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Pinta London rebrands and merges with Venice project

Latin American art fair changes tack to reflect the changing tastes of London collectors

Anny Shaw

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Pinta London, the art fair dedicated to contemporary art from Latin America normally held in June, is merging with The Immigrants, a curatorial project launched in Venice in 2013 by the Milan-based dealer and artist Federico Luger. The new fair has been rebranded The Immigrants: The London Art Show and will no longer focus exclusively on Latin American artists. The event is to be held in east London (15-18 October) to coincide with Frieze London.

The market for contemporary Latin American art was experiencing a moment in the sun in 2010 when Pinta London was born, but "today it is flatter", says its chairman Alejandro Zaia. "You can't have a boom every five years - the market is now moving at a regular pace."

Pinta London will nonetheless have a presence within the new fair: Zaia says he will bring in around 20 galleries from South America. A total of 65 international galleries are expected to participate, although none had been confirmed at the time of going to press. Over the years, Pinta London expanded to include galleries from France, Spain, Portugal and the US, among others, but this year the organisers are opening their doors to artists of all nationalities.

Changing tide

Pinta London held its previous five editions in west London in June. "[The new fair] will offer an affordable alternative to Frieze," Zaia says. With prices averaging around \$10,000, he hopes to attract new and young collectors, as well as securing stalwarts, such as those who sit on the Tate's Latin American acquisitions committee. "There's been an explosion of art fairs in places such as São Paulo, Mexico and Peru over the past five years; the key is to facilitate the lives of collectors and galleries," he says.

Zaia describes Pinta London's new incarnation as "a platform rather than an art fair", saying he hopes to work with fairs in other countries, including India, China and Russia. "It's a natural evolution for Pinta London [to merge], since contemporary Latin American art no longer needs an exclusive art fair. Now it's part of the mainstream," he says.

Mario Palencia, the director of Maddox Arts, which has exhibited at Pinta London for the past five years, says there is no longer a big enough market in London to sustain a fair dedicated to Latin American art. "There was an opportunity around ten years ago for this exciting continent to impress the local market," he says. "But now the art market in London is a lot more segmented and relies on big blue-chip works to attract collectors." The London-based dealer has not yet decided whether he will participate in The Immigrants: the London Art Show.

Luger, who exhibited his Immigrants project at Pinta London in 2013 and 2014, says his initiative shares "core values" with the Latin American art fair. "Immigrants travel to new countries, imagining a better life. Like the avant-garde in art, they represent the future," he says.

In 2012, Pinta's organisers decided to separate the management of its London and New York editions, partly due to the extra effort needed to promote contemporary

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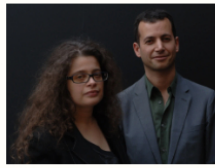


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