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FINANCIAL TIMES

The Art Market **Collecting**

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Art fairs go from famine to feast

London landmark as a gallery in disguise; rent-to-buy art scheme;
Luciano Fabro in the spotlight; and a chance to Frieze your heart



There may be some Covid complications for visitors to Art Basel later this month © Art Basel

Melanie Gerlis 4 HOURS AGO



After 18 months of cancelled and postponed art fairs, the market has gone from famine to feast for the autumn season. Events next week include [Cosmoscow](#), [Art Paris](#) and [Photo London](#) plus the

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[Armory Show](#) and [Independent](#) fairs in New York. As if these weren't enough, there's the prospect of four major events within a few weeks of each other in Europe: the postponed [Art Basel](#) runs September 24-26; [Frieze London](#) and [Frieze Masters](#) are due back in Regent's Park on October 13-17; and [Fiac](#) in Paris falls the following week.

All is not rosy, given that the Covid-19 pandemic is still here with its unpredictable Delta variant. The PAD design fair in London has been cancelled while restrictions on Europeans getting into the US has dented in-person exhibitor numbers at the Armory, falling from 212 to 157. This week the US authorities warned against travel to Switzerland and while the AstraZeneca vaccine is acceptable at the Swiss border, it is not recognised by the Art Basel venue, so visitors vaccinated this way (ie most of the UK's art trade) will need to get another test, offered on site.

Art adviser Emily Tsingou says the logistics could be the least of the problems. "We are all ready to go back to school and will find ways," she says. "The questions are more about what material dealers will bring to the major fairs. Which collectors will get first dibs — those that see the works in person? Or are they competing with people online? Will a dealer's backroom be visible virtually? I don't expect a seismic fair season, which could dent confidence. It is all very complicated right now."

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Works by the Verhoeven twins will appear at the Eye of the Collector fair © Carpenters Workshop Gallery

For visitors not yet ready for mass events comes a new-style art fair, [Eye of the Collector](#), which runs September 8-11 in a hidden London landmark, Two Temple Place. Everything will be tightly controlled, including the number of visitors and the setting of the 200-plus works of art and design that range from the sixth century BC to pieces made for the fair.

Items will include a 1946 Lucian Freud portrait of a lover, the young actress Pauline Tennant (Thomas Gibson Fine Art), an Egyptian blacktop vase from between 4000BC and 3200BC (Charles Ede)

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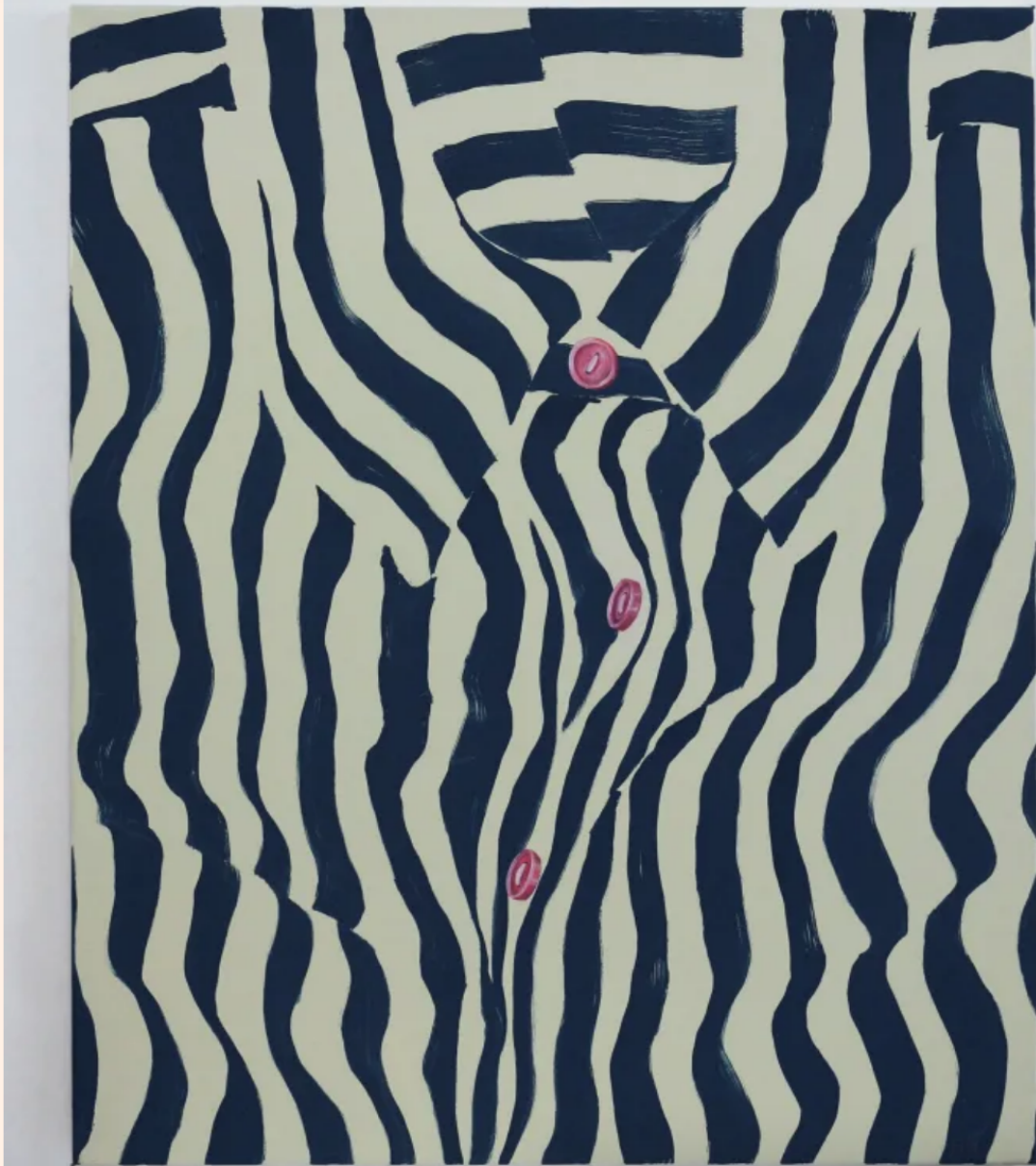
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and glass bubble works made by the Verhoeven twins in 2019 (Carpenters Workshop Gallery). Prices at the fair will start at £1,000 and go into seven figures, confirms director Nazy Vassegh.

