

Obama Image Sells Quickly at AIPAD Photography Show

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The Association of International Photography Art Dealers (AIPAD) annual Photography Show kicked off with a VIP preview at the Park Avenue Armory on April 14. The fair's 86 international dealers brought a wide range of work, spanning the medium's earliest years to today's digital masterpieces.

Here are ten contemporary works that caught our eye, including a couple of pictures of Barack Obama that found buyers before the fair even opened.



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1. Daisuke Yokota, Untitled, at Harper's Books Inc., East Hampton, New York

"He has almost a cult following in the places that he's known," Harper's Books Inc. owner Harper Levine told artnet News of Japan's Daisuke Yokota, who has already found success in Asia and Europe.

Through the photographer's manipulations, expired film can be mistaken for painting. Exposed in different temperatures of water and with a variety of chemicals, the layers of film sometimes stick together, creating strange and beautiful abstract pieces. Yokota's work will appear in an upcoming group show at Miyako Yoshinaga (April 21–May 28, 2016)—the artist's first exhibition in New York.



2. Jean-Pierre Evrard, Hôtel des Sables à Tatu (2012), at Galerie Esther Woerdehoff, Paris

At first glance, Jean-Pierre Evrard's work could be from the first half of the 20th century. That's because the French artist prints his work on vintage paper, creating a look and feel from a bygone era.

Described by Galerie Esther Woerdehoff as a "globetrotter," the street photographer captured this dramatic geometric composition formed by cast shadows in Morocco.



3. Zhang Wei, Artificial Theater-Big star, Marilyn Monroe (2014), at 798 Photo Gallery, Beijing

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There's something slightly off about the instantly recognizable large-scale photos of John Lennon, Audrey Hepburn, and Marilyn Monroe at the booth of Beijing's 798 Photo Gallery, but it's hard to put your finger on exactly what it is.

As it turns out, Zhang Wei created the portraits by using composites of some 300 Chinese men and women. The "Artificial Theater" series blends race and gender with delightfully destabilizing effects.



4. Maggie Taylor, *The Seeker* (2014), at Catherine Couturier, Houston

Photoshop maven Maggie Taylor continues to inspire with her dreamy compositions, created largely from vintage photographs she collects and scans.

Taylor's densely-layered, fantastical worlds also featured manipulated imagery of objects she places directly on a scanner bed, such as the vibrant fern gown worn by the young girl in *The Seeker*.



5. Vincent Laforet, *New York I*, March 16 (2015), at Fahey/Klein Gallery, Los Angeles

A striking booth from Fahey/Klein pairs celebrity portraits (don't miss the massive black-and-white photograph of Patti Smith and Robert Mapplethorpe) with unreal looking aerial shots by Vincent Laforet, who captures the world's ever-evolving urban landscapes from above.

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A shot of New York City, for instance, taken last March, glows an otherworldly blue and purple, the high-tech LED lights of Times Square contrasting with the older neon, in yellow and green, and tungsten, in orange. This view gave Laforet some insights into how lighting reveals socio-economic divides, gallery curator Nicholas Fahey told artnet News.



6. Adam Magyar, Shanghai #517 (2007), at Julie Saul Gallery, New York

The massive population of one of Asia's biggest cities is distilled into an orderly grid in Adam Magyar's Shanghai #517, from his "Squares" series.

Each person was shot from above, and then digitally placed on a tiled floor in unnaturally-neat rows. "He cataloged them almost like insects, like specimens," Julie Saul said to artnet News.



7. Doug and Mike Starn, maybe it's whatever's in my head (2016), at HackelBury Fine Art, London

We've spotted Doug and Mike Starn's work at fairs before, ethereal pieces based on photographs of tree branches. The duo print the negative images on strips of Japanese tissue paper which are then varnished together.

Their latest work enters the realm of sculpture, transferring the images onto stained glass, and displaying the panels with a twisted tree branch on a bed of moss.

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8. Mariana Cook, Barack and Michelle Obama, Chicago, Illinois, at Steven Kasher Gallery, New York

In the final year of Barack Obama's presidency, the two images of the US Commander in Chief at New York's Steven Kasher Gallery had a larger than life presence at the fair.

Mariana Cook's intimate 1996 photo captures Barack and Michelle at home in Chicago, in the years before his ascent to the presidency. Fourteen years later, Mark Seliger's photo of Obama from behind suggests a man looking back on a long, distinguished career.

"We actually sold them before the fair opened," said gallery representative Cassandra Johnson to artnet News, pointing to the two red dots below the Seliger.



9. Niko Luoma, Adaptation of Guernica (2015), at Bryce Wolkowitz Gallery, New York

Niko Luoma takes abstract photography to a new level with this colorful diptych inspired by Pablo Picasso's Guernica. His analogue process involves repeatedly exposing a single negative to sections of colored light.

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"It's like a Cubist photo," gallery representative Andrew Wingert told artnet News.



10. Chris Jordan, Blue (2015) at Verve Gallery, Santa Fe

A social message permeates the work of Chris Jordan, above, who uses Photoshop to create an image of Picasso's Blue Nude from tiny photos of 78,000 water bottles. Together, they represent a small fraction of the world's population without access to safe drinking water.

To have one bottle per person, Jordan would have to print 10,000 copies of the 60-by-70-inch image, which viewed together would be nearly ten miles long.

The Photography Show is on view at the Park Avenue Armory, 643 Park Avenue, April 14–17, 2016.