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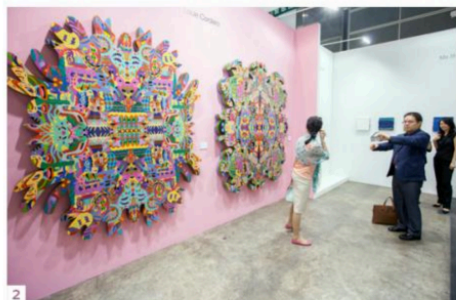
## Art Meccas

A global guide to the must-visit fairs of 2017  
—by Marla Wasser

Art fairs have become the hub for enthusiasts and collectors to congregate. Acting as a one-stop shopping destination, galleries come together from all over the world to celebrate modern and contemporary artistic practice. These global fairs are referred to as ‘meccas’ through their collaborations with local communities and the organization of cultural events, attracting thousands of visitors and providing something for everyone.

As a mass cultural feeding frenzy, these art meccas appear to have no boundaries. Luxury and the arts have become closely related, and as a result many global brands are utilizing these fairs to connect with their affluent consumers. High profile brands that have taken on major sponsorship include: UBS, Deutsche Bank, BMW, Gucci, Prada and more. To keep patrons well-hydrated, each fair will have its own champagne partner, as well. With so many global brands getting in on the art-fair action, a fun, diverse and engaging environment has been created for the ultimate art experience.

As the art market continues to become more global, the number of fairs has exploded with every major city now wanting to participate. In just one decade, international art fairs have jumped from 105 to 269 worldwide, according to *The Art Newspaper*. With new collectors entering into the market daily, the demand for art fairs has grown exponentially, with no slowdown in sight. This cultural marathon, now coined by arts writer Georgina Adam as *fairtigue*, has collectors becoming much more selective about which fairs, and how many they will attend. So how do you decide which one is right for you, your interests, travel budget and time constraints? Here are our recommendations.



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### 1 THE ARMORY SHOW

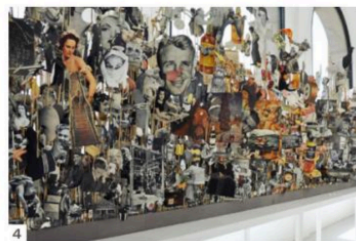
March 2nd—5th, NYC

*“The goal is to make this the best art fair in the United States and to give New York the art fair it deserves. It’s time to have an art fair in New York that reflects the importance of the city as the center of contemporary art and the contemporary art market.”*  
—Benjamin Genocchio, Director

As a great way to say goodbye to winter, the Armory Show is a fantastic opportunity to travel south of the border and spend a few days at one of New York’s most exciting art fairs. Founded in 1994, The Armory Show has become a cultural institution in the Big Apple. Under recently appointed director

Benjamin Genocchio, a new vision has been announced for the 2017 fair. The previously separate modern and contemporary buildings (Pier 92 and Pier 94) will be merged this year, along with the introduction of the ‘Platform,’ a new curatorial initiative dedicated solely to large works and performances. Additionally, the ‘Focus’ section will invite a curator to select galleries to showcase new or rarely seen artworks by today’s most compelling artists. The ‘Armory Presents’ section is expanding to provide a wider platform for emerging galleries to showcase fresh talent.

Photo by BLEA, Courtesy of The Armory Show 2016  
Photo by Amy Ng, South China Morning Post



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### 2 ART BASEL HONG KONG

March 23rd—25th, Hong Kong

*“Hong Kong has become recognized very much as the international Asian art hub.”*  
—Adeline Ooi, Director

Debuting as ArtHK in 2008, the fair was purchased by and rebranded with Art Basel in 2013, providing visitors with an opportunity to experience modern and contemporary art from both western and eastern cultures. Of the top 100 best-performing contemporary artists in the world for 2013 and 2014, approximately half are Chinese, supporting Art Basel’s expansion into Asia’s most prolific art market. Announcing that 241 galleries will be exhibiting at the 2017 edition (10 percent of which are new exhibitors), Art Basel HK will be broken into three major sections: Galleries, Insights and Discoveries. The main exhibition sector is ‘Galleries,’ where leading galleries from Asia and around the world will showcase modern and contemporary art. ‘Insights’ will feature curated projects on artists from Asia and Asia-Pacific, and lastly, ‘Discoveries’ will provide a platform for galleries to present one or two emerging artists.

Photo by Graham Carlin

### 3 FRIEZE

New York May 5th—7th, NYC

*“[Art fairs] need to be places that are commercially successful for the galleries”...“but, they’re also places for discovery and places for debate.”*  
—Victoria Siddall, Director

Boasting a record attendance of visitors for 2016, Frieze has turned into one of New York’s most important art fairs. Originally founded in London, UK in 2003, Frieze expanded to New York in 2012. For 2017, the fair will be broken down into three different highlighted areas: Spotlight, Focus and Frame. ‘Spotlight’ is critically acclaimed for its solo presentations of 20th century work from all over the world (with a special focus on the ‘60s and ‘70s). ‘Focus’ was created to showcase monographic or two-artist presentations by younger galleries. Lastly, ‘Frame’ is located in the center of the fair and is dedicated to solo artist presentations shown by galleries opened in or after 2009.

Frieze has created a unique fair environment by reducing booth fees, allowing smaller galleries to participate, and show their artist’s most contemporary works on a global scale.



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### 4 VENICE BIENNALE

May 13th—November 26th, Venice

*“La Biennale has selected Christine Macel as a curator committed to emphasizing the important role artists play in inventing their own universes and injecting generous vitality into the world we live in.”*  
—Paolo Baratta, President

The Venice Biennale has, for over a century, been one of the most prestigious cultural institutions in the world. Established in 1895, the Biennale has an attendance of over 370,000 visitors. What makes the fair unique is its thematic organization. Every two years, the chosen curator will select a theme to be incorporated into the ‘national pavilions,’ where each country is represented by an artist that they nominate. The Canadian pavilion for 2017 will feature Geoffrey Farmer, a 49-year-old Vancouver-based artist whose inventive reconfigurations of image and sound have won him international respect amongst his Canadian peers. The fair is spread throughout Venice, so it is highly recommended that you prepare a pavilion must-see list, or hire a local art guide to help navigate your adventure.

### 5 ART BASEL

June 15th—18th, Basel, Established in 1970

*“We want to feed the entire ecosystem of the art world, which means we have to be different things to different people.”*  
—Marc Spiegler, Global Director

Art Basel Switzerland is the world’s most important art fair. Widely considered to be the barometer of the art market, only the most serious collectors attend due to the limited accessibility of accommodations and location. Art Basel brings the art world together under one roof, with a carefully selected group of 280 of the top international galleries, sharing over 4,000 artist’s works. Highlights include: ‘Parcours,’ which are site-specific sculptures and performances around the city; ‘Unlimited,’ an exhibition platform for hugely scaled projects; and ‘Statements,’ which celebrates emerging-artist solo projects. An exciting addition to the fair is Photo Basel, Switzerland’s first international art fair dedicated specifically to photography.