

virtual reality in Lagos; Ropac to represent Judd

Foundation in Europe; daft price paid for an

algorithm with backstory. By *Melanie Gerlis*

Tefaf New York Fall may be a fair for older art (from antiquities to the 1920s) but its exhibitors certainly know how to woo with 21st-century tactics. Sales for the drawings dealer Stephen Ongpin included a 1734 brush and ink work by Jean-Baptiste Oudry (\$60,000), which Ongpin had posted on Instagram, hanging awry and with the caption "These three drawings . . . have their own wall on the stand. Now if they would just keep still . . .". His humour caught the attention of an institution in France, whose representatives didn't need to come to the fair. "They went from Instagram to the gallery's website and then bought the work," Ongpin said.



Other buyers did make it to the swanky Park Avenue Armory, where the fair hosted 93 multi-category

exhibitors between October 27 and 31. Celebrity visitors included the model Jerry Hall, rock superstar Jon Bon Jovi and the artist Ai Weiwei, who picked up a Qing Dynasty (1644-1911) rootwood scrollrest from the Hong Kong scholars' objects specialist Maria Kiang.

Overall, works weren't flying off the walls, though this seems to be the norm at art fairs at the moment. There were nonetheless some substantial sales, not least of a full-length portrait of George Washington, painted around 1800 by the American painter Gilbert Stuart, which sold from Hirsch & Adler gallery for \$12m. Displays in the Armory's historic rooms were particularly impressive.

This was the fair's first outing under new ownership: it was founded in New York as a joint venture with art investment firm Artvest but was restructured this summer under the wider Tefaf umbrella.

Also in its third edition is this weekend's Art X Lagos fair (Civic Centre, Victoria Island, November 2-4), with 18 galleries mostly from Africa. The small fair was launched by Tokini Peterside who noticed that local enthusiasm for contemporary art was lagging behind other creative fields. While the sprawling city boasts some private collectors — including Prince Yemisi Shyllon, who plans to open a private museum next year — her target audience is its increasingly affluent, younger middle class. "This isn't the same as Art Basel or Frieze, it's geared to Lagosians. People here might not be able to buy art but I want to show them that they are welcome to look at it," Peterside says.

Interactive projects are key, she says. Last year, artist Olalekan Jeyifous created a work that allowed visitors to decorate one of the city's yellow Danfo buses. This year, Jeyifous and fellow Nigeria-born artist Wale Lawal launch their interactive virtual reality project that imagines the city of Lagos in the year 2115. "Mad Horse City" (2017) includes a future world "in the face of an illegal subversive culture known as 'going offline'", the artists say.

Donald Judd, the American minimalist who died in 1994, has featured in the art press even more than usual lately as his foundation begins a major restoration project in Marfa, Texas,

where he lived and worked, and as New York's Museum of Modern Art plans a big retrospective for 2020.

Now the Salzburg, Paris and London dealer Thaddaeus Ropac confirms that he is representing the foundation in continental Europe, working with its longtime gallery David Zwirner. Ropac plans a show in Paris in April 2019, to be curated by Judd's son and the artistic director of his foundation, Flavin Judd.

"A lot of Judd's major works went to US collections, so there's a lot that can be done in Europe. Judd hasn't had a [main] solo show in Paris for 20 years, for example," Ropac says, adding that there is an "astonishing" interest in the artist in Asia.

Six works by Judd are currently included in Ropac's *Monumental Minimal* exhibition in Pantin, Paris (\$1.3m-\$6m, until March 23).

Berlin's Bastian gallery, a business founded by the two married curators Céline and Heiner Bastian in 1989, is turning to the next generation. Their son Aeneas Bastian is moving the gallery to London's Mayfair and is due to open at 8 Davies Street, close to Sadie Coles, Gagosian and Phillips auction house, in January.

"Berlin has a vibrant artistic community but there isn't a real market. Coming to London is an important next step," Aeneas Bastian says. He is, he says, "a bit concerned" by some of the possible regulatory implications of Brexit but feels that "so far, the UK art market seems not just to be operating fine, but prospering."

