose or an ear looks incredible. I also couldn't think of any artist who'd painted noses -- so I thought, there must be money in it." He's obviously forgetting Komar & Melamid's (1970s) paintings by the fictional Nikolay Buchumov, a one-eyed realist from the '20s, who painted landscapes in which the artist's nose was inevitably present.

When asked whether he covered up faces in his work with his trademark dots in order to avoid litigation from the owner of or the subject in the image, Baldessari replied, "Possibly later on, occasionally, but when I first started obscuring faces, they were faces I just really couldn't bear to look at."

Later on, Higgs gave the DJ and artist Spencer Sweeney



Michael Lale Taylor's *Black Knight Squared Away* (2007), in "The Embassy"



Sarah Lucas' *Nuds* at 13 Dover Street, organized by Sadie Coles HQ



Jake and Dinos Chapman's *F\*\*king with Nature in "Play"* in an unused mansion across from the U.S. embassy in London



a break, by taking over the decks at Frame's very own "Club Nutz" -- a fully operational recreation of the world's smallest comedy club of the same name, located in Milwaukee, Wisc. It was kept shipshape by the glamorously mad-looking Scott Reeder. In a tiny darkened room, you could get a beer for £4 (free if you told a joke), or watch a screening of Gillian Wearing's *Dancing in Peckham*. At one point, security had to be called to eject a grumpy pissed-up German man who seemed to think he was in a pub off Leicester Square.

It really was "all go" in the Frame section. I'd say Frame was an example of Frieze treating younger, poorer galleries really well. Being supportive but not too intrusive. The kind of parent everybody wants but very few people get.

Ed Ruscha at the Hayward Back outside, the day before at the Hayward Gallery, the retrospective of another titan of modern art opened. An uncannily youthful looking 72-year-old Ed Ruscha, in a pair of trainers, appeared uncomfortable surrounded by film cameras, people with notebooks and his "Fifty Years of Painting" show.

"Thrilling, that is the main word I'd use," said Hayward director Ralph Rugoff when I asked him how he felt about hosting the show. "In 1969 Ed was here as part of 'Pop Art,' then two years later he was in another group show. But it's been a very long time since then. Very much worth the wait." Rugoff then did a formal introduction to the gathered press, and Ruscha took some questions from the audience.

"Do you see yourself as being defined by the West Coast?" asked a man. "Everybody asks that," snipped Ed. "As far as there being a school of thinking emerging from California, I'm missing the point somehow." "Are there any works that you've never shown?" asked someone else. "There's probably a few in the refrigerator," came the drawled reply.

Grayson Perry's tapestry  
Later in east London, at the Victoria Miro gallery, Grayson Perry presided over afternoon tea, a book launch, some macaroons, and the unveiling of his astonishing 15-meter-long Walthamstow Tapestry. Loosely depicting the Seven Ages of Man (albeit man often dressed as woman), and (mainly) rendered in acid-yellow and blue weave, it describes a gruesome scenes of stabbings, hangings, births and drug-takings alongside everyday scenes of doing the laundry and wandering about. Medieval people share the same pictorial space as modern reprobates.



Artist Ed Fornieles giving "art massages" at "Play" in London



Agnes Varda talks to Frieze magazine editor Jennifer Higgie



Two ballets -- Swan Lake and Martin Creed's Work no. 1020



Martin Creed's Work no. 1020, performed at Sadlers Wells Theatre, Oct. 16-18, 2009

It's supposed to represent the "shopping trip of life" said Grayson -- there are brand names sewn all over it. Marks and Spencer, Google, Barclays, HSBC, Wrigleys, MySpace and Gap all get a look in. "Even the Guggenheim Museum is up there, look," said Grayson, pointing. "It's being led by Sotheby's the guide dog."

Perry's dress matched the work. He told me it was his "Jesus dress, don't you recognize him? The blue buttons are there instead of nails." When he introduced the work to the gathered crowd, he said that he'd made the piece because "we needed something to stand in front of to launch my book. I started designing it just before the credit crunch hit. I thought brands. . . I'll do brands. Each brand we come across sets off a little bomb in the brain. Now the tapestry has become the Guernica of Depression.

