



## Pulse Art Fair: Interview with Helen Allen



Sabine Rieck and Helen Allen

This is vernissage.tv and Artfacts.Net. I am Sabine Rieck. We are here at the opening of the PULSE Fair in Miami Beach. I will be interviewing the director of this fair, Helen Allen.

Afn: Hello Helen. How are you?

Helen Allen: Very well. Thank you.

Afn: Helen, I would like to know: what is your impression of this year's PULSE Miami?

Helen Allen: I think that this year, it is the strongest show we have had to date. The dealers have put on phenomenal booths. There are a lot of discoveries to be made here. With some fantastic artists, we have done some really wonderful installations throughout one of the things that we have just mentioned with the Ellen Harvey. And the buzz is just amazing; it has got a real flow to it. People have been all around Miami. I have been hearing little things here and there about people going to PULSE which obviously - as the director - I am delighted to be hearing.

Afn: You have mentioned the installation of Ellen Harvey. How was the reaction of the people she asked to send her photographs? It is a project "ugly beautiful Miami Palm Beach", and she asked people to send her two photos: one ugly, one beautiful. How did the people react?

Helen Allen: From what I understand, it was great. There was a very very strong response. She put on a beautiful installation. She and Magnus worked tirelessly to get this all together, so it is good.

Afn: This year, it was also the debut of PULSE in New York. Did this have any effect on this year's PULSE Miami?

Helen Allen: As with any time you have been around a little bit longer, it helps obviously get the name out. There were definitely people that were able to come see us in New York that had not seen us in Miami last year. And many of them had been in contact with us and asked to be included in any upcoming information and events that we do. So our attendance this year already is far superseding what we were expecting. We are thrilled with the attendance this morning. Dealers are selling wildly, and the show looks strong across the board. It is very consistent, and we are excited.

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Afn: How do you picture PULSE in the Art Basel/Miami Beach events, five years from now ?

Helen Allen: PULSE will always be its own events. I think it will always be the smaller fair. We do not have ambitions to be huge. It is more about remaining intimate in scale and consistent, and every fair having something of an edge that is slightly different. Art Basel/Miami Beach has been incredibly supportive which is amazing. We would not be here without them. We are aware and very appreciative of that. So we are just going to keep trying to grow - not in terms of size, but in terms of our presence and our outreach.

Afn: Do you have something like a collectors' program?

Helen Allen: We have - what is known as a collectors' group that we have just begun to launch, which was born out of the fact that several people had been contacting us about year-round programming. So we are launching a young collectors' program with that. We usually do one event outside of the fair itself because there is so much going on in Miami. We try not to do too much because it distracts from our galleries. And it is obviously very important that the primary purpose that people are here is to look at the art. So that is the ultimate goal.

Afn: One final question: How do you look at art? And when do you consider it "good art"?

Helen Allen: That is a hard question. Well, I think it is very subjective. I have been in the art world for over a decade now, I have been collecting myself for over a decade. It is very subjective. In terms of the galleries that are selected here and how do you know it is good, it is a very strong international roster that is made up with curators and advisers and gallerists. So in terms of the work that is here, that is one way. You know it has been bettered, you know that what you are seeing has been bettered by a group of professionals, so you know that you are going to be seeing top quality work.

Afn: Oh yes, that is for sure. But how do you personally know when something is "good art"?

Helen Allen: Me personally? When you see something that makes you think and you walk away from it, and you are still thinking about it. That is when I buy something; when I see something, and I cannot get it out of my mind. That is my way of feeling like that is something that I really want to have. And obviously, I feel this good because it is making me think about it.

Afn: That is really interesting. Thank you very much for this interview.

Helen Allen: Well, thank you for coming.

This interview can also be viewed as a video on Vernissage.tv.  
Interview: Sabine Rieck  
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