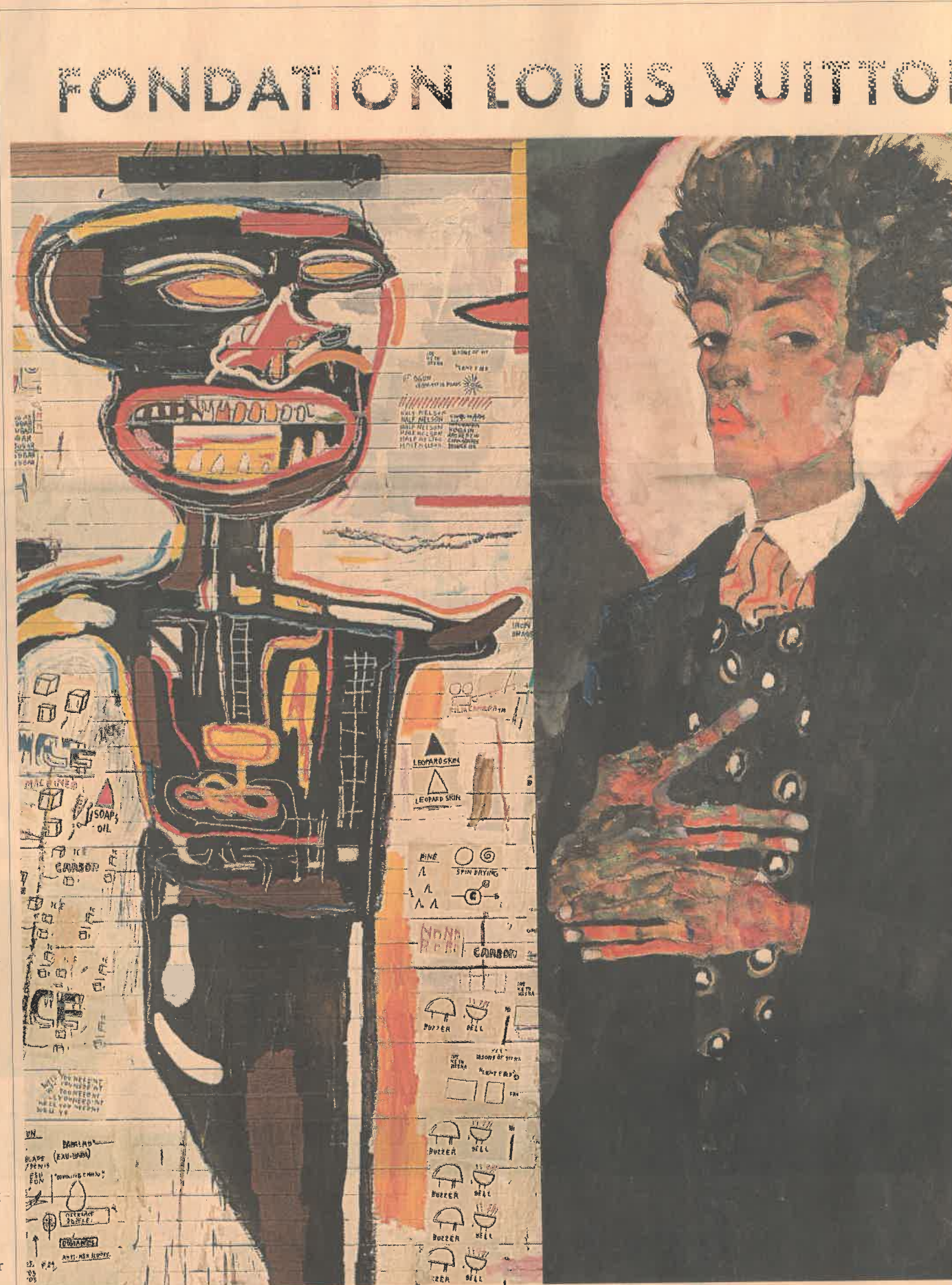
The move puts to an end a protracted process around the sale of the four-floor, David Chipperfield-designed gallery building near Berlin's Museum Island that the Bastians opened in 2007. This is now being donated as an "unconditional gift", Aeneas Bastian says, to the city's state-run museums body, the Prussian Cultural Heritage Foundation (SPK).



The new London space opens with a show of around 60 of Andy Warhol's celebrated Polaroid photographs. These sell for about £50,000 each, though Bastian says he has yet to price the London show.

There was much surprise in the art market last week as an algorithm-generated painting, conceived by the three-person collective Obvious, sold at Christie's for \$350,000 (\$432,500 with fees), considerably more than its \$7,000 to \$10,000 estimate. "Portrait of Edmond de Belamy" was, according to Christie's, created through artificial intelligence gleaned from a data set of 15,000 portraits, and emerged a rather blurry, ghoulish work.

Its selling price seems daft, but is not so surprising right now when context (otherwise known as a memorable dinner party story) is where value seems to lie. It's not such a new phenomenon — backstories have arguably boosted the market for several artists over the years, including Vincent van Gogh and Frida Kahlo, though they didn't start out with a savvy marketing team. In the case of Edmond de Belamy, perhaps the dealer Martin Clist puts it wisest: "Don't mistake the market for art."



Jean-Michel Basquiat, *Grillo* (detail), 1984. Fondation Louis Vuitton. © Estate of Jean-Michel Basquiat. Licensed by Artstar, New York. Photo: © Fondation Louis Vuitton Marc Damage

Egon Schiele, *Self-Portrait with Peacock Waistcoat, Standing*, 1911. Ernst Ploil C

From top: "Mad Horse City" (2017); ink drawing by Jean-Baptiste Oudry (1734); 'Portrait of Edmond de Belamy', created by Obvious; installation view of Galerie Chenel's booth at Tefaf New York Fall Olalekan Jeyifous

Jean-Michel
Basquiat Schie
Egon

Exhibitions 3 October 2018 > 14 January 20

