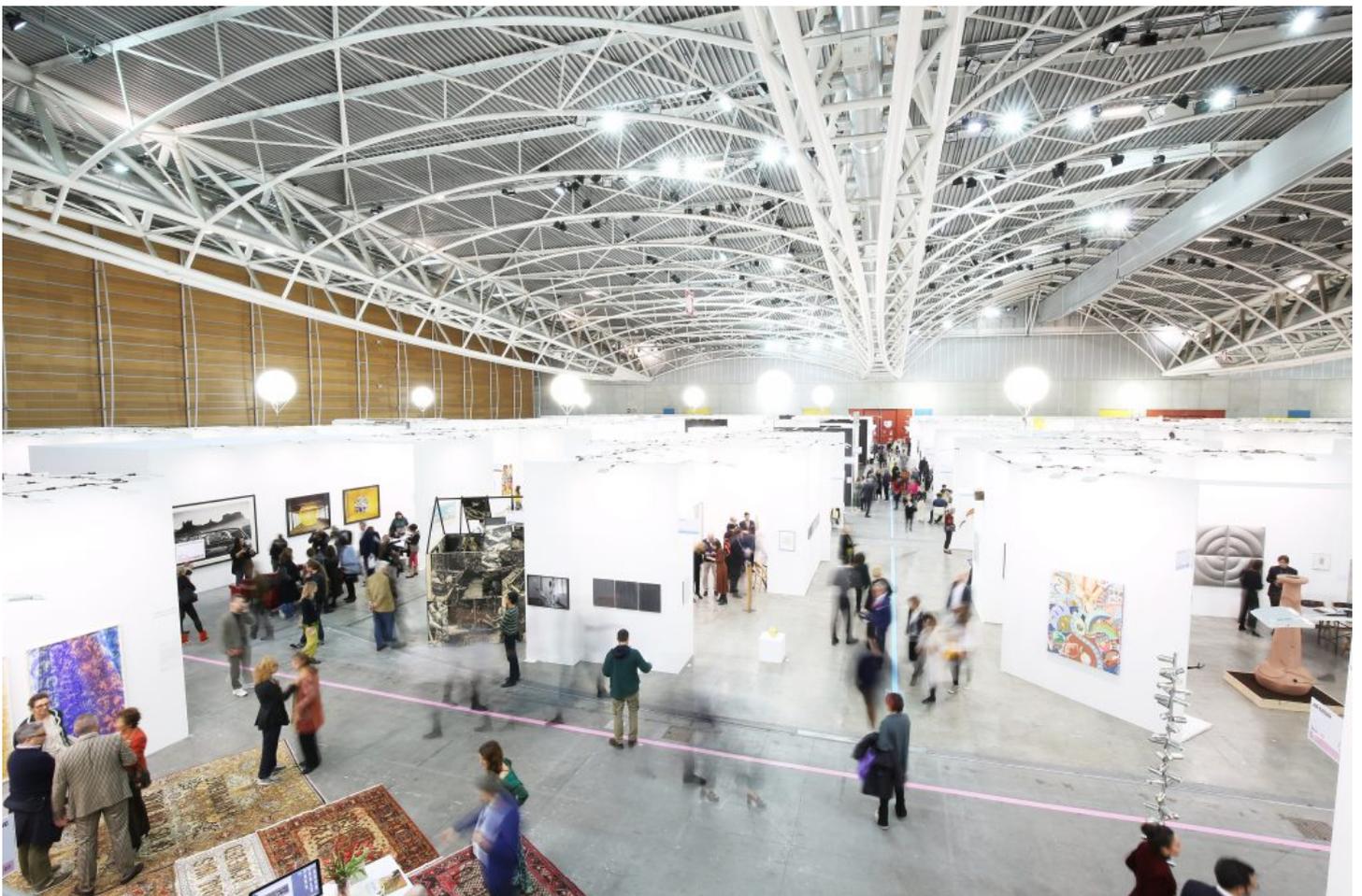


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Artissima, Italy's Leading Contemporary Art Fair, Returns With an Unexpected Focus: India

The fair's special feature 'Hub India' will showcase work by 65 contemporary artists from the subcontinent.

