



Art Chicago 2008 Attracts World's Leading Modern Art Galleries



David Hockney - Woldgate Lane to Burton Agnes, 2007 - Oil on canvas
Courtesy of Annelly Juda Fine Art

Chicago, IL - A carefully vetted compilation of 181 of the **world's foremost contemporary and modern art galleries will be exhibiting at Art Chicago 2008 at The Merchandise Mart**. A 17% increase in applications was received for Art Chicago 2008, with 350 galleries submitting in contrast to 300 the previous year. The strong roster of U.S. galleries continues, with 27 cities represented, a 35% increase over 20 in Art Chicago 2007.

Additionally, 95% of the 132 exhibitors who participated in the 2007 fair re-applied for 2008 -- a dramatic increase from the 75% re-sign of the 104 participating galleries in 2006. Under different ownership, Art Chicago 2005 saw only 50% of galleries reapplying. International representation has been bolstered 36% for 2008, with 30 cities presenting, up from 22 in 2007.

"In every measurable way," commented Merchandise Mart Senior Vice President Mark Falanga, "Art Chicago is bigger and better. We attribute many of these improvements to the standards established by our Selection Committee, which was re-instituted in 2007."

"The quality of our 2008 exhibitor list defines Art Chicago as a prominent international contemporary and modern art fair," said Tony Karman, director of sales and development, Art Chicago. "Leading galleries – from Chicago to Seoul, from Paris to Los Angeles -- will offer an extraordinary experience for art collectors, curators and art enthusiasts, showcasing works of more than 2,000 artists in a variety of media including painting, drawing, sculpture, photography, prints and video installations."

The new team created by the Merchandise Mart Properties, Inc.'s acquisitions of Art Chicago, The Armory Show and Volta, establish the Merchandise Mart as the strongest, most important American art show producer.

"The Art Chicago experience allows collectors to view and purchase in the broader context of a city with renowned museums, terrific curators and great collections," said Mart President Christopher Kennedy. **"A single location is more convenient, and gives credibility and confidence that all exhibiting galleries have been vetted for quality. Chicago has always been the destination for the thoughtful collector."**