

REVIEW: The Things Done Well at Papier 14

BY SKY GOODDEN | APRIL 29, 2014



Ken Nicol, "Project Index Card (Index Scrape)," 2013.
(Courtesy MKG127.)

Montreal's medium-focused art fair **Papier** had a little something more to prove, this year. Following a recent announcement that it's [launching a second art fair](#) to compete with **Art Toronto**, this fall, we cast our eyes on the diminutive institution with renewed attention, April 24-27, looking to see the potential cracks in a growing franchise. The **Association des galeries d'art contemporain** (AGAC) managed to present its seventh iteration with polish and confidence, however, navigating a shift in location, massive crowds, and a stacked educational program with adroit conviction. And while many gallerists complained of low sales and overcrowding, a general sense of benevolent cheer was shared among colleagues and roving artists, as Papier promotes a unique and intimate approach to an increasingly corporate model. The Canadian art market – still knock-kneed and halting – does well to present on a scale so self-contained; at just over forty galleries, Papier provides a window into a market that only requires a small frame.

BLOUIN ARTINFO Canada spent four days noting sales, charting curatorial shifts, and chatting with dealers. Here's our breakdown of the bright, the exceptional, and the excessive.

Best Curating

Clint Roenisch (presenting **Harold Klunder, Niall McClelland, Marcel van Eeden**)

Toronto's Clint Roenisch Gallery is known for promoting an aesthetic of scruffy minimalism and, on occasion, something like post-party wreckage, so the gallerist's additive approach to his booth, this year, was right on point. Starting with a spare presentation of Niall McClelland's ink-jet prints, he brought in new 'voices' each day, layering the works and growing the connective folds. By Sunday it looked like he'd amassed works, rather than sold; but it was a self-admitted tactic to appeal to the Montreal aesthetic, where more is always more.

Katharine Mulherin (presenting **Balint Zsako**)

Katherine Mulherin followed the through-line in watercolorist Balint Zsako's expansive series of small canvases, running a ledge around her booth and interchanging the narrative works to arrange new meaning. Hands reached across frames, and color reigned.

Trench Contemporary (presenting **Nicholas Galanin, Sara Gee Miller, Amy Mukai, Ed Spence, Carrie Walker, Vincent Trasov**)

Despite an extensive artist list, Vancouver's Trench Contemporary kept its focus by largely giving the floor to Vincent Trasov, one of the founding members of the laureled artist-run center Western Front, and a storied artist in his own right. Pinned to an improvised scaffolding that set the booth apart, Trasov's "Terrorism/Arms Race/Drug Wars" (1987) series punched forward with color and jarring text. Before it, Trench presented a well-crafted vitrine documenting Trasov's trajectory in publishing and artist-made marginalia. This entry could have easily fallen under the next category, "Biggest Chances Taken," however, as Trench failed to sell the expansive series that nearly consumed its booth.

Biggest Chances Taken

Joyce Yahouda Gallery

It was never very clear to me what was happening at Joyce Yahouda, but *something* was going on. Shifting from a massive black-and-white mural (Michel Boulanger) that papered the booth on opening night to an aerobic presentation by "action artist" Thierry Marceau on Sunday, the Montreal gallery was out to impress. Like Marceau, though, it risked straining something in the process.

Pierre-François Ouellette

Pierre-François Ouellette took full advantage of his nearby inventory, renewing his booth on several occasions and risking lost sales from those who knew they saw *something they liked somewhere, but, oh, where is it now?* There was more than enough good work to go around, though, especially the small vitrine-framed collages by the architect's artist, Dil Hildebrand.

Parisian Laundry

Fabienne Lasserre's fabric-based (but paper-made) petals spotted the well-situated Parisian Laundry booth, representing the gallery's focus on sculpture while pulling crowds. Despite punctuating the space with color and three-dimensional form, though, the works failed to sell and proved vulnerable to crowding bodies and curious passerby. "Don't touch!" and "watch out!" became the gallerists' enduring refrains.

Best Presentations of Artists

Katharine Mulherin (Balint Zsako)

p/m Gallery (Wil Murray)

Trench Contemporary (Vincent Trasov)

Galerie Trois Points (Anne-Renée Hotte)

Stephen Bulger (Henri-Cartier Bresson)

Best Individual Works

Erika Dueck, "The Ephemeral Mind II," 2004 - (Art Mûr)

James Nizam, "Wrought Iron Railing with Scotchlite," 2013 - (Birch Contemporary)

Ken Nicol, "Project Index Card (Index Scrape)," 2013 - (MKG127)

Luce Meunier, "Sequence Bleu Jaune," 2013 - (galerie antoine ertaskiran)

Jérôme Havre, "Anthropologie de l'image," 2012 - (Donald Browne)

Tammi Campbell, "Paper Series," 2014 - (Hugues Charbonneau)

Sorel Cohen, "The Shape of a Gesture (Four Colours)," 1978 - (Donald Browne)

Séripop, "What You Should Have Been and Would Not (Stack)," 2012-14- (Hugues Charbonneau)

Marie-Claire Blais, "Densité neutre _ 2," 2010 - (René Blouin)

Anne-Renée Hotte, "Bateaux," 2013 (Galerie Trois Points)

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Papier Art Fair 14

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