Artnet Gallery Network (<https://news.artnet.com/about/artnet-gallery-network-737>), November 3, 2021



Installation view of Artissima, 2019.

This weekend, Artissima, Italy's leading contemporary art fair, will open in Turin for its 28th edition. The fair will mark a joyful return for the Northern Italian art scene after being hard-hit by the pandemic over the past year,

with 154 galleries from 37 countries in attendance. Since its founding in 1994, Artissima has defined itself as an international meeting point that supports cutting-edge experimentation in the art world.



Myna Mukherjee, founder and director of Engendered, is co-curating the fair's extensive "Hub India" program.

Building on that tradition, this year the fair will debut "Hub India: Maximum Minimum (<https://www.artissima.art/en/hub-india/>)," an expansive program that showcases the galleries, institutions, and artists shaping the Indian cultural scene today. Curated by Myna Mukherjee, founder and director of Engendered, New Delhi, and Davide Quadrio, founder and director of Arthub, the project unfolds at the fair pavilion and expands into the city itself. According to organizers, "Hub India" is poised to be the largest and most significant conversation between contemporary art from India and the West in recent memory.



Nox Umbra, *Night Shadows* (2021). Courtesy of Shrine Empire.

A special section of the fair will be devoted to Indian galleries and institutions, offering a cross section of startling breadth and complexity with works by 65 influential Indian contemporary artists. Participants include Nature Morte (New Delhi), Gallery Espace (New Delhi), Emami Art (Kolkata), Akar Prakar (Kolkata and New Delhi), Art Alive (New Delhi), Latitude 28 (New Delhi), Shrine Empire (New Delhi), Sakshi Art (Mumbai), Jhaveri Contemporary (Mumbai), Vadehra Art Gallery (New Delhi), Volte (Mumbai), and the Kiran Nadar Museum of Art (New Delhi). Artists will address subjects from India's ancient spiritualism to modern materialism, its colonial legacy and rising global influence, its tensions between agrarian and urban existence, and more.

Simultaneously, the sprawling exhibition "[Classical Radical](https://www.turismotorino.org/en/experiences/events/hub-india-classical-radical) (<https://www.turismotorino.org/en/experiences/events/hub-india-classical-radical>)" will take place at three museums throughout the city—the [Palazzo Madama](https://www.artissima.art/en/open/hub-india-classical-radical-disruptive-confluences-3/) (<https://www.artissima.art/en/open/hub-india-classical-radical-disruptive-confluences-3/>), the [MAO Museo d'Arte Orientale](https://www.artissima.art/en/open/hub-india-classical-radical-residues-resonance-5/) (<https://www.artissima.art/en/open/hub-india-classical-radical-residues-resonance-5/>), and the [Accademia Albertina di Belle Arti di Torino](https://www.artissima.art/en/open/hub-india-classical-radical-multitudes-assemblages/) (<https://www.artissima.art/en/open/hub-india-classical-radical-multitudes-assemblages/>)—in a collaboration between Artissima and the Fondazione Torino Musei.

"Classical Radical" examines recent and Modern works from the Indian subcontinent that harken back to the country's rich antiquity but through a contemporary sociological lens. The exhibition questions how India's nuanced histories, with their own motifs, styles, and ideas, can transcend millennia to exist in this cultural moment.

Complementing the tripartite exhibition, the Accademia Albertina di Belle Arti will also host the film installation *Sama: Symbols and Gestures in Contemporary Art Practices. Italy and India, Vol. 1*, which posits the two countries as historical, cultural, and socio-economic extremes of the Euro-Asian continent.

Learn more about 'Hub India' programming [here](https://www.artissima.art/en/hub-india/) (<https://www.artissima.art/en/hub-india/>). Artissima runs from November 5 through November 7, 2021.

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Artissima, the Italian Contemporary Fair, Serves Up Substantial, Risk-Taking Works for Its Target Audience of Art Cognoscenti

Curators, collectors, and gallerists reunited after a year of upheaval at the Italian fair known for edgy experimentation.

