

Art Brussels 2022 Reveals Content for 38th Edition

By Manny Berhanu



Kirsi Mikkola: "GLO", 2022. Courtesy: The artist and Galerie Nagel Draxler Berlin/Cologne/Munich. Photo: Simon Vogel

Now in its 38th edition, Art Brussels – one of Europe's oldest and most established art fairs – discloses details of presentations by 157 galleries from 26 countries.

With a strong and international line up and a mix of established and emerging talent as well as artists to rediscover, Art Brussels maintains its reputation as a place for discovery. It presents the best of the contemporary gallery scene, showcasing close to 1,000 artists as part of a vibrant programme. Alongside the new initiatives and works commissioned for the fair, Art Brussels will feature thought-provoking artworks which examine identity and the body, technology and environmental issues.

The participating galleries are divided into different sections according to the fair programme: PRIME (for mid-career and established artists), DISCOVERY (emerging artists), REDISCOVERY (artists where recognition is long overdue), INVITED (emerging galleries that are transcending the typical gallery format) and SOLO (solo artist presentations).

The fair continues to show its dedication to curated displays by hosting a record number of SOLO presentations with more than 30 galleries highlighting the work of individual artists. Key SOLO presentations include: Wanda Koop at Blouin Division (Montreal) who examines the landscape through the lens of technology; Paul McCarthy at Xavier Hufkens (Brussels) whose works criticize American mythologies and politics; Dankyi Mensah at Maruani Mercier (Brussels, Knokke, Zaventem) whose colourful portraiture documents the development of the social and political landscape in Ghana; Nazanin Pouyandeh at Sator (Paris) whose works explore her personal evolution and relationship between Iran and Europe; and Noel W. Anderson at Zidoun-Bossuyt (Luxembourg), known for his exploration of black male identity using textiles as a medium. The best SOLO presentation will be awarded the SOLO Prize (supported by Hiscox), with the winning artist receiving €10,000.



Dankyi Mensah, Kmerican Reddie, 2022 courtesy Maruani Mercier

Some works at the fair examine notions of gender, identity and the body. Examples in PRIME include: Kiki Smith at Lelong & Co (Paris, New York), known for her figural representations of mortality, abjection and sexuality; Kenny Dunkan at Les Filles du Calvaire (Paris) who refers to Caribbean culture, particularly the Carnival, and the ambiguous duality between colonialism and local tradition mixed with the African slave history and Didier William at M+B (Los Angeles) who draws on Haitian history and his personal experience regarding colonialism and resistance. At Steve Turner (Los Angeles) in DISCOVERY, Jingze Du's black and white paintings represent the artist's status as an immigrant.

DISCOVERY

In DISCOVERY, several artists are highlighting concerns around the environment and climate change. Ronan McCrea's work at Green on Red (Dublin) centres on the controversial Dublin Waste-to-Energy facility; Chris Soal at WHATIFTHEWORLD (Cape Town), creates sculptures with disposable objects such as toothpicks and bottle tops to comment on ecological concerns; whilst at Axel Vervoordt (Antwerp, Hong Kong) and Laurent Godin (Paris) in PRIME, Peter Buggenhout's unpolished sculptures are created from industrial waste, horsehair, entrails and house dust.



Chris Soal, Even Revolutions Don't Cause Change. Change Causes Revolutions, 2021, Courtesy WHATIFTHEWORLD

The influence of technology and social media on society is addressed by a number of artists. In DISCOVERY ASPN (Leipzig) presents Katarína Dubovská whose installations use images that are dragged and twisted until all the cells are disintegrated; and House of Chappaz (Barcelona, Valencia) and Joey Ramone (Rotterdam) present a shared booth with works by Momu & No Es that criticize hyperconnectivity and express distrust towards the use of 'new reality' technologies. In PRIME Charlot (Paris, Tel Aviv) displays among others Quayola who merges classical aesthetics with software and algorithms.

PRIME

In PRIME Michel Rein (Paris, Brussels) Romanian artist and peace activist Dan Perjovschi will unveil a new series of original black and white drawings, criticising the invasion of Ukraine. He has also created a series of five pins that will be on sale at the fair, inviting visitors to show their support for the country. The entire purchase price of the pins will be donated to the charity Ukraine 12-12.

New initiatives for 2022 include a partnership with Parallel.art to create an NFT 'touch point' designed to inform, educate and support NFT collectors and visitors who are curious about blockchain-based art practices. A series of talks hosted off-site in collaboration with the fair's institutional partner iMAL – the pioneering centre for digital cultures and technology in the Brussels – brings together major players in the artworld and crypto/NFT experts, building bridges between the two worlds.

Within the fair there's also a special exhibition *L'Oeuvre et son Double* curated by Sam Steverlynck, which unites the work of a number of artists participating in this year's Venice Biennale and there are some great institutional shows happening in the city including Kasper Bosmans at WIELS and Kiki Smith at Fondation Thalie, Rinus Van de Veldeat Bozar and VOID at Botanique.

The art fair will take place from Thursday 28th April until Sunday 1st May 2022.

www.artbrussels.com

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