"One of the great comforting things for me is that life is meaningless," he continued. "The piece is only supposed to be a decorative object. The USP of art for me is visual pleasure -- I'm very pleased with the tapestry -- so much so I hope it ends up in the foyer of a bank."

I love the growly masculine timbre of his semi-depressed statements, emerging as they do from the mask of rouged cheeks and cherry-red lips.

The following day I heard that (Sir) Norman Foster had bought the piece. Has he designed a bank in which it can hang? I'm sure he has. As I was leaving, I asked Grayson if he was looking forward to Frieze. "Yes, I'm looking forward to popping down to our community fête," he said.

Art surgery?  
I heard that, back in June, Grayson, Tracey Emin, Anselm Kiefer, Rachel Howard, Sarah Lucas, Boo Ritson, Conrad Shawcross and Bernar Venet were invited to watch a surgeon perform open-heart surgery at the Harefield Hospital in Uxbridge, Britain's largest specialist heart and lung center. The artworks they created in response were auctioned off at Sotheby's on Saturday, Oct. 17, 2009, to raise funds for the hospital.

"Harefield is a powerful expression of society's love for the individual," said Grayson. His *Urn for the Living* (2009) sold for £58,850, and was acquired by a British collector who will lend the pot to the Harefield Hospital to be put on display there. Rachel Howard's painting *Sacré-Coeur* (2009) sold for £39,650. She said, "I had the most extraordinary day at the Harefield -- my lasting image is the beating of a weak heart exposed by a sawn-through jacked-open breastbone; the extreme contrast between a harshness and a delicacy in a single memory." The total raised for the hospital was £485,000



(\$789,483), significantly exceeding the presale high estimate.

“A Season in Hell”  
A 1,000-strong crowd turned up at the Alison Jacques Gallery for the opening of “A Season in Hell,” a show of Robert Mapplethorpe photographs. In honor of that, Patti Smith, Robert’s best friend, came to play a set in the gallery. As Patti wandered around signing things, sans bodyguards or assistants, the people were screaming with excitement, and some looked asphyxiated, purple-faced and panicky. In the end, Patti had to play on the street. (Well, in the doorway to the street, with the crowd outside on the street.) People were hanging out whooping and cheering from the Sanderson Hotel windows.

Even though the road was blocked for over an hour, the usually over-zealous police of Fitzrovia, surprisingly, didn’t come to break it up. Patti said, “There were only supposed to be 300 of you. You all spawned like tadpoles.

“I know my guitar is out of tune but it’s not used to being outside and I don’t know how to tune it. Some of you asked me to sing this next song but I can only play songs with three and a half chords so I’ll do it a cappella if you’ll join in. Can we sing it? I know it’s stupid; I know it’s embarrassing but if you can join in, I won’t be as embarrassed.” She was talking about *Because the Night Belongs to Lovers*. We all sang it. It was a bit embarrassing. But not toe-curlingly so.

Damien Hirst at the Wallace  
Straight down then to Damien Hirst’s first UK outing of his painted-by-himself canvases, “No Love Lost: Blue Paintings,” at the delicate and lovely Wallace Collection in Hertford House. I’ve commented on these works before, as they did have their first trip out in Kiev at the Pinchuk Art Centre [see “Kiev Dispatch,” May 4, 2009]. They actually look a whole lot lovelier in the context of the blue rooms of Hertford House.

Damien spent £250,000 of his own money refurbishing the walls of the two rooms in blue silk for the Wallace Collection, but nothing could stop the catty, horrific coverage he got in all of the following day’s national press. I hope he’s OK. He’s quite a tough nut of course, but some of the comments were rather harsh. You don’t like the paintings, okay, but do you have to rip the man to pieces too? As a wise-ish soul said to me yesterday, “No town or city has ever commissioned a statue depicting an art critic.” Quite true. Leeds will have one of Hirst soon, I’m sure, but I’m not sure that would make him feel any better.