Vivienne Chow (<https://news.artnet.com/about/vivienne-chow-1111>), November 5, 2021



The Artissima fair returns to Turin, Italy, after a chaotic year. Courtesy of Perottino-Piva/Artissima.

Joy was in the air when Lorenzo Giusti and Mouna Mekouar finally saw each other on Thursday's opening day of Artissima, the Italian contemporary art fair in Turin, Italy.

For two years, Giusti, the director of Galleria d'Arte Moderna e Contemporanea in Bergamo, and Mekouar, a Paris-based curator, have worked together virtually to curate the fair's Back to the Future special feature, which last year was presented only digitally. When they finally met each other in person yesterday, standing in front of one of their selections—one of Julião Sarmento's last works before his death this year—it was more than just about seeing the fruit of their effort. It was a jubilant reunion.

Such was the ambience of the first day of the return of the respected Italian contemporary art fair in physical form since the [year of chaos](https://news.artnet.com/market/italy-lockdown-museums-second-wave-1920751) amid the pandemic. It was a congregation of art dealers, collectors, friends from the Italian art world—not to mention an assembly of thought-provoking and edgy contemporary artworks.

“Being able to come back, and things are kind of returning to normal, I just appreciate everything,” said the Berlin-based dealer Isabella Bortolozzi, a veteran exhibitor of the fair. “People are just happy to see work in the flesh. People are tired of Zoom meetings. You need to experience art.”



Artissima 2021. Courtesy of Perottino-Piva/Artissima.

The 28th edition of Artissima, which runs through Sunday, November 7 at Oval Lingotto, is divided into seven sub-sectors (<https://www.artissima.art/en/sections/>), and hosts a total of 154 galleries from 37 countries, down from 209 galleries in 2019. Travel restrictions and the ongoing rehabilitation of Italy, an early locus of the pandemic, may have created uncertainties for some dealers, particularly those from the United States, said fair director Ilaria Bonacossa. Still, more than half of exhibitors—56 percent—came from outside of Italy, as well as an array of visitors who flew in from abroad.

“The vibe is good. I’m very happy,” Bonacossa told Artnet News. “Many great collectors have come. But the most important thing is that the quality of art is very good. Galleries take risks in presenting their work.”

Galleries can indeed afford to take risks here. Unlike some of the world’s biggest art fairs, Artissima is not only smaller in terms of size. It is essentially owned by the city: run by a company that is affiliated with Fondazione Torino Musei, and the fair’s trademark is jointly owned by Regione Piemonte, Città Metropolitana di Torino and Città di Torino. The booth fees, as a result, are generally more affordable, starting at €4,000 (\$4,600). Bonacossa said there were no discounts this year, but the fair has made a one-time exception by allowing galleries to pay by installments. Price points of the works on show range from a few thousand euros to around €30,000 to €40,000 (\$34,700 to \$46,200).

Among the risk-takers is Gianluca Gentili of the Florence-based gallery Veda. His booth in the Dialogue/Monologue section showcased the politically-charged installation *Zero Is My Country, 2021*, by the Marseille- and London-based Dominique White. “My presentation intends on making a statement on the artist,” said Gentili.

The fair is an ideal international launchpad for young galleries in the region. “We selected Artissima as our first international fair because of its emphasis on ambitious, curated installations, which is very much aligned with our ethos,” said Alexander Caspari, founder and director of the London-based gallery Encounter, which presented a solo booth by abstract painter Alexis Teplin.

A handful of galleries reported sales on the first day, including the Paris-based 31 Projects, which sold three paintings by South African artist Aviwe Plaatjie to Italian and Asian collectors for around €5,000 (\$5,800) each. Belgium’s Dauwens & Beernaert sold works by Loïc Van Zeebroek and Charlotte Vandenbroucke to Museum Voorlinden in the Netherlands at prices ranging from €2,000 to €10,000 (\$2,300 to \$11,600). Galleria Mazzoli, of Berlin and Modena, sold a painting by Mimmo Paladino for €45,000 (\$52,000) to a European collector, while Galerie Urs Meile, of Lucerne and Beijing, sold two small drawings by Mirko Basaglia for just under €10,000 (\$11,600) each.



