

CALENDAR

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ALLEN J. SCHADEN Los Angeles Times

AN AREA devoted to Korean art is explored by Kim Martindale, the L.A. Art Show's executive producer and general manager.

L.A. and beyond

The L.A. Art Show, in its 19th year, features more work from around the world. Particularly big is art from China and Korea.

BY DEBORAH VANKIN >>> A yellow forklift zigzags across a loading dock at Los Angeles' downtown convention center while workmen unload wooden crates from a dozen container trucks packed to the hilt with art treasures. One truck carries oil paintings and prints from galleries in Japan, England and the Netherlands, including several Damien Hirst works from London; a second holds a shipment from China — ceramics, ink paintings, parts for a multimedia installation.

On these two vehicles alone there is more than \$10 million of art — all of which has traveled around the globe and just cleared customs at LAX. Soon the art will go on display on the convention center floor for the 19th annual L.A. Art Show, which opens Wednesday night.

Kim Martindale, who's overseeing the morning's deliveries, squints into the sunlight and smiles nostalgically.

"This is a completely different world from the early days," says Martindale, L.A. Art Show's executive producer

and general manager, who's been with the show since its inception in 1995 at the Pasadena Civic Center. "People would bring art in their cars or maybe UPS it. You might see one truck with all the New York galleries."

The L.A. Art Show, started by the nonprofit Fine Art Dealers Assn., has grown steadily in gallery participation and guest attendance — from 14 galleries the first year to about 110 in 2012, which saw more than 50,000 visitors stream through the Los Angeles Convention Center. But since mid-2012, when it was purchased by the Palm Beach Show Group, the show has amped up its ambitions.

Central to the new vision is broadening the international scope of the show by including more galleries and special exhibitions from around the world.

"We want to make it a world-class event on par with Art Basel or Frieze in New York," says Palm Beach Show Group owner Scott Diament. "Being that L.A. has such a vibrant Asian community, it seemed logical [See Art, D6]

BOOK REVIEW

Gates still at war in snarky 'Duty'

BOB DROGIN

Duty

Memoirs of a Secretary at War

Robert M. Gates
Alfred A. Knopf: 640 pp., \$35

During 4½ years as secretary of Defense under presidents George W. Bush and Obama, Robert M. Gates was widely lauded as a shrewd national security mandarin who had seen it all, done it all and most important, could stay above it all in the partisan wars of Washington.

So the snarky put-downs and petulant asides in his impassioned, if somewhat contradictory, memoir, "Duty: Memoirs of a Secretary at War," come as something of a surprise.

Behind his mask of calm civility, Gates nursed grudges, tallied up slights and jotted down the caustic ripostes that he never delivered in public. The carping and zingers already have generated headlines. No crime there, but since he also bemoans the backbiting and bickering in politics, he lowers his pedestal considerably to do so.

Gates is the embodiment of a Washington trope: the independent outsider as consummate insider. He has worked for eight presidents since Lyndon Johnson while proclaiming his loathing for it all. His most recent book covers a particularly turbulent period, from December 2006 to June 2011, when the Pentagon was fighting — and in danger of losing — the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Running two major wars and the world's biggest military was tough enough. Doing it in the last two years of Bush's second term, and the first two years of Obama's first, could cause whiplash. So can Gates' book, which ranges from generous and gracious to churlish and [See Gates, D8]