Pam Hogg, Valentino, Tracey Emin, Mat Collishaw, Dinos Chapman, Sadie Frost, Portia Moores, Jay Jopling, Damien himself and lots more were there, some eating mini-cones of fish, chips and mushy peas. Outside, Viktor Pinchuk -- flanked by his guards -- was heard saying, “Isn’t it crazy how the two rooms that are for

Damien's paintings, that are all behind glass, were where we weren't allowed to take our champagne? But where everyone was drinking, was where the Rembrandts were."

It was indeed a champagne-sloshing, free-for-all in the stately rooms where the drinks party was held. Those rooms hold some of the most priceless artworks in Britain, almost none of which are covered by glass. Paintings by Fragonard, Frans Hals and Rembrandt cover every inch of the walls, salon-style. But God forbid if you wanted to walk through the Hirst rooms with a drink. You were barked at by eagle-eyed staff and told to leave them on a table. Strange institutional policies everywhere.

String Theory at Frieze  
On the first day of Frieze proper, I threw myself round the fair try to catch as many commissioned Frieze Projects as possible. My favorite was conceptual artist Jordan Wolfson's intervention *Your Napoleon*. (Wolfson won this year's celebrated Cartier Award). Theoretical physicists were on hand to take individuals around the fair and teach them about the fundamentals of String Theory. Each 45-minute walk and talk was electronically recorded. By the end of Sunday, 150 people had taken part.

My very own scientist was named Dan Thompson. He told me that our universe is in fact ten-dimensional, not four-dimensional as most people think, and that we may well be living on a "kind of sheet of paper" that is moving through these dimensions, most of which we don't know how to name or how to measure. Some of the dimensions could possibly be too small to see, and some of them could be curled up and, as yet, hidden from us.

"Trying to imagine these dimensions too much," he said, "is the mistake," he said. I'm still making that mistake six days later.

Because those people imbibing the scientists' knowledge were largely "art-world" people, I imagine there were lots of interruptions and interventions into the world of science from that world of art. On my own tour around the fair, I spoke to two friends -- Katya Degot, a Russian art critic, and Ivgenia Naiman, a Russian specialist from Phillips de Pury -- both of whom became part of my recorded conversation. And that must have been the point.

A new temporary language, or at least a crossover of the way people speak about things, was created, and it was played out in Regent's Park the next morning and on, for the duration of the fair, via a "re-enactment" of the talks by two actors sitting on a blanket, who were reading from the print-outs of the recordings, while occasionally tak-

ing verbal directions on their delivery from Wolfson.

So for part two of my tour, I was led to the actors, and instructed to kneel or sit down. Each time one of the actors stopped reading their part from the script, they stared at me intently. They were acting at being a couple, their arms and legs loosely thrown over each other. It was all slightly sinister and disorienting. I had no say over which recording I heard, and only eight minutes to listen, after which time an invigilator came to tap me on the shoulder, which was my cue to stand up, walk away and make room for the next listener.

Because I heard an eight-minute snippet of someone else's conversation with another scientist, I not only learned a bit more about String Theory, but also learned, perhaps, that the other person asked more pressing, sensible questions than I did.

It was then, for example, that I recalled asking my scientist if he was ever worried his "head would implode" if he kept going down his path of discovery. I also remembered rambling on about what a coincidence it was that we were passing a painting made of gold string (by Seth Price at Reena Spaulings Fine Art). I sometimes wish I was a bit more like a scientist.

Later in the week, I asked Wolfson if he himself had learned a lot about String Theory. "A fair bit," he said. "But also a lot about other things."

More Frieze projects  
Kim Coleman and Jenny Hogarth's Players was another Frieze Project with a disorienting bent. They'd employed actors to wander round the fair and interact with visitors naturalistically. One was instructed to do "funny things with his foot," Kim Coleman told me, and another was asked to "wash the marquee's windows from outside occasionally." But mostly they were asked to act as if they were going round the fair as they normally would. The artists had installed a number of CCTV cameras, and showed the results -- some live, some on a delay, some favorite parts replayed -- in a claustrophobic tent underneath a viewing platform you could scale to watch the fair from above.

