

The Dallas Morning News

Center Stage

From Judy Garland to Sky Mirror: A Deliciously Plump Dallas Art Fair sets the tone for Dallas Arts Week

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Irving Penn Ball Dress by Olivier Theyskens for Nina Ricci, New York, 2007 Silver print Overall: 19 x 19 in. (48.3 x 48.3 cm) the photo will be on display at the Dallas Museum of Art as part of Dallas Art Week and the Dallas Arts Fair 2016 Smithsonian American Art Museum, Gift of The Irving Penn Foundation. Copyright Conde Nast

For cultural connoisseurs, the fourth annual Dallas Arts Week offers a smorgasbord of more than 100 cultural events, just one of which is the eighth annual edition of the Dallas Art Fair opening Friday at Fashion Industry Gallery downtown.

The events range from Janelle Lutz doing a fantastic imitation of Judy Garland in *End of the Rainbow* at the Kalita Humphreys Theater to Kirk Franklin singing at the Majestic Theatre to the finals of the 24-Hour Video Race at the Angelika Mockingbird.

And that's just one day — next Sunday.

But for those whose mojo embraces visual art, the week is comparable to the buildup for the Super Bowl, the NCAA Final Four or the World Series for sports fans.

It comes close to raising the question: Why couldn't more of this be spread across a wider swath of the calendar?

Just one of the artists being shown at the fair is the highly provocative Rachel Lee Hovnanian, who gave Dallasites a racy sneak preview by posting a billboard on Dallas North Tollway, near Oak Lawn Avenue.

It reads: "Perfect-Babies.com ... Genetically Perfect Children ... Inconceivable?" It concludes by saying, "Coming to Dallas April 15," which happens to be the opening day of the fair, and voilà! There's your tie-in.

Hovnanian's art is meant to provoke, not unlike a comedy skit by Sacha Baron Cohen, whose antics completely fooled (and outraged) a gathering of Plano residents during the making of his 2009 film, *Brüno*.

As Hovnanian herself writes on her website: "My job as an artist is to elicit conversations. These conversations began around the societal obsession with beauty and narcissism."

What may be happening here is the attempt to create the perfect baby of an art fair, whose calendar has gotten deliciously plump in recent years, with this year appearing to offer more possibilities than the previous seven combined.

It all begins at 5 p.m. Wednesday, when new gallery SITE131 hosts an edgy panel discussion titled: "Who Was Lee Lozano: Artist, Dropout, Star?"

A painter as well as a visual and conceptual artist, the New Jersey-born Lozano died in Dallas in 1999 at the age of 68.

In a 2001 interview, critic Lucy Lippard noted that "Lee was extraordinarily intense, one of the first, if not the first person, who did the life-as-art thing. The kind of things other people did as art, she really did as life — and it took us awhile to figure that out."

Later that day, from 6 to 9 p.m., the Dallas Museum of Art unveils its latest hot new show, "Irving Penn: Beyond Beauty." An extraordinarily gifted photographer who created lasting, memorable images like no one else's, Penn hailed from quite a bloodline: His brother Arthur Penn directed

the 1967 Warren Beatty-Faye Dunaway classic, *Bonnie and Clyde*, which was filmed in North Texas.

Should someone arrange a screening of *Bonnie and Clyde* during art-fair week, we would truly have everything. Local trivia: A then-Lake Highlands High School student named Patsy McClenny (later known as Morgan Fairchild) was hired to play Dunaway's double, thus launching her own career.

From 7 to 9 p.m. Wednesday, The Power Station trumpets the start of the Dallas Art Fair by opening a racy exhibition by Karl Holmqvist.

The show will include two new large-scale sculptures, a short film and a live performance. The sculptures spell out the words TUFF and LOVE. Holmqvist will stage a performance of the Throbbing Gristle's "Discipline" with New York electronic music composer and performer Stefan Tcherepnin.

On Thursday morning from 10 to 11, Art Fair visitors are encouraged to check out the PumpHouse, where layers of paint, marks and tracings "tell the varied history of the site," which was transformed years ago by art philanthropist Deedie Rose and her late husband, Rusty Rose — one of three couples whose art holdings form the Fast Forward bequest to the Dallas Museum of Art — into an art installation and private event space.

