

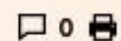
## Paris Internationale – a killing time at the fair with new dynamism

The cutting-edge event challenges the traditional models



Work by Chris Korda for the Church of Euthanasia at Goswell Road gallery

Anny Shaw 6 HOURS AGO



Five years after its launch, the cutting-edge contemporary art fair Paris Internationale is cementing its place in the French capital's art scene. "Not many people thought the project would survive, back in 2015, but here we are. It's enormously satisfying," says Clément Delépine, the fair's co-director.

In establishing a more domestic alternative to the standard art fair, Delépine and his co-director Silvia Ammon have carved out a niche by giving a platform to emerging commercial galleries and a new wave of independent spaces.

Free to visit, the fair is billed as a non-profit venture. Delépine explains, "It's a commercial enterprise, but it doesn't make a profit. All proceeds are reinvested into the organisation for the following year. It's a business model that's oriented towards collectivity — sharing resources, counting on goodwill and benevolence." The fair, for example, relies heavily on voluntary work.

Until now Paris Internationale has been nomadic, occupying buildings undergoing renovation or changing hands to keep the budget down. This year for the first time the event is returning to rue Alfred de Vigny, a plum spot opposite the Grand Palais where Fiac, Paris's grande dame of fairs, is held concurrently. "But," Ammon says, "we will definitely have to move again next year." Delépine notes that venues are usually not finalised before the spring of each year, which, he says, can be "stressful, but ultimately rewarding when it comes off".

Keeping costs down for exhibitors has been crucial. "We offer all our exhibitors an inclusive fee, which covers furniture, internet, insurance, as well as free off-site storage for art and crates — all the areas where traditional fairs make a margin," Ammon says. Booth prices range from €4,000 to €7,000.



650mAh presented Tenant of Culture's 'Sample Sale' in 2018 © Veli-Matti Hoikka/Courtesy the artist and 650mAh

The non-profit component of the fair has steadily grown since its inception, and this year eight independent and artist-run organisations have been selected to exhibit alongside 42 commercial galleries. In Delépine's view, "It is important for us to acknowledge the contribution these spaces make to the contemporary art ecosystem in Paris and beyond."

One such organisation is 650mAh, a project space located inside MIST vape shop in Hove, East Sussex, which is recreating a vape lounge at the fair. Communal "de-stress and relax" vape sessions will be held daily; e-liquids designed by Paul Barsch & Tilman Hornig, Débora Delmar and Lloyd Corporation, among others, are available for €20 a bottle. According to a press blurb, 650mAh is interested in the "intersection between vaping as a commercial contemporary technology and noncommercial contemporary art".

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**It is important for us to acknowledge the contribution of non-profit spaces to the art ecosystem**

Clément Delépine

Returning for the second year, their co-founder Tabitha Steinberg says they were drawn to the fair's "untraditional" environment. "We like that we are forced to navigate a domestic space. It makes the install harder but an interesting challenge," she says.

While the main galleries are given white cube-style booths, the non-profits set up shop in the more unexpected spaces, quite often the bathrooms and kitchens. Goswell Road, a Parisian gallery named after the north London thoroughfare, is transforming a former Jacuzzi into a merchandise store for the Church of Euthanasia, a controversial eco-conscious project founded by the transgender artist Chris Korda in 1992. The church has been decried as a dangerous cult (its main motto is Save the Planet — Kill Yourself) but, with the climate crisis deepening, Korda's project is gaining traction. "Greta Thunberg and the younger generation have really changed the game," says Anthony Stephinson, an artist and co-founder of Goswell Road.

He describes the church as an “environmental educational group”. Stephinson adds, “They preach that the best thing we can do is to kill ourselves. It’s about stopping your lineage.” The other three pillars of the religion are abortion, sodomy and cannibalism.

Korda’s work has not really been shown in an art context. At the fair, Goswell Road is selling T-shirts (€25), stickers (€5) and badges (€2.50). The artist is also creating new pieces to reflect his position today. One new design reads: “Winning The War On The Future”.



Korda's message resonates in other contexts too. As Brexit threatens to dent London's position as the cultural capital of Europe, Paris is increasingly being touted as a viable alternative. Stephinson welcomes the arrival of mega galleries from London and elsewhere. He says: "It's great David Zwirner is opening in Paris, it means other interest follows. That can only benefit the emerging scene, which Paris Internationale has been so instrumental in growing."

Delépine, meanwhile, detects a "new dynamism" in Paris. "No one is happy about what's happening in the UK right now, but there is a sense that this is now the moment for us," he says. The director is keen to stress the global outlook of the fair, however. "Only 15 per cent are French exhibitors, so it's really geared towards the outside, there's a European ideal to it," he says. Times like these call for radical solutions, and, in the art world at least, Paris Internationale is delivering just that.

*October 16-20, [parisinternationale.com](http://parisinternationale.com)*

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