Artist Carey Young was offering "Donor cards," unique pieces of art signed by herself that, only when signed by both viewer and artist, officially became an artwork that would last the lifetime of both participants.

The Lisson gallery's Ryan Gander set up an (almost) instant photo studio, titled We Are Constant, taking pictures of fair-goers looking at their favorite work. He immediately printed two copies out, gave one to the viewer



and exhibited the other along the corridor of the entrance to the fair. I had mine taken looking at Phil Allen's miniature painting *Plumphthinking and Grumbled Realities* (2009), which sold at the Approach gallery stand for £3,500. Gander and his team were only expecting 50 participants, but they got 135.

I got my (clothed) *derrière* photographed by artist Tomomi Sayuda inside the Resonance 104.4 FM booth. She'd made the seat of a rather comfy chair into a photocopier. Resonance is one of the best independent art radio stations in the world, and can be picked up internationally at [www.resonancefm.com](http://www.resonancefm.com). Tomomi kept telling me, as I was sitting on her photocopier, "This is to make embarrassment." Yes, indeed.

For "Copystand," San Franciscan artist Stephanie Syjuco employed five technicians to copy pieces of work from around the fair, using cheap materials like sticky tape, polystyrene and clay. I loved her reproduction of Richard Artschwager's *Pianofart* (2008), the original of which was at Sprüth Magers' stand for many thousands of pounds. I could hardly tell the difference. Syjuco was selling her works for under £500, although she had an "Everything Must Go" sale on Sunday.

That bootleg Artschwager was then on offer for £150, a song. I should have bought it but had just thrown all my cash up the wall eating oysters and many different types of beetroot at Hix's on-site restaurant Hix Oyster Bar and Restaurant. (Are we noticing an art restaurant theme of late?) I'd also have been lumbered with transporting a cardboard piano held together with sticky tape across London to Bethnal Green. I'm glad I was thinking clearly.

Frieze stand-outs  
Some stand-out pieces from around the fair: Barry X Ball's Italianate "Purity" sculptures, smooth marble sculptures of heads swathed in cloth, at Salon 94. Barry told me that the "white one" was made from the last available chunk of White Iranian Onyx from a quarry that was then (and recently) requisitioned for the tomb of Ayatollah Khomeini, the supreme Leader of Iran. He also told me that I'm to write his name "with no period. Like Harry S Truman." I might try that method myself actually. Death to the full stop.

Barry may well have helped Salon 94 win this year's Frieze Best Stand Prize; £10,000 that the gallery said, wryly, that it plans to spend on "shipping costs."

I loved Henrik Olesen's quiet untitled manifesto for a world that shuns the unit of the father and mother, at Cologne's Galerie Daniel Buchholz (priced at \$8,000). "It is precisely this world of fa-

ther and mother which must go away,” shouts the piece, a bit sadly. Erin Shirreff’s primal “Knives” photographs, at Lisa Cooley’s stand in Frame, were outstanding. By day one, Cooley had sold half of them at \$3,000 apiece. New York’s Team gallery showed a stand full of bloodthirsty paintings of bashed-up film stars by London artist Dawn Mellor. All of them had sold (for £5,500 each) by day three.

Off-site shows and more  
Even off-site shows and events were selling well and attracting crowds. The spritely Shoreditch Ball raised money for in-Shape, which looks after the local elderly population, and two other local charities, and was held in the beautiful Shoreditch Town Hall on Friday night. The Blockheads played, the dissolute Andy Collishaw and his not-dissolute girlfriend Claire Binnall DJ’d, and an auction raised £45,000, thanks partly to a £10,000 sale of a unique Marc Quinn Shoreditch Moon (2009) print.

Joe La Placa’s All Visual Arts’ dazzling group exhibition, “The Age of the Marvelous,” at the nearby (to Frieze) Holy Trinity Church featured Polly Morgan’s Departures (2009), an incredible airborne flying machine drawn by a flock of taxidermied birds, which sold for £95,000. The same European collector also purchased Paul Fryer’s breathtaking Black Pieta (2009), a black Jesus Christ electrocuted by an electric chair, for an undisclosed sum.