Nome's presentation of Goldin+Senneby. Photo: Vivienne Chow.

Sales at Artissima, however, follow a very different rhythm, said Alex Mor, director of Mor-Charpentier. The Paris/Bogotá gallery clinched a few initial sales, but he was not impatient. "It's not an art fair where you sell a lot on the first day like a race. The collectors here take more time. You reconnect with people, have intense and profound conversations. It's another way of working and it's special," Mor said.

The emphasis on curated exhibitions appeals to not only industry players but also to collectors. While Asian buyers were notably thin on the ground, due to travel restrictions, many prominent European names were present. The elegantly dressed mega Italian collector Patrizia Sandretto Re Rebaudengo was seen enthusiastically greeting gallerists and friends during the early hours of the fair before heading off to prepare for the preview of her foundation's new exhibition and a gala dinner at her house. Lena Baume from Paris, Jonathan Cheung from Hong Kong, Safia El Malqui from Monaco—and, from the U.S., Laurie Ziegler, as well as Tony Podesta—were among those that attended the opening day.

From Belgium, Alain Servais and Eva Ruiz were spotted admiring the booth of the Berlin-based gallery Nome, with a solo presentation that challenged notions of monetary value by the conceptual Swedish duo Goldin+Senneby. Servais told Artnet News that Artissima has always remained in his art calendar, as there he could discover artists and works that wouldn't be seen at other fairs. "The show is not just about selling, but also getting artists exposure to curators," he said. "It involves 50 curators. Nobody in the world does that."

And the curatorial focus means stringent standards. On Sunday morning, the fair's committee will do a round of evaluation to see which galleries have managed to deliver on the exhibition proposal in their fair applications. Expect a 20 to 30 percent change in the galleries list next year, said Bonacossa. "We want to give as many galleries as possible a chance," she said.

Artissima (<https://www.artissima.art/en/>) runs November 5–7 at Oval Lingotto, Turin, Italy.

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What Gives an Art Fair Staying Power? Turin's Artissima Remains a Haven for Old-School Collectors After a Quarter-Century

The fair isn't looking to expand into a brand. It just wants you to see (and buy) good art.

Javier Pes (<https://news.artnet.com/about/javier-pes-728>), November 1, 2019



An invited collector on preview day of Artissima 2019 in Turin. Courtesy of Artissima.

There's a huge soccer match in Turin on Saturday, the Italian city where art, like soccer, is a deeply serious business. "Half my team are Torino but we have to cheer Juventus at the fair," says Ilaria Bonacossa, the director of Artissima. Juve is sponsoring the fair's child-friendly junior section for the second time. The manager of Juve's women's team turned out yesterday, October 31, as the fair kicked off its 2019 edition. So, the bias is understandable.

Now in its 26th edition, Artissima stands out in a crowded field of European art fairs held every fall because it is committed to serious art for serious collectors. It isn't looking to expand internationally, nor is it particularly interested in converting art novices into first-time buyers. Artissima is comfortable existing for the already converted. As one French collector who preferred to remain unnamed put it: "It's not branded—it's different."

And indeed, throughout the aisles, brand names give way to lesser-known galleries from Tehran, Beirut, and Tel Aviv. Sculpture doesn't get more serious than Yael Bartana's haunting new "fossilised" automatic weapons, *R.I.P. AK47* and *R.I.P. UZI*, on the booth of Sommer Contemporary Art of Tel Aviv and Zurich, which were instant talking points.



Yael Bartana *R.I.P. AK47* (2019) at Sommer Contemporary Art. Photo by J. Pes.

Not a "Shopping Mall" Fair

"There is a tradition of Italian collectors being quite brave," says Bonacossa, the former curator of Turin-based super-collector Patrizia Sandretto Re Rebaudengo's foundation, who now juggles Artissima with directing the Fondazione La Raia near Genoa. "International collectors come because they find strong new things, not the same power 100."

