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ARTMONTE-CARLO OFFERS SOMETHING NEW FOR COLLECTORS IN MONACO

April 26, 2016

Posted by **Pauline Le Gall** (<http://newsofheartworld.com/author/pl/?lang=en>)

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Several weeks after Art Paris and a few days before Frieze New York, Artmonte-carlo is trying to establish a niche for itself amongst the big design and contemporary art events. The weekend event (<http://newsofheartworld.com/event/artmonte-carlo-grimaldi-forum-monaco/>) should draw on the wave of collectors that flock to the Riviera as the weather improves. From 30 April to 1 May, a select handful of galleries from around the world will set up in the Grimaldi Forum. Alongside the new fair, a White Night developed by Jörg Heiser, co-editor of *Frieze* magazine, will light up the “rock” in honour of contemporary art.

Who is behind the new event? The Artgenève team, headed by Thomas Hug. Hug intends that Artmonte-carlo will become an unmissable event on the art calendar for the region’s many collectors. We talked to him about his ambitions for the first edition of Artmonte-carlo.




artgenève 2016, galerie Mayoral © Julien Gremaud


News of the Art World – How did you decide to adapt the concept of the Artgenève fair for Monaco?


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Thomas Hug, Director of Artgenève and Artmonte-carlo – Galleries and collectors who knew Artgenève told me that our concept would fit in well in Monaco and the Riviera generally. The concept of Artgenève is a small fair compared with the big fairs, with a non-commercial programme that adds to the galleries' offering and that draws strongly on the region. The Riviera did not have a serious contemporary art fair.

The launch date was also suggested by our contacts: the weather is good and the locals are in town. We had noticed. Monaco is booked out!

There are a lot of collectors in the region...

We noticed the same thing when we started Artgenève in 2012. There are a lot of collectors and art enthusiasts in the region and before we came along they did not have an international fair. There are a whole host of reasons why these fairs did not take off sooner.

A White Night will also run during Artmonte-carlo. Do you want to be set the foundations of a major contemporary art event in Monaco?

The government organized the White Night, not us. That said, it was after we committed to the fair that the discussions started with the government and it was decided that the White Night would take place during the fair. That means we can have two interesting, quality events on at the same time and spotlight the region.

I was also involved in discussions prior to the selection of the curator for the White Night. The event needed to follow in the same vein and have the same scope as our fair. We are very happy that there are two events on offer.

How did you go about selecting the galleries that would be involved?

When you are dealing with the first edition, it is harder to dictate a line that you would like to follow, either regarding the style or artists offered. In addition to quality – which is non-negotiable – we also looked for exhibitors who already had a network, who could be good ambassadors for the project, who were convinced by it and who were prepared to invest over several years. I think that there will be more demand in the future and it will be harder to make the selection. A lot of people missed out, either because they applied too late, or they did not realize that our fair had a serious goal.

In addition to the 36 participating galleries, another space in the Grimaldi Forum will host 15 exhibitions commissioned with regional and international foundations and art centres. We are also organizing a fringe exhibition of contemporary art works on a beautiful private boat.

All recent reports seem to indicate that collectors are being rather cautious this year. Are do you have any particular concerns regarding the fair?

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**Christies New York:
contemporary art
bubble not ready
to pop**

November 18,
2014

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I think that everyone is affected, even in Monaco and Geneva. The fact that we have opted for small fairs protects us from the repercussions of collectors being a bit cautious. In regions like ours, if you are committed to a fair with 200 or 300 exhibitors, it is currently very difficult to survive; that goes for all fairs.

For our fair, we will only have 36 galleries. Very few are unknowns. There are several young galleries that we will introduce, but beyond that we have a fairly marked interest in works that can be considered part of the canon of contemporary art. The crisis primarily affecting galleries in between the two extremes. They are finding it very hard to survive currently.

We have created a structure that is not too heavy to bear. We tried to develop a model that could exist with few exhibitions, to cope when the times are tough, so we do not have to shut up shop if 40 exhibitors withdraw. We will always be able to survive without getting any bigger. The same cannot be said for all fairs.

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