From 2 to 3 that afternoon, the fair will host a viewing of the Karpidas Collection, which Pauline Karpidas began in the 1970s. The Karpidas Family Collection is described as one of "the most renowned private holdings of art in the world." It features 18 international artists, including Tracey Emin, Andy Warhol and Christopher Wool.

The fair is even offering music. At 10 p.m. Thursday, the Dallas Symphony Orchestra will present a "special installation by Barbara Kasten" that will serve as a prelude to the second annual Soluna International Music & Arts Festival, which begins in Dallas in late May. On Friday, the fair attempts to take away the pain of Tax Day by offering a breakfast from 9 to 11 a.m. with renowned artist Paula Crown, whose exhibition "Bearings Down" is on view at the Goss-Michael Foundation, which is hosting the breakfast.

After leaving Dallas, Crown will journey to Cuba with other members of President Barack Obama's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities. I recommend she listen to Jackson Browne's "Going Down to Cuba" before she goes, for there is no better song. The Art Fair scene shifts that evening to Dallas Contemporary, with the focus on artists Dan Colen, Helmut Lang and Paola Pivi.

Colen's exhibition is his first large-scale show in North America. Lang's sculptures will round out the program, along with Pivi's exotic show, which promises a "slight subversion of the real — resulting in whimsical and fantastical situations. Bears made of feathers, upside-down planes and whipped cream covered alligators all have a place in Pivi's oeuvre." I've always liked the word: oeuvre. It is Pivi's first solo show in the U.S.

But that's not all. From 10 p.m. to midnight Friday, Culture Hole at 3816 Commerce St. promises to chase away the Tax Day blues with performances by international artists in an underground project space below The Power Station.

From 9 to 11 a.m. Saturday, the art fair is hosting an open house of The Warehouse, the project initiated by Howard Rachofsky and Vernon Faulconer to make their collections available to curators, scholars, critics and students.

At noon Saturday, the Dallas Art Fair uncorks “a discussion of the origins of Southern yard shows by Bill Arnett.”

Here’s the description: “For four decades Bill Arnett, the founder of the Atlanta-based Souls Grown Deep Foundation, has been documenting and preserving the work of Southern African-American vernacular artists as well as publishing a series of books and mounting museum surveys on the field. A discussion about the history of Southern yard shows and environments will start the event, which will then shift focus to the Alabama artist, Joe Minter, whose vast outdoor environment is one of the last vestiges of this art form.”

At 2 p.m. Saturday, the scene shifts to the Nasher Sculpture Center, where its 360 series examines “Agents, Advisors, Devils and Apostates: The New Art World.” The event poses the question: “In a rapidly changing market, who defines the value of art?” You can ponder that while closing out the night at the annual Eye Ball celebration across the street from the Joule Hotel. The Eye in this case is contemporary artist Tony Tasset’s 30-foot-tall sculpture.

The final day of the fair, April 17, begins with a “Texas tour” of the Dallas Cowboys Art Collection at AT&T Stadium.

Its centerpiece, of course, is *Sky Mirror*, the lavish outdoor sculpture designed by British Indian sculptor Anish Kapoor, whose London studios I have had the pleasure of touring with architects of the Cowboys’ collection: Gene Jones, wife of team owner Jerry Jones, and their daughter, Charlotte Jones Anderson. Mr. Jones also made the tour, which took place two days before the Cowboys beat the Jacksonville Jaguars at Wembley Stadium in London in November 2014. Kapoor’s *Sky Mirror* carried with it quite a price tag: More than \$13 million.

What I loved about the studio was a room that seemed to be filled with miniature versions of *Sky Mirror*, as though we were lost in an episode of *Star Trek*.

Sky Mirror is the perfect place to say sayonara to both the fair and Dallas Arts Week. Maybe Gordon Keith of The Ticket (1310-AM, 96.7-FM) would be willing to pass out audiotapes of his killer imitation of “the fake *Sky Mirror*,” addressing our thousands of out-of-town visitors as they prepare to fly back home.

Forty-one cities around the world are represented at the fair, so why not let them leave with a bit of whimsy as they head back home?