



"Electrical Goods, Middlesbrough"
Richard Forster; from the Workplace Gallery booth

Armory Week: A Year Later, A Fair Better

by Robert Ayers

NEW YORK, Feb. 25, 2007—One of the more interesting things to do at the annual fairs is to seek out the people whose booths impressed you last year and see how things developed for them. Saturday morning I revisited the **Pulse** aisles to do precisely that.

First I spoke to my young U.K. compatriots from the **Workplace Gallery** (Gateshead), who last year fell into the "lots of interest but no sales" category. This time around, though, they had learned how to better present their work, they told me, without losing any of their funky edge. The gallerists were delighted to have sold a **Richard Forster** drawing (to a British collector, coincidentally) for \$5,600; an exquisite **Jo Coupe** gilded and encrusted bracket fungus, called *Femmer* (2007), for \$6,000; and **Joe Clark's** *Petrol Station*, also for \$6,000.

Another British gallery that I'd noticed before is **Rokeby** (London), which had a particularly successful week with **Sam Dargan's** little pictures from the series "A Bad Year for People." The pessimistic little pieces with a peculiarly British flavor have been flying off the wall at \$1,100-\$1,500.

Elsewhere, the folks from **Sixspace** (Los Angeles) had some beautiful small gouaches by the duo called **Kozyndan** for \$650-\$2,700. They've also been snapped up by collectors—and at those prices, I'm not surprised.

But perhaps the nicest "where are they now?" story concerns the Japanese artist **Kenichi Yokono**. Last year, he represented himself at Pulse New York, and I recall writing enthusiastically here about his quirky plywood cut-outs. This time, he's being shown by **Mark Moore** from Santa Monica. When I stopped by the booth to introduce myself to Moore, his surprising response was: "Oh, you're the guy who wrote the article!"

It turns out that, though Moore and Yokono were at Pulse last year, it wasn't until Moore read our report that he sought out Yokono's display. He signed him up there and then. Now, he has Yokono's pieces listed

at \$2,500-\$10,000 (roughly twice what the artist was asking for them last year), and he's sold every one of them.

But Moore's success didn't stop there. By the time we saw him, he'd sold almost his entire booth and the additional stock he brought with him. "All I've got left is two paintings and a lot of nails in the wall," he said. Moore sold work by **Ben Weiner**, **Allison Schulnik** and **Kim Rugg**, whose mind-numbing, 26 panel *Don't Mention the War* fetched \$85,000.

This is probably the most labor-intensive piece at any of the fairs this week, as it consists of an entire issue of the British *Guardian* newspaper that Rugg cut up into individual typographical characters and then rearranged alphanumerically. She did the pictures, too, reordering them tonally. If \$85,000 sounds like a lot of money, Moore points out, given how long Rugg worked on this piece, she's probably making less than minimum wage.

Hopefully when we see her next year, she'll have gotten a pay raise.

Image credits (numbered from top): Courtesy Workplace Gallery (1,2); Courtesy Rokeby (3,4); Courtesy Mark Moore Gallery (5,6)



"Petrol Station" (2006)
Joe Clark; at the Workplace
Gallery booth



Work from the series "A Bad
Year for People"
Sam Dargan; at the Rokeby
gallery booth



Work from the series "A Bad
Year for People"
Sam Dargan; at the Rokeby
gallery booth



Kim Rugg's "Don't Mention
the War" at the Mark Moore
booth



Detail from Kim Rugg's
"Don't Mention the War" at
the Mark Moore booth