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Final report:

## **Cologne Fine Art and COFA Contemporary: a convincing mixture of old and modern**

- Around 16,000 visitors came to the trade fair
- Increase in visitors despite fewer trade fair days
- Galleries report good to very good sales
- Cologne Fine Art Prize goes to Karin Kneffel

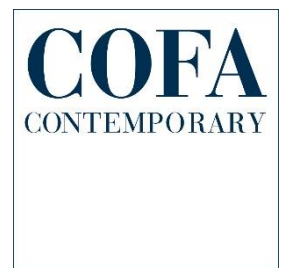
Following a convincing performance, Cologne Fine Art 2016 and COFA Contemporary ended successfully on Sunday evening, 20 November 2016. On five instead of six trade fair days, around 100 galleries and art dealers offered a top-quality cross-section spanning from Antiquity through modern and applied art and design to the art of the 20th century at the traditional Cologne Fine Art. Another 50 galleries and non-commercial project spaces took part in the contemporary platform COFA Contemporary, which took place for the second time. Despite the reduced number of trade fair days, with around 16,000 visitors from Germany and neighbouring countries, more art enthusiasts attended the trade fair than in the previous year (2015: 15,500). "This year we are especially pleased at the many new galleries from abroad and in the old art segment. The high quality offering of our exhibitors in the classics sector and in the field of contemporary art convinced the public from the Rhineland, from throughout Germany and from neighbouring countries", is how Cornelia Zinken, Director of Cologne Fine Art summarised. "With COFA Contemporary, in addition to established galleries, we also primarily provide young and innovative project spaces with the possibility to present themselves jointly, and thus simultaneously support the contemporary art scene in the Rhineland", Zinken continued.

"Cologne Fine Art is the best German event in the classical segment", was the opinion of **Laszlo von Vertes** (Zurich), a participant in the trade fair of many years from the field of classical modernity. "The trade fair is very harmonious. All German top traders are here. I am always pleased to come to Cologne and to contribute to the quality of the offering. The public is wonderful and visitors come from afar", praised the Zurich gallery owner, who has participated for 30 years. "We always



Cologne Fine Art

17.11.-20.11.2016



COFA CONTEMPORARY

17.11.-20.11.2016

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experience a great deal of appreciation for our offering in Cologne", agreed antique dealer **Dr. Thomas Schmitz-Avila** (Bad Breisig), who sold two items of museum-quality furniture.

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"The appearance of Cologne Fine Art is first class", was the judgment of the Cologne Pop Art-specialist **Klaus Benden** (Cologne), who was also represented at COFA Contemporary with a stand. "This is a good possibility to establish a younger public; I believe in the idea of COFA Contemporary", says the gallery owner, who achieved good sales at both locations, including a one-of-a-kind Beethoven portrait by Andy Warhol. **Heinz Holtmann** (Cologne) expressed himself in similar terms: "Cologne Fine Art is a very respectable trade fair with exceptional works. COFA Contemporary provides for a breath of fresh air that does the trade fair good". "I am a big fan of Cologne Fine Art. Everything is beautifully designed", according to Düsseldorf-based **Ralph Gierhards**. Among other things, Gierhards sold Fauré vases and a painting.

Many trade fair debutantes also got off to a good start. For **Mario Bermel** (Berlin), first-time participation in Cologne Fine Art was a complete success story. "I made very good sales and even had museum people at my stand", the young Berlin art dealer was pleased to announce. Among other items, he sold sculptures by Lucio Fontana for 90,000 Euro. "I'll be sure to be here next year", said Bermel. **Kunsthandel Engelage und Lieder** (Minden) is also satisfied: "We had interesting people at the stand and were able to establish good, new contacts", Svea Herzog confirmed. Also completely enthusiastic about his sales successes was Peter Reis from the **KK Kiez Kabinett** (Berlin), whose stand with designer furniture from the 1950s to the 1970s was almost completely sold out. His trade fair debut at Cologne Fine Art went "sensationally". Reis sold nearly all items of furniture and a series of chandeliers. **Galerie Gabelsberg** (Munich), which brokered a Dali sculpture (€ 25,000) to a collector, joined in the praise. "An unbelievably good atmosphere prevails here. We really like the trade fair", was also the bright opinion of the Stuttgart gallery owner **Brigitte March**. She reported a great deal of interest in works by John Cage, Laurence Weiner and Dieter Roth.

Maria Galen from **Galerie Galen**, who sold a *trompe l'oeuil* painting by Vispré on the opening evening, was pleased at the "interested and decisive public". **Galerie Kaune Contemporary** (Cologne), which sold an Eames lounge chair from 1958 (€ 9,500), registered a "high level of interest". **Alex Vömel** (Düsseldorf) was also "very satisfied" with his participation in Cologne Fine Art. He sold works by Helmut Kolle, Heinrich Nauen, Werner Gilles and others. "Cologne Fine Art is the most beautiful art fair in Germany", praised **Elisabeth Nüdling** (Fulda); "the level is great". The art dealer, who specialises in silver and jewellery of the 20th century, already did good business on the evening of the vernissage. **ED Gallery** from Piacenza was very successful with Italian design classics from the 1950s and later, as well as ceramics. "We were able to establish good contacts and are very satisfied", Davide Cammi reported.

