

# Crowds gorge on art week appetizers

• ART, FROM 1B

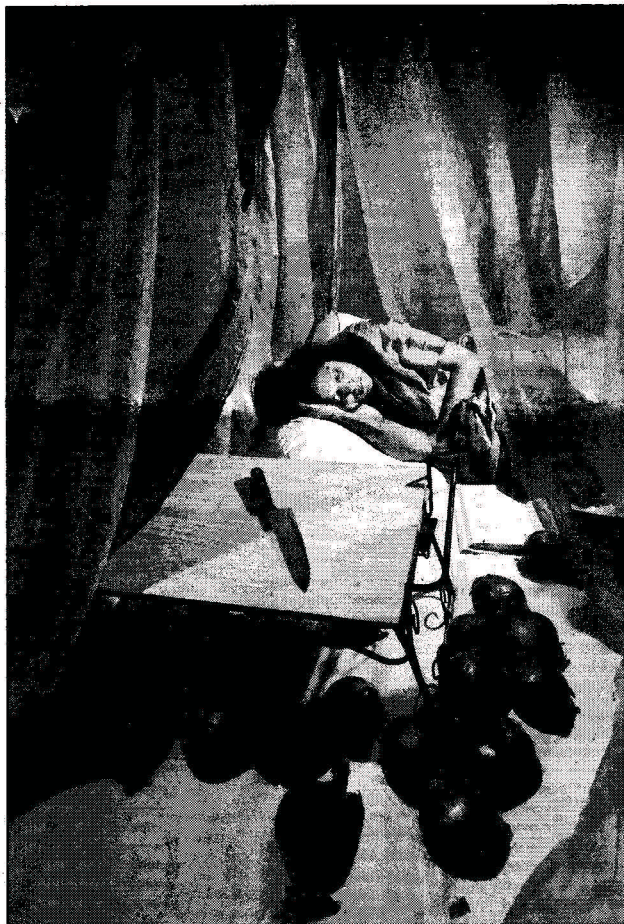
the week's main course, the Art Basel Miami Beach fair, doesn't open inside the convention center until Wednesday, and then only to VIPs, art lovers started gorging early on an improbably rich selection of art that if anything promises to be broader, deeper — and more overwhelming — than usual.

Inside the Midtown tents, on the graffiti-laden walls of nearby Wynwood, and in the Design Miami pavilion in Miami Beach, was the usual buffet of sensory overload — art new and classic, high and low, by artists famed and unknown. It was nearly all for sale, brought from galleries stretching all the way around the globe, from Istanbul, Shanghai and San Jose, and from some others much closer to home.

Like El Portal. Carol Jazzar Contemporary's booth at SCOPE, which focuses on young artists, was an early magnet for photographers thanks to an assemblage by North Carolina artist André Leon Gray, who is showing during art week for the first time and seemed nearly stunned to be there.

His piece, *There is Always Room at the Top, They Said*, alludes to the African-American fight from slavery to today. It features a headless torso on a stool with a dangling chain, wearing boxing gloves and crowned by a cowrie-shell-bedecked brush from a street cleaner that recalls a Masai warrior's collar.

Nearby, Beatle progeny Julian Lennon, a musician and accomplished photographer of cloudscapes and landscapes, manned his own booth at OVERTURE, which shares a tent with SCOPE and Art Asia. Lennon caused a small media stir when he strolled over to



MARICE COHN BAND/MIAMI HERALD STAFF

**SENSORY OVERLOAD:** Bangladeshi-American artist Monica Jahan Bose lies in a bed for 'Indelible Scent,' a performance installation at Art Asia.

Art Asia to see Chinese artist/designer/musician Simon Ma, who was wearing a white suit and white-rimmed glasses.

Just a block away, Art Miami has grown dramatically, nearly doubling in size to 190 galleries and 250,000 square feet and incorporating CONTEXT, dedicated to emerging artists and cutting-edge work. At the VIP opening, benefitting the Miami Art Museum, the tent was abuzz with some 10,000 artists, collectors and galleries joyful about the quality of the art, if not — for buyers at least — the price tags.

"The quality is very high," said Miami Art Museum supporter Aaron Podhurst.

"So are the prices." Red sticker dots, meaning the works are sold, popped up at Modernbrook Gallery, where black-and-white photos by Ryan Bush were priced under \$1,000. Bigger ticket works were getting some serious attention as well, including a unique screen by Sol Lewitt being eyeballed by Miami developer Jorge Perez.

Works on offer ranged from 11 paintings by Cuban master Wifredo Lam at the Leon Tovar booth, a Chagall for \$595,000 at Leslie Smith, and the massive *Ladies of the Opera Terrace* by James Rosenquist, for \$2.75 million — a far cry from the \$250,000 it originally

fetched in 1985.

Across the causeways at the Miami Beach Convention Center, Design Miami, the official companion event to the Basel fair, opened its doors — actually a mammoth pavilion of inflated tubes entitled *Drift*, the creation of Snarkitecture of New York — to a bigger-than-ever inaugural crowd drawn by collectible furnishings and objects d'art.

By 8 p.m., a line of invitees waiting to get in snaked out of the pavilion entrance. Buyers almost immediately began snapping up pieces, fair director Marianne Goebel said.

"There is a lot of energy and interest," she said.

Among the hits drawing the well-heeled, cameras in hand: *The Bride*, a spectacular gold and copper chandelier, cascading floor to ceiling, made by artist Taher Chemirik in a Parisian studio, and yours for \$150,000. Or, for \$155,000, an American flag table with legs that spell "independence" fashioned from epoxy resin by Gaetsno Pesce. Only in Wynwood, where the family of the late urban revivalist Tony Goldman unveiled a new set of graffiti murals including a tribute to the developer by Shepard Fairey, was the mood subdued in comparison to previous years.

His daughter, Jessica, who took over the company, and his widow, Janet, posed for pictures with Fairey, in a Ramones T-shirt, and a throng of Wynwood Walls muralists in front of Fairey's big new sunbeaming portrait of Goldman.

"It's bittersweet," said Fairey. "It's sad but also amazing to see how much love there is for Tony."

Audra D.S. Burch and Jane Wooldridge contributed to this report.