Unlike most art fairs, there will be no demarcated booths with dealers waiting to show their wares. Instead, Vassegh will place works through the building "as if they were in a collector's house", she says. The venue, completed in 1895, is something of an artwork itself, built with no expense spared for William Waldorf Astor, one of the richest people in the world. "It is a lovely building and having a new eye on what we do and how it could fit with other works will be different and fresh," says exhibitor Madeleine Perridge, director of the antiquities gallery Kallos.

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Hannah Knox's 'Wednesday' (2021) on the Gertrude art rental site

The founders of London's cutting-edge [The Sunday Painter](#) gallery are launching a new art-rental business online for works valued at up to £12,000. Subscribers to Gertrude, named after the 20th-century patron Gertrude Stein, pay £50 a month for a work

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for a minimum of three months and then can swap for another, take a break or buy their work (minus the amount already paid in rent). "There is a potential clientele that just needs the right solution. They go to Frieze year after year and no way can collect at that [price] level," says Will Jarvis, co-founder of The Sunday Painter and chief revenue officer of Gertrude, a separate business.

Artists already signed up include Cynthia Daignault, Sara Naim and Nicholas Pope and include those without representation or from other London galleries, such as Seventeen and Guts Gallery. There is no cost for inclusion — quite the reverse. Artists who have one work selected will immediately receive £30 a month for each of their pieces on the site, up to a maximum of 10, for a year. "There's a guaranteed, consistent stipend of up to £300 per month, which could cover the cost of a studio, for example," Jarvis says. Gertrude launches on September 27 with works available to view from September 2 (gertrude.com).

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Luciano Fabro's 'L'Infinito' (1989) © Paolo Pellion/Paula Cooper Gallery

Luciano Fabro, the postwar Italian artist who died in 2007, enters the spotlight this month as Paula Cooper Gallery now represents his estate, the Archivio Luciano e Carla Fabro. It is marking its new charge by offering his "[L'Infinito](#)" (1989) at Art Basel's Unlimited section for large-scale works (September 24-26).

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The installation features a steel cable in the shape of the mathematical symbol for infinity, punctuated with six pieces of unprocessed Carrara marble and is one of two versions; the other is in the collection of the Pompidou Centre in Paris.

The work typifies Fabro's role in the Arte Povera movement, which favoured everyday, often industrial materials, notes Steve Henry, senior partner at Paula Cooper Gallery. He says demand is strong for Fabro's work: the gallery recently sold another large-scale piece, from 1994, to the Miami collector Martin Margulies. This will be a highlight of an Arte Povera exhibition that opens at the [Margulies Collection](#) at The Warehouse on October 20. "I find his work very thrilling," says Margulies, who dates his acquisitions of works from the movement back to the late 1980s.

And finally . . . are you tired of swiping left in the desperate search for a partner who is as passionate about art as you? Frieze Magazine has launched a personal ads section — called, of course, Lonely Arts. Their first illustrated listing, posted on the @friezeofficial Instagram handle last week was: "Picassos are blue, Rothkos are red — to the girl in mohair who sits next to me in art history classes on Thursdays, can we unmake my bed?" — signed "Horny NYU punk". Top marks for the art references, but surely you could scan better? Send your words to lonelyarts@frieze.com.