

Bacon fails to sell as Christie's feels the crunch

Gloom at major European art fair as boom in sales seen over

MADRID, Feb 12. (Agencies): A gloomy air surrounds ARCO, one of Europe's biggest contemporary art fairs, with participants predicting the global financial crisis will put an end to the boom in sales enjoyed in recent years.

"Before people would buy fast and then think about it, people now take their time to decide," said Fiona Liewehr, the director of Georg Karyl Fine Arts gallery in Vienna which has taken part in the fair each year since 2002.

Among the items the gallery brought to ARCO, which opened Wednesday and runs until Monday, was a black replica of a skeleton that hung upright inside a wooden crate marked "fragile" in red letters by US artist Mark Dion.

During boom times, contemporary art was sought after by the new rich as a badge of affluence as much as luxury cars and branded jewellery.

But with Spain and most major European economies facing their worst recession in years, art galleries are finding it harder to sell contemporary works.

"People have no money to spend. In the



Two women, view an art work called 'Last Supper - Gaza' by Vivek Vilasini, from India at the ARCO International Art Fair in Madrid, Feb 11. India is the guest country at ARCO this year. (AP)

end we will sell less than last year," said Floor Wullems, the director of the Annet Gelink gallery in Amsterdam which displayed mostly black and white photographs at the fair.

A total of 238 galleries from 32 nations are taking part in ARCO this year, 57 fewer galleries than in 2008 when the event drew a record 200,000 visitors.

ARCO director Lourdes Fernandez said some foreign galleries declined to take part in the six-day fair this year because of the global economic crisis.

"It is undeniable that the economic recession will affect the fair," she told reporters on the eve of ARCO's opening. "Sales will not be like in past years, but they will not be bad. We want to convince people that, even though there is a crisis, art is a very important component in people's lives, it is enriching and a good investment," she added.

Fallen

Daniele Pescali, who runs the Imago Art gallery in London, said now is a good time to invest in contemporary art since prices have fallen between 15 and 25 percent over the past six months.

"There is a very, very low cash flow but I think it is still a good investment for people, better than houses or stocks," he said.

The items on display at ARCO from Pescali's gallery, which focuses on works from Italy, ranged in price from 5,000 euros to 2.5 million euros (\$3.2 million).

Some participating artists, like Britain's Jodie Carey, whose works include sculptures made up of plaster replicas of bones, believe the global economic slowdown could be an opportunity for younger artists like herself.

"Galleries are interested in lower prices, and that is an opportunity for the new generations," the 27-year-old told daily newspaper Publico.

The fair is turning its spotlight on emerging markets once again this year, with India as the featured country. Brazil was the spotlighted nation in 2008.

Thirteen galleries and 50 artists are taking part in the "Panorama India showcase put together by Mumbai-based curator Bose Krishnamachari who said he had sought to highlight "talent and creativity" during recessionary times.

Organisers said the rise in the number of

private collectors in India, the nation's booming economy and the constant appreciation in value of its artists make the Indian market "one of the most promising focal points for contemporary art in the 21st century."

"In recent months India has become, without a doubt, the big star in the art market," ARCO organisers said in a statement posted on their website.

Also:

LONDON: The top lot at an auction of contemporary art failed to sell late on Wednesday, reversing the fortunes of Christie's which held a relatively robust auction of impressionist and post-war art in London earlier this month.

Francis Bacon's "Man in Blue VI", expected to fetch £4-£6 million in London, was shunned, and overall the post-war and contemporary sale raised £8.4 million (\$12.1 million), far below the expected range of £15.1-£21.8 million.

At the same sale last year, a Bacon triptych sold for £26.3 million and the sale fetched £72.9 million, then the second highest total for a Christie's contemporary and post-war sale held in London.

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25653006. E-mail: membership@darmuseum.org.kw Website: www.darmuseum.org.kw Moderated by: Ahmed Khaja.

Dr Marina Tolmacheva is the President of the American University of Kuwait (AUK). The winner of a number of prestigious grants and fellowships, she contributed many articles to academic publications and published The Pate Chronicle in Swahili and English. In addition, Dr Tolmacheva contributed several chapters to the four-volume series "Arabic sources for the ethnography and history of Africa south of the Sahara" in Arabic and Russian. Prior to joining AUK, she taught history and Islamic civilization at Washington State University, where she was Director of the Asia Program and an Associate Dean.

Feb 17

KTAA monthly meeting: The Kuwait Textile Arts Association (KTAA) under the auspices of Al-Sadu House warmly invites you to its monthly meeting on Tuesday, Feb 17, at 07:00 pm. Doors open at 06:30 pm.

The guest speaker this month is Noha Al Mansour. This highly acclaimed Kuwaiti fashion designer will speak on her new clothing line in which she has incorporated Sadu designs.