The mood among exhibitors at COFA Contemporary was outstanding. The exhibitors unanimously praised the art-loving and deep-pocketed public.

"We had a great opening with lots of visitors and were very pleased with the new contacts and intensive discussions", reported **Gisela Clement** (Bonn), who sold a wave-shaped bench (€ 25,000) by Martin Pfeifle. **Anna Klinkhammer** (Düsseldorf) praised the "high quality public". "I met a lot of important people. Participation in the trade fair was a very rich experience for me", was the balance presented of the Düsseldorf resident. Christian Löhrl of **Galerie Löhrl** (Mönchengladbach) was also enthusiastic: "The trade fair exceeded our expectations. Our most important collectors came by and we were very successful with sales." **Galerie Droste** (Wuppertal) also reported great success with its debut at the contemporary platform. Patrick Droste brokered a large-format painting by Hendrik Beikirch (€ 22,000) and sold a canvas by Niels Meulmann (€ 15,000), as well as a bronze sculpture by Heiko Zahlmann (€ 4,500). "We get some great feedback here. Even museum people approached us", the young Wuppertal gallery owner was pleased to report. "COFA Contemporary has a very solid image", **Philine Cremer** (Düsseldorf) concluded. "Visitors here find us exciting and enriching". "The list of exhibitors is good and COFA Contemporary is very lively", says **Rupert Pfab** (Düsseldorf). "Those who go from Cologne Fine Art to COFA Contemporary can observe how many links there are between postwar art and the present works of young artists. The historical mooring is visible, which makes the connection of the two trade fairs really exciting", says **Berthold Pott** (Cologne), who sold two works by Evan Robarts. "We were able to provide good mediation services for our artist Lutz Driessen. The very special trade fair format is especially suited to a solo show", says Sven Ahrens from **Galerie Hammelehle und Ahrens** (Cologne). "We once again noticed that there is a rich group of collectors here, and view our participation as a long-term investment". **Galerie Choi & Lager** (Cologne) was also able to broker a canvas by Helena Parada-Kim (€ 8,800), as well as works by Andreas Blank (€ 6,500 to € 7,500).

#### **Non-profit project spaces / Off spaces**

COFA Contemporary is a welcome platform for the Cologne project spaces that have joined together to form the "Art Initiatives Cologne" network. "It is important that the scene, which is of elementary importance for young artists, is given a visual presence", according to Jochen Heufelder from the **Kunstraum Fuhrwerkswaage**, which organised a solo show for Madiha Sebbani. The artist performed every day and also received an unexpectedly large amount of attention through social media. "That is grandiose for the artist, whose origins are in another culture", Heufelder reported enthusiastically. "The contrast with the bottom floor is quite large, but that makes it exciting", found Silke Büchel from **Kunstraum Tiefgarage**. "The off spaces are something really new". "We feel very much at home here and had many good talks", Gerd Mies from the **Projektgalerie Labor** reported.

#### **Karin Kneffel awarded the Cologne Fine Art Prize 2016**

The Cologne Fine Art Prize, endowed with 10,000 Euro, was conferred jointly by Koelnmesse and the Bundesverband Deutscher Galerien und Kunsthändler e.V. (BVDG/German Association of Galleries and Art Dealers) on the preview day to the

Düsseldorf-based artist Karen Kneffel. The master student of Gerhard Richter was honoured for her exceptional artistic work in the field of Neorealistic painting. The artist became known for her watercolours and etchings, which are saturated with colour, and for her more recent works, in which she plays with perspectives, light and shadow and elements of gravitation. The special event of the prize winner met with a great response from both trade fair visitors and media representatives. **Klaus Friese** (Berlin) also almost exclusively dedicated his stand to Karin Kneffel.

#### **A lot of interest in special events**

As in past years, the **Young Collectors Room**, which serves as a room for communication and offers exhibits for less than 5,000 Euro, remains a major magnet for attention. In this year's special event **Style Icons**, the focus will be on five centres of early automotive engineering history: Cologne, Milan, Paris, Munich and Coventry. Classics of automobile design of the 1920s, 1930s, 1950s and 1960s, like a Bugatti T38 from the year 1929, a Bentley 6 L Coupé from the year 1935, the Auto Union 1000 SP from the year 1959 or the 1969 Lamborghini Espada drew the gazes of visitors. Located at the interface of art and design, the **Design Course** presented a very special selection of design furniture from Ludwig Mies van der Rohe. In addition to the well-known Barcelona armchair from 1954/55, which was conceived of for the first time for the German pavilion of the World Exposition of 1929 in Barcelona, the trade fair for the first time showed one of the first prototypes of this item of designer furniture from 1949, as well as a pre-production model from the year 1959 from an important modern architect.

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#### **Note for editorial offices:**

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