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L.A. Story

The Los Angeles Art Show set new records for attendance as more than 50,000 people visited the fair during its four-day run

New owners and wonderful national and international exposure led the *LA Art Show* to perhaps its most successful show in its 18 years of existence as an excess of 50,000 people walked through the gates January 24 to 27 at the Los Angeles Convention Center.

LA Art Show has both contemporary and historic dealers making up the fair. Historic dealers this year included William A. Karges Fine Art, Trotter Galleries, Josh Hardy Galleries, Del Monte Fine Art, Surovek Gallery, The Redfern Gallery, George Stern Fine Arts, Abby M Taylor Fine Art LLC, Rehs Galleries, Kendall Fine Art, and M.S. Rau Antiques.

"The show exceeded any expectations I had for the weekend and the success was truly beyond, beyond any wildest dreams I could have had," says Scott Diament, co-owner of the Palm Beach Show Group who purchased *LA Art Show* only last June from the Fine Art Dealers Association (FADA). "We had an excess of 50,000 attend the fair during the four-day run."

The opening patron reception set the tone for the entire weekend as collectors mixed with celebrities and other L.A. luminaries for the evening that supported The Art of Elysium and The J. Paul Getty Museum's Education Department "Bringing Art to Kids and Kids to Art Program." James Franco was the guest of honor at the Patron Reception and was joined by co-hosts Ali Larter and Hayes MacArthur, Lily Collins, Sam Trammell, Amanda Fuller, Edwin Hodge, Kevin Nealon, and Noah Wyle.

"What really sparked interest was



The 2013 *LA Art Show* took place January 23 to 27 in downtown Los Angeles.

getting the cover of the *Los Angeles Times* on Saturday along with a two-page story on the show inside," says Diament. "Opening night was also packed and many celebrities were in attendance. Our step and repeat [banner] had 80 people waiting in line for it on opening night."

Diament said there was another first-ever occurrence for him at an art fair—he actually extended the hours on Sunday, the last day of the show.

"I've never done that but I spoke with at least 20 exhibitors and they all said there are 5,000 people still here and they are still buying so I decided to keep it open later," says Diament. "We made the announcement during the fair and the crowd actually cheered."

Diament credits the success of this year's show with an aggressive local and national media campaign, which included several television spots that

reached more than 4 million people. They also hung large banners on the convention center and targeted national media, such as *American Fine Art Magazine*, *American Art Collector*, *USA Today*, and *The Wall Street Journal*.

Many dealers reported sales throughout the weekend including Surovek Gallery, The Redfern Gallery, George Stern Fine Arts, and William A. Karges Fine Art. Already, Diament has received more than 50 applications from galleries that haven't participated before to be part of next year's *LA Art Show*.

"This year's show really attracted local and international people who came and bought at the fair," says Diament. "And, Los Angeles really got behind it this year as well. The convention center is still the only venue in town where you can hold a truly international event." ■



1. Actor and Patron Reception guest of honor James Franco with his grandmother and art collector Mitzi Verne. 2. LA Art Show partners, from left, Robert M. Samuels, Kim Martindale, and Scott Diament. 3. Ali Larter and Hayes MacArthur served as co-hosts for the Opening Night Premiere Party. 4. Actor Noah Wyle. 5. Howard Rehs and LA Art Show co-owner Robert M. Samuels in the Rehs Galleries booth. 6. Clay K. Surovek with beautifully rendered portraits of Andy Warhol by Jamie Wyeth. 7. Terry and Paula Trotter of Trotter Galleries in Carmel, California. 8. Josh Hardy of the Josh Hardy Galleries in Carmel, California, in front of a beautiful Edgar Payne. 9. Ray Redfern of The Redfern Gallery in Laguna Beach, California. 10. Whitney Ganz of William A. Karges Fine Art next to a Maynard Dixon landscape. 11. George Stern of Los Angeles' George Stern Fine Arts saw strong crowds in his booth the entire weekend. 12. A lovely Edgar Payne in The Redfern Gallery booth. 13. This Maynard Dixon in The Redfern Gallery booth was among several Dixons seen at the show this past January.