Early on Saturday morning at the Prince Charles cinema in Leicester Square, David Gryn’s Artprox hosted a film by Jeremy Deller and Nicholas Abraham, The Posters Came from the Walls, a melancholy look at Depeche Mode fans around the world. Some of the fans aren’t allowed to listen to the music, including fans in Iran. It’s easy to forget how free our lives are, and the film reminds us of that.

Some devotees of the group have eccentric ways of demonstrating their loyalty, like the family of three that dresses up and re-enacts Enjoy the Silence on the beach, the father and child dressed as kings and the mother in an enormous red bird mask. Fans envision Basildon, Depeche Mode’s hometown, as a beautiful arena for creativity and culture. The filmmakers insert images of the Brutalist housing estates and soulless high street of that Essex town to demonstrate otherwise.

I left to run up to the Bernard Jacobson Gallery on Cork Street for Bruce McLean’s comeback performance at midday, which had been billed as “Bruce McLean Explodes.” He did a slapstick performance piece in front of his new paintings of flowers and reeds. At the end of his performance, he shouted, “In schools, get rid of teachers. In the art world, get rid of curators!” Everyone cheered. As I left, I heard him saying to the rather beautiful art-PR-extraordinaire Theresa Simon, “I don’t care what you do, just get me into Homes and Gardens!”

More offsite shows  
“The Embassy,” produced by 20 Hoxton Square Projects and Zoom Art Projects, was a “parody of outmoded cultural diplomacy” held

in the former embassy of Sierra Leone at 33 Portland Place, just 100 meters from Regent's Park. Alastair Mackie, whose work is also included in "The Age of The Marvelous," showed a presidential palace made from mud, aptly titled Mud Hut (2005), and former serviceman turned artist Michael Lisle-Taylor showed two ancient ceremonial uniforms, both fashioned into straitjackets, Black Knight Squared Away and Crossing the Line (both 2007). Wandering up and down the stairs of the sixth-floor Georgian townhouse was none other than the very wholesome Sting; there no doubt, because his daughter Coco Sumner knows the curator and participants.

Sarah Lucas opened "Nuds" in an unused building at 13 Dover Street. Her dealer Sadie Coles told me that they'd just borrowed the space temporarily. I'd heard that it was a very recently conceived show; regardless, this was my one of my favorite Lucas events ever. A series of biomorphic sculptures made from stuffed tights are installed on breeze-block plinths and look particularly stout against the rough brick walls of the semi-derelict house. They're raw, yet more classically sculptural than previous Lucas works. Uncooked, sad and honest.

As well as curating a knock-out stand at Frieze which included a specially curated film section by Hilary Lloyd, Sadie Coles also managed that week to open Ugo Rondinone's "Nude" at her South Audley Street gallery -- walnuts, tree trunks, potatoes and a piece of bread on the floor, cast in lead-filled bronze and from the artist's ongoing Arte Povera-inspired "still.life." series. Also on tap was a performance by John Bock at Coles' Balfour Mews space, in which the German artist fed a machine with tea leaves and dressed as a giant rat.

"Play" opened at a disused mansion at 50 Upper Brooke Street, right beside the American Embassy. It's a "pop-up" gallery conceived by Nick Hackworth, director of Paradise Row, and art consultant Lauren Prakke. All sorts of pieces, loosely based on the theme of "play," attracted huge crowds over the week. Jake and Dinos Chapman, having been scuppered by Health and Safety regulations from tattooing visitors to the White Cube stand at Frieze, showed here a piece called F\*\*king With Nature -- two groups of copulating taxidermied animals on a seesaw.

Also exhibited in "Play" were Ross McNicol, Amelia Whitelaw, David Birkin, Eloise Fornieles, Barry Reigate and Douglas White, as was Ed Fornieles, who created a sort of twisted funhouse where I managed to receive what I can only describe as an art massage. There I also entered a "floatation tank" -- here created from a room of polystyrene balls, some of which remained on my face all night.