The venue is Al-Sadu House, Arabian Gulf Street. Entry is free to members. Non-members are required to pay KD2/. For more information please contact: wovempieces@yahoo.com

Feb 18

Yarn & Fibre group meeting: In January the Yarn and Fibre group, a subgroup of the Kuwait Textile Art Association, was revived at Sadu House. This group is back in action to address the need for fibre art activity in the KTAA community.

There was a 'show and tell' from participants plus an interesting talk and slide-show by Dr Ali Najadah, Assistant Professor of Design, a weaving consultant to Sadu House and a well-known international artist.

It is envisaged that people bring their own handwork to work on during the monthly meetings plus share their skills in a relaxed environment.

Please join us on 3rd Wednesday morning of each month. Next meeting is Feb 18 at 09:30 am at Sadu House on the Gulf road. All welcome.

Please contact Patricia Redding at ktaworkshop@yahoo.com or 99368147, or Phillipa Anderson, 97349046.

Feb 20

IPC courses: The Women section of Islam Presentation Committee will be conducting a new course for ladies irrespective of their religions in Arabic Language accessible for beginners and higher level starting on Feb 20. Islamic Subjects and Quran classes are also offered in different languages starting on Feb 22. Arabic class is available on Fridays. Register now. Call Rawdah 22512257, 97290278, Salmiya 25733263, 99847624.

FPBL 6th Conf League: FPBL 6th Conference Basketball League: confirmed teams for 5'10" & Under (All Filipino Cup) Contact Persons: 1. Fil-Am Kuwait, Jess, 66409866; 2. Mark Ali, Sonny, 66051618; 3. Freight Liner, Kapatid, 67393408; 4. OLMG Kuwait, Darwin, 66862137; 5. Kapamilya Rest, Lito, 65821630; 6. Mss Kuwait, John Arante, 66348631; 7. 69 'RS, Rally, 66421787; 8. Le Monde Café, Josun Rivera, 55890301.

Coaches and teams' representatives are kindly requested to attend the final meeting and submit the team roster, etc on Feb 20, 2009 (2:00 pm) at Fahaaheel Sports Club. The said conference will start on Feb 27, 2009.

For more details please contact: Tony Lucero, #66082351; Rolliie Abenales, #66006206; Jojo Magbanua, 66620453; Bobits Peteros, 66140295.

Desert Pioneers Toastmasters Club: Desert Pioneers Toastmasters Club is very pleased to inform and invite English speaking audience to witness the Speech Contest that will be held on Feb 13 and Feb 20 at Rezayat Villa in Salmiya.

The Humorous and Evaluation contests will be held on the 13th from 5:00 pm onwards and the International Speech and the Table Topics will be held on the 20th Feb 5:00 pm onwards.

For more details, please contact Surya Prakash at 7200187, Hasayanar Pared at 9257094; Xavier Muthu at 9985-0173, to know more. You may also visit our website at www.toastmasters.org.

IEI Kuwait Chapter Family Day: IEI, Kuwait Chapter is pleased to announce that like every year Family Day 2009 will be cele-

NEW YORK, Feb 12, (AP): The rusty, crumpled, metal shell sits in a large room, thousands of miles (kilometers) from a popular Iraqi book market where the car was destroyed in a suicide bomb attack that killed 38 people in 2007.

The car, a raw reminder of the six-year Iraqi conflict, is the only object in a new show whose goal is to get people talking about Iraq.

Meant to be politically neutral, the unscripted project, "It Is What It Is: Conversations About Iraq," opened at the New Museum on Wednesday. It was conceived by British artist Jeremy Deller, acclaimed for his collaborative projects.

Deller has arranged a cozy cluster of couches in the center of the vast gallery — the kind of space that invites conversation. The car, which he variously describes as a metaphor for a corpse or a piece of evidence, lies off to the right. It is the touchstone of the project, a visual aid for sparking conversation among the public and a rotating cast of Iraqi refugees, soldiers, journalists and other experts offering their perspectives on Iraq and the war.

Among them are Donny George Youkhanna, who was director of the Iraqi National Museum when he was forced to flee because as a Christian, a religious minority in Iraq, his life was in danger. Now a visiting professor at the State University of New York at Stony Brook, Long Island, he is one of 35 expert residents participating in the

six-week exhibition. Deller launched the project because "short of going to Iraq itself, there is no substitute for meeting someone who has actually lived there, or been there," he said. The 42-year-old artist won Britain's Turner Prize in 2004 for "Memory Bucket," a documentary on former President George W. Bush's hometown of Crawford, Texas, and the siege on the Branch Davidian compound in nearby Waco. "It Is What It Is" — a term often used by the military to rationalize casualties — is a two-pronged project, created in collaboration with the Hammer Museum in Los Angeles, the Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago and

Creative Times, a New York City arts organization. After closing in New York on March 25, Deller and two of the residents and a curator will board an RV for a cross-country trip to California, the destroyed car in tow. They will stop in at least 10 major cities, pulling up at community centers, Army bases, veterans organizations and random sites such as truck stops.

