



Lucy Rees and Rozalia Jovanovic, "14 Highlights of Art Basel in Miami Beach," *Galerie*, December 8, 2018.

Galerie



Detail of Derek Fordjour's installation *Backroom*.

14 Highlights of Art Basel in Miami Beach

The 17th edition of Art Basel in Miami Beach featured intriguing works by Derek Fordjour, Betty Woodman, and Keith Haring

by LUCY REES AND ROZALIA JOVANOVIC

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The 17th edition of Art Basel in Miami Beach kicked off for VIPs at the Miami Convention Center on Wednesday, December 6. The \$615 million renovation resulted in a less congested and somewhat more civilized first-day experience as collectors navigated the 268 exhibitors without the usual mad rush.



Spotted during the VIP opening, which began at 11 a.m., was the usual crowd of museum directors, curators, collectors, and artists wandering through the expansive aisles, including artist Chuck Close; New Museum director Massimiliano Gioni and his wife, High Line Art director **Cecilia Alemani**; **Performa** director RoseLee Goldberg; director of the new **Frieze L.A.** Bettina Korek; and dealer Jeffrey Deitch.

Within the first few hours, galleries were enthusiastically making sales, with everything from a historic work by Philip Guston going for \$7.5 million at Hauser & Wirth to a sold-out booth of works by rising star Derek Fordjour at Josh Lilley, who is showing at the fair for the first time. Major museum works spotted included a 1955 Rothko at Helly Nahmad (on offer for \$50 million and on reserve as of Friday, December 7, the second public day of the fair); a monumental, 258-inch-long James Rosenquist at Landau Fine Art (\$2 million); a 1982 work by Rosenquist, *Reflector*, sold at Thaddeus Ropac on the second public day for \$1.2 million.

Read on for our selection of highlights from the fair from both established and emerging artists.



Derek Fordjour's installation *Backroom*.

Photo: Courtesy of the artist and Josh Lilley



Derek Fordjour, *Backroom*, Josh Lilley

Derek Fordjour transformed the booth at Josh Lilley into a carnivalesque scene complete with a gravel floor, paintings hung on walls of corrugated steel, and a kinetic sculpture dotted with light bulbs that resembles a Ferris wheel. The work, *Backroom*, also features a performance. A small boy who appeared to be five or six years old sat on an upturned white bucket. According to the press release, the boy was meant to be "generally just hanging around for his paycheck," but in the context of the art fair, he appeared to be bored and waiting for his parents to finish looking at art. Fordjour's public art installation, *Half Mast*, which deals with the national reckoning with mass shootings, is currently on view at the Whitney Museum.