Jacques Hachuel, the septuagenarian Guggenheim Museum trustee and "one of the biggest collectors on earth" -- as he was described to me -- was seen talking to the mildly crazed Mr.



Fornieles in the dingy padded bedroom of the funhouse at one point. But the elderly gent didn't look in the slightest bit worried.

Zoo, Varda, Creed  
The Zoo art fair, running almost concurrently with Frieze, was turfed out of its previous home in Burlington Gardens and was this year housed in three old warehouses close to Liverpool Street station. I can't really say the move has done the event any favors. The "Editions" section was good, with some interesting stands from Other Criteria, the Whitechapel gallery and the Chisenhale. In the gallery section, the David Risley gallery booth was doing a fair bit of trade and Brown, London looked lively. Only 22 galleries exhibited, compared to 58 last year.

Back at Frieze, the humanistic 80-year-old powerhouse that is French artist and filmmaker Agnes Varda gave a talk about her astounding working life. Just an unbelievable body of work.

After she was invited by Hans Ulrich Obrist to show an art-work -- Patatutopia -- at the Venice Biennale in 2003, she said she's pretty much decided to stop making films, and concentrate on making installations. "From an old filmmaker, I became a young shy artist when I started to be invited to do these things," she said. "You don't need to make a big political point, I realized. Just make a formal point. It's not what you tell; it's how you tell it." To promote the Patatutopia installation about sprouting potatoes, at the biennale she dressed as a potato, and "walked around with the important people." What surprised her most was that people came. "It works," she said. "A potato costume. Try it."

I can't imagine a better, more funny or melancholy way to end Frieze fortnight than going to see Martin Creed's first ever ballet, Work no. 1020, commissioned by Frieze Music and performed at the Sadlers Wells Theatre for three nights only, Oct. 16-18, 2009.

Rules set by Creed beforehand meant the professional dancers were only allowed to move like the knight on a chessboard, he said. They must only do ballet's five basic positions, moving forward, backwards and sideways, but never diagonally.

So the dance was strictly organized, but it was accompanied by some of Creed's films, including Work No. 670, Orson & Sparky (2007), which features two wonderfully mismatched canines lolling across the screen. And there was the angry but comical, nihilistic yet feeling music that we've come to know and love, from him and his band Owada.

Also some possibly-not-intended comedy, from Creed, as he wandered around explaining why he was doing what he was doing, and wondering what to do next. At one point, he asked the dancers, "What do you think we should do next? Oh yes, let's do C forwards and backwards, and then C silently going into F"

An angry rendition of What's the Point of It? from the band was followed by If You're Feeling Bad, Pass it On. I was definitely slightly crying at this point, but then, I had been pretty much awake for the past week and a half.

Between five-minute slots of ballet, music and more film, Creed continued talking, and wondering about things out loud. "I was thinking what the point of doing this was. The point for me is just to try to feel. Better. I wrote a little rhyme. It goes,

I want to feel better  
Better than I do  
I want to feel  
Better than you."

More (silent) tears from me (in the theater's dark). Sir Nick Serota was sitting next to me. I hope he didn't see. I was perturbed but at the same time I couldn't help thinking at this point that Creed's one of the greatest artists on earth.

As another peculiar dance sequence ended, Creed came forward to explain that he "couldn't work out an ending for this one as we didn't know how to get the dancers up from the floor, from lying down. It's nice to be lying down. It's the ultimate position."

"I thought I should try to say something," said Martin, desperately trying to say something, and desperately trying to not say something at the same time. "What I wanted to say is that it's nice to be here. Well, it's not nice to be here because I feel scared. But it's nice 'cos I have people with me and I don't like being on my own."

He then asked his technician, "Can we have the ass film please?"

Before belting out the coruscating and alarmingly sad If You're Feeling Lonely, he made a dedication, "If you're lonely, then this is for you."

That was me floored.

G o o d n i g h t .

LAURA K. JONES is a journalist based in London. She has written for the Guardian, the Observer, the Times, the Saatchi Magazine and artforum.com.