On April 17, they will arrive at the Hammer Museum, where the project will remain until May 31. In early October, it will move to the MCA in Chicago.

Jonathan Harvey, 31, a psychological warfare specialist for the US Army

who spent 10 months in northwest Baghdad in 2007, is one of the two residents making the trip who hopes to deepen the Iraqi understanding beyond the headlines. Esam Pasha, a 32-year-old Iraqi artist who now lives in New London, Connecticut, is also going on the trip. He wants to focus on Iraq's rich heritage, art and culture. Americans "all know that Iraq had the oldest culture in the world, the first written word, but that's about it," Pasha said. He was a frequent visitor to the famed Mutanabi Street book market — a thriving gathering place for Iraq's intellectuals and artists — where the car in the exhibition was destroyed.

While violence in Baghdad is noticeably down today, another of the experts, Nour Al-Khal, hopes to convey through her own experience the fear and destruction that has consumed the lives of Iraqis until recently. Al-Khal was working as a translator for British and American journalists when she and a freelance reporter, Steven Vincent, were kidnapped, beaten, interrogated and shot by a death squad in Basra in 2005. Vincent did not survive. "I want them to hear my story. I want to show them we're real, not something in their imagination," said Al-Khal, who now lives in New York City. "People need to see us face to face to see the problem."

A car that was blown up in an attack on a crowded book market in central Baghdad is on display as part of exhibit entitled 'It Is What It Is: Conversations About Iraq' a collaborative project conceived by artist Jeremy Deller at the New Museum, in New York. (AP)



brated on Friday, Feb 20. The venue for this year's Family Day is Al-Hashemi-II at Radisson SAS Hotel, Mangaf. The program shall start at 10 am and will continue until 4pm. It will be a day full of fun, entertainment and surprises.

All those members who are interested to attend are requested to contact IEI, chapter office by Tel 22445588 ext 314 between 6 pm to 08:30 pm Sunday through Thursday or by email ieikwt@hotmail.com

Feb 25

Dr Bernard meetings: It is our great privilege to invite you with family, friends & relatives for the Divine Blessing 2009 Conventions. Dr Bernard from Ghana, West Africa will be the ministering in these meetings. He is the president of Rescue Life International, is a world renowned minister, visited more than 100 nations, provides mentoring leadership and support to worldwide leaders.

Dr Bernard will be ministering in Kuwait for different programs. The program schedule



State apartment warders look towards a painting by Anthony Van Dyck of Britain's Princess Mary dated around 1637, as it hangs in Hampton Court Palace near London, Feb 11. The painting has been returned to the palace after more than 360 years, and will go on display to the public from Feb 12. (AP)

will be as follows:

Day Time meetings on Feb 25, 26 & 28 (Wednesday, Thursday & Friday) at 09:00 am in the NECK premises, Kuwait City.

Evening Meetings on Feb 25, 26, 27 & 28 (Wednesday to Saturday) at 07:00 pm in the NECK premises at 07:00 PM.

All are welcome. For more details please contact Joseph Mathew, Phone - 66012310.

Feb 26

Music Theory Examination: The Don Bosco Music Center and IBMC is conducting a Music Theory Examination on Feb 26, 10 am onwards, in Don Bosco, Salmiya for all grades. It is ideal for students preparing for the ABRSM (London) examination. For details please call 25633459 or 99523789.

Feb 28

FPBL tournament rescheduled: Fahaaheel Pinoy Basketball League (FPBL) Fahaaheel, State of Kuwait. Attention! All Basketball enthusiasts, the

opening of the 5th (FPBL) Basketball Tournament is re-scheduled on March 13, to be held at Fahaaheel Sports Club, State of Kuwait.

We are inviting All-Star Teams to join this Indoor Basketball Competition. Deadline of submission of entry will be on Feb 28. The categories are 5'10" and Under All Filipino Conference. We do limit the number of teams to 10 or 12, to allow all teams to play every Friday throughout the tournament. First come, First serve.

For more details please contact: Tony - 66082351, Rolly - 66658755; Jojo 66620453 and Bobits - 66140295.

March 1

Spring 1 Arabic Course (2009): The AWARE Center is glad to announce that the Spring 1 Arabic Course will begin on March 1, 2009 until April 13, 2009 (Introductory begins on March 1 till April 2, 2009). The AWARE Center offers Arabic classes on a

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