

ARNDT

BLOUINARTINFO

How Matthias Arndt Plans to Conquer the Asia-Pacific Art Market Part 2



Copyright Matthias Arndt 2012

MIGRATION First International Pop Up Show by ARNDT March 27th to July 10th 2012 Location: - CASSydney, 9 Jenkins Street, Sydney NSW 2000

by Nicholas Forrest

Published: April 16, 2012

Nic Forrest, Executive Editor of **Artinfo Australia**, recently caught up with **Matthias Arndt** to find out more about his foray into the Australian art market and the Asia-Pacific region. In part two of this interview, Arndt reveals his thoughts on the Australian art market and Australia's role in the Asian art scene.

See part one of the interview here: <http://www.artinfo.com/news/story/798250/how-art-world-powerhouse-matthias-arndt-plans-to-infiltrate-the-asia-pacific-market-part-1>

Does Australia have the potential to be the gateway for the Asia-Pacific art market?

Gateway may be too ambitiously said. The major hubs for the Asian Market are Hong-Kong for China and Central Asia and Singapore for South-East Asia, not to forget Korea, Japan and Mainland China... Australia can play a bigger role in the Asia-Pacific, especially in getting more Asian Art to Australia: GOMA, 4A Gallery, Art Gallery of South Australia and other institutions, but also private initiatives like White Rabbit Gallery and the fact that the Australian collector groups going to Art Hong-Kong is steadily growing, are positive signals in the right direction. But there is still a long way to go. I thought for instance that Art from Indonesia, one of the most exciting new art landscapes I discovered for myself and my activities recently would be much more popular in Australia: they are almost your only direct neighbours?

The interest is growing and we are working with a few major collections in Australia, public and private. But the majority of the Australian audience is still looking while the works by Eko Nugroho, Entang Wiharso, Agus Suwage or FX Harsono are being placed in major European and American collections by collectors who see the potential in Southeast-Asian art even before the wider Australian public. There lays a huge opportunity for the Australian art landscape to play a major role in this fast growing market and become the Pacific Portal for (South East) Asian Art.

How do you plan to market European and North American artists to the very nationalistic Australian market?

By including major pieces or entire bodies of artists works in our own projects here (we will do a solo presentation of 30 years work by Sophie Calle at Melbourne Art Fair and will bring "MIGRATION" in a second step to Melbourne also later this year) or ideally into museums and institutional exhibitions and collections. The works have to be seen in Australia and next to Australian art. But also we will point at the very competitive prices of major international artists and the stunning institutional pedigree some artists have: There is almost no major museum in the world left (except in China and Australia) where Thomas Hirschhorn or Sophie Calle did not exhibit or are collected by. And still a representative work of theirs with Museums provenance is available for under \$50,000 Australian Dollars! These are only a few of the many good reasons to show and to collect international art.

And on another note: Australian collectors and curators are very well travelled and informed, and Australian Art (unfortunately), with a few major exceptions internationally, not that widely known and respected. So the Australian audience that wishes to join the international arts community needs to invest in Asian and International Art (and also promote the Australian Art overseas - but that is a different story).

Are Australian galleries doing enough to tap into the Asian market?

I cannot speak for the Australian Galleries but the colleagues I am talking to are all aware of the opportunities and also the necessity to improve their international contacts - and Asia is (relatively :-)) close. But as I said already: There is no promised land waiting for us; The Asian Art Market is as all markets in Asia fiercely competitive. I am working in the region for more than 5 years now and nothing comes without huge investment and efforts.

What has been your most significant sale in Australia to date?

The sale of a major work by the Indian Artist Jitish Kallat in a middle six figure number to a major foundation.

Do you predict buyers of works from your Australian exhibitions to be of Australian or Asian origin?

Sure: this is why we made such a huge effort spending enough on our first show in Sydney to run a permanent gallery in Australia for a year or more. And we did some nice sales into Australian collections already. I do not expect that Australia feeds a global business such as ARNDT in the first year but I have to admit that I was expecting a bit faster action and commitment from the majority of the Audience. Talking and claiming a better position only does not bring this country closer to the international art community: only further engagement and action counts, as in any market. But the potential I see is big and contrary to Berlin in 1993 when I arrived too early, this time I have the feeling to be in the right place at the right time. The surfing has to wait, too much needs to be done.

Current Show in Berlin:

Gilbert & George LONDON PICTURES 23.3. - 30.5. Private View: March 22nd 3 to 6 pm

Current Show in Sydney:

MIGRATION

First International Pop Up Show by ARNDT

March 27th to July 10th 2012

Location: - CASSydney, 9 Jenkins Street, Sydney NSW 2000

Open times: - March 27 to 31 - 10am to 6pm

April/May/June: Thursday, Friday and Saturday only - 11 am to 5pm

(and by appointment)

Closing: - July 10

For more information visit <http://www.arndtberlin.com/website/>

Upcoming Show in Berlin:

EKO NUGROHO 27.April to 30.May - Opening April 27th

Art Fairs:

Art HK May 17 - 20

Melbourne Art Fair August 2012

Migration opened parallel to the re-opening of the new building of the MCA at the end of March 2012 in a transformed office building within walking distance from the MCA and world famous Sydney Harbour.

Migration is a significant part of Matthias Arndt's strategy to bring exciting emerging and major established international and Asian art to Australia and in turn, showing Asian Art in Europe to feature in the Berlin Gallery programme. With 25 years experience as an art expert and dealer in Europe, Matthias can now use his expertise in China, the booming South East Asian Market and Australia. There are plans for Pop-Up shows throughout these new regions over the next years together with focussed artist projects.

Thanks partly to the Australian born wife of German Born gallerist, collector and powerhouse dealer Matthias Arndt, the Australian art market has been afforded the privilege of being given special attention by Arndt and his gallery empire.

After a 25-year career as a gallerist and cultural entrepreneur, Matthias Arndt recently announced that he will spend more of his time in Asia and the Pacific Region as an art dealer and independent expert to artists, museums, private and corporate collections.

In addition to the advisory services, the central mission for Arndt's exhibition schedule will be to introduce the major positions of Contemporary Art from the new art landscapes in China and Southeast-Asia to the European audience and vice-versa.

Following *The Ephemeral*, a curated group show held in the Berlin gallery, *Migration* is the first major pop-up-show to be held in Sydney, Australia by ARNDT. As part of the new initiative of working in Australia and the Asia Pacific Region, Matthias Arndt has brought together a group of celebrated international artists to this vibrant art landscape in the Southern Hemisphere.

Migration has been produced by Matthias Arndt and his Australian born wife, Tiffany Wood, who has 20 years experience in the art world with Sotheby's in London and New York, Marianne Boesky Gallery New York and Phillips de Pury & Company New York, London and Berlin.

According to Arndt, “the Australian art scene wishes to connect to the international art community and has all the assets and potential for that. To this ambition the projects of ARNDT, with our first show in Australia, wishes to cater. And after we brought these major works from all over the world across the various ponds into the Australian’s “front yard”, it will be interesting to see how the audience reacts: Do they step out of their houses and literally just cross the street to participate or would they prefer watching through their windows from the safe position inside? We are excited to see and very optimistic.”