That view was also endorsed by the Belgian collector and art-fair aficionado Alain Servais, who tweeted that Artissima is a healthy contrast to other fairs that can feel like "shopping malls" full of branded products. His early purchases included an interactive sculpture comprised of a set of rolling pins made of various animal skins by the Brazilian collective OPAVIVARÁ at A Gentil Carioca gallery of Rio de Janeiro.

Museum leaders were also in ample supply. Fifty curators and museum directors had signed on to attend, a remarkable number given the size of the fair. Among those that made purchases was the Castello di Rivoli museum, which bought the VR installation *Real Violence* (2017) by the American artist Jordan Wolfson for an undisclosed sum from Sadie Coles. The work is, virtually speaking, the hardest-hitting at Artissima: Don the goggles and earphones and you will witness a man beating a defenseless victim in what seems like an unprovoked street attack. The more than two-minute-long bloodbath is accompanied by a Hebrew prayer and brutal sound effects. (Full disclosure: the first whack of the baseball bat was enough for me.) The director of Castello di Rivoli, Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev says: "It is the first VR work that embodies the violence in the medium."



Augustus Serapinas *Blue Pen* (2018-19). Courtesy of Emalin and David Dale Gallery.

A Place for Risks

Part of the benefit of Artissima is that participation “is not expensive for galleries,” Bonacossa says. “So [they] can take risks with a young artist.” Proof of the pudding is the way the London-based gallery Emalin and Apalazzo of Brescia quickly sold a show-stopping installation of bread loaves by Augustus Serapinas, the youngest participant in the main exhibition of the 2019 Venice Biennale. Called *Blue Pen* (2018), the ingeniously engineered sculpture was first shown at the 2018 Glasgow International. The Italian designer Luca Bombassei bought it for €35,000 (\$39,000) and plans to show it at his forthcoming exhibition space in Perugia.

Meanwhile, another well-trafficked portion of the fair was its much-imitated section “Back to the Future,” which features works made from the 1960s to 2000 with a focus on overlooked artists. Standout projects this year include the American-born, Britain-based Liliane Lijn’s video and bronze sculptures at Rodeo of London and Athens; veteran Japanese artist Kimiyo Mishima’s collages from the late 1960s at Sokyo Gallery Kyoto; an ephemeral sculpture made of pillars of salt by the radical architecture collective Superstudio presented by Pinksummer of Genoa; and the German-based, Hungarian artist Endre Tót’s redacted-text paintings of the late 1980s at ACB of Budapest.



Robert Breer *Variation*(1970). Photo: by Aurélien Mole, Courtesy gb agency, Paris.

For collectors and curator unfamiliar with the US artist Robert Breer (1926-2011) gb agency’s booth is a memorable introduction. Early sales of historic pieces from “Back to the Future” included 21 of the artist’s colorful mechanical “creepers.” Made in 1970, the mesmerizing miniature kinetic pieces were snapped up by an Italian foundation within hours of the fair’s opening. The artist’s works in the presentation—which artist Ryan Gander called “a genius stand”—included experimental film, drawings, and animation sketches priced from

€10,000 to €100,000 (\$11,000 to \$111,000). The gallery's Marisol Rodríguez says she keeps coming back to Artissima because there are "serious collectors here, who are very educated about different artists, and different epochs."



Richard Wilson *Hang On A Minute Lads... I've Got an Idea*, installed in Turin, 2019, for Artissima. Photo by J.Pes.

There is much to see outside the confines of the fair, too. Two of Artissima's off-site projects stand out: the exhibition "Abstract Sex" held at Jana, a famed Turin fashion boutique, which includes thought provoking works by the likes of Candice Breitz (KOW gallery), Simon Fujiwara (DVIR), plus Barbara Hammer's 1976 film *Multiple Orgasm* from the artist's estate (KOW and Corrado Levi). Elsewhere in Turin its long art weekend started early with British sculptor Richard Wilson's spectacular sculpture of a full-sized bus teetering on the edge of a tall building. Inspired by the famous cliff-hanging ending of the 1969 heist movie, *The Italian Job*, which was filmed in Turin, the precarious sculpture was unveiled on Wednesday, the day Britain was due to leave the European Union (but didn't). Politics, like art and soccer, is an unpredictable and precarious business.

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