



Art Talk with Edward Goldman



All's Fair in LA

Tuesday, January 5, 2010



Once in a while, or, to be more precise, once each year, one can justifiably say about life here in the City of Angels that All's Fair in LA. Usually it happens in the month of January, when not one, but three art fairs roll into town, causing a lot of happy commotion, confusion, and anticipation. Scheduled literally days apart, these art fairs have names which are easily mixed up, so it shouldn't come as a surprise that even art insiders get somewhat confused.

Let me try to straighten it out for you. The first of these three fairs, **Photo LA**, will take place at the Santa Monica Civic Auditorium and will run from January 15 - 17. The Opening Night Reception will take place on Thursday, January 14. Tickets for the reception are \$75 and can be purchased online; proceeds will benefit the **Photography Department** at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. However, to attend Photo LA during the regular daytime



hours will cost you only \$20. And this is a bargain, considering that you can not only browse through thousands of photographs displayed by dealers from the United States and abroad, but you also have a chance to attend lectures and seminars conducted by museum curators and well-known photographers. It's also worth mentioning that Photo LA organizers have invited the Museum of Latin American Art (MoLAA) in Long Beach to present a preview installation of its **upcoming exhibition** of Latin American photography, giving many visitors the chance to discover for the first time this young and ambitious museum.

A week later, another art fair opens at the Convention Center in downtown LA. Known as the **Los Angeles Art Show**, it features 110 galleries from around the world, so if you have the stamina, you can browse through approximately 15,000 artworks, spanning from Old Master to Modern and Contemporary Art. This fair runs from January 21 - 24, with an opening night reception on Wednesday, January 20. If you want to rub elbows with the bigwigs, a ticket to the opening gala will cost you \$225 - quite a lot of money - but it will give you free entrance to the fair for the next four days.



Considering the proliferation of art fairs around the globe in the last couple of decades, one shouldn't be surprised that organizers of such fairs are trying to distinguish these commercial endeavors with a variety of smart cultural programs and museum exhibitions. Besides an array of seminars and lectures, the LA Art Show will offer a sneak preview of the upcoming exhibition "Seven Renowned Artists from the Middle East," an exhibition that three years from now will be shown in its entirety at the Guggenheim Museum in New York.



The third and last of the three fairs, **Art Los Angeles Contemporary**, will take place in West Hollywood at the Pacific Design Center, in the last days of the month, January 28 - January 31. This is a new fair, and its organizers are smartly betting on the relatively easy access to its venue, located in the center of sprawling metropolis that is LA. For more than three decades, the striking blue and green glass buildings of the PDC, designed by Cesar Pelli, have been home to hundreds of high-end design showrooms, but in the last few years, business has slowed down, and many of the showrooms have become vacant. So bringing in more than fifty dealers to exhibit the best of contemporary art in such an elegant setting is a smart move that will likely benefit the participating art galleries as well as the venue itself. Of all three fairs, this

one is the most affordable, with a \$16 admission fee and an opening night reception (on January 28) costing only \$30.

o the choice is yours, and with these three art fairs in town, you definitely have an opportunity to start the new year in style. Once more, Happy 2010.

Photo LA: January 15 - 17 Opening Night Reception: Thursday, January 14 Santa Monica Civic Auditorium Tickets available online

Los Angeles Art Show: January 21 - 24 Opening Night Gala: Wednesday, January 20 Los Angeles Convention Center Advance tickets can be purchased by calling (323) 857-6501

Art Los Angeles Contemporary: January 29 - 31 Opening Night Public Reception: Thursday, January 28 Pacific Design Center, West Hollywood