

Sculpture

Why collectors are moving from the wall to the floor

LONDON. Composed of a life-size mannequin straddling a Rotterdam trash can, the two-metre sculpture *Isis Syndrome* by the collective Kimberly Clark at Galerie Diana Stigter (H9) is hardly suited for the average urban studio apartment. But in the era of the luxury loft, says the gallery's David van Doesburg, he has observed a growing market in works of such size. "Before, only museums would consider something that's even a little larger than the classic 'domestic size', but now we see interest from private collectors as well," he explains. "And when I walked around the fair this morning, I saw loads of sculpture. Maybe people are bored with the two-dimensional."

Indeed, Counter gallery's Carl Freedman describes a common progression among

his collectors: "As people buy more art, the space they use for their collection moves from the wall onto other available places. Sculpture is harder to collect, no doubt, because it's a different beast altogether." His stand (E10) spotlights two armchair-sized sculptures by Fergal Stapleton and a slender piece by Tatiana Echeverri Fernandez, the towering height of which might limit it to collectors with industrial-style spaces.

For collectors, buying sculpture carries more cachet than acquiring "easier" painting, which can be seen as an entry point for new art buyers and the turf of frenzied speculation.

There are also logistical complications, involving storage, transport or conservation, but collectors

of sculpture say it's worth it. "The first piece I bought was a sculpture," recalls Tehran- and Paris-based Ebrahim Melamid. "I was always fascinated by sculpture because it's three-dimensional and so much more sensual. It's interesting if you look at the prices for people like Anthony Caro and Anish Kapoor, the medium is gaining value lately."

Another factor is the surging crossover of design into the art world—once a collector is willing to include dysfunctional furniture in his living environment, sculpture is hardly a reach. "People are buying furniture again and paying attention to architecture, so sculpture fits with that focus," says Swiss dealer Francesca Pia, who already had a collector reserve Mai-Thu Perret's *Echo*

Canyon at €30,000, an hour after the fair started.

"A Ron Arad chair or a Zaha Hadid sofa is a lot like a sculpture," points out Milanese dealer Gió Marconi, whose stunning stand is composed almost entirely of sculptures, all of them commissioned by the dealer for Frieze to celebrate his gallery's new association with the estate of Louise Nevelson. Two sold rapidly: Tobias Rehberger's *Today Nothing Goes Out of Fashion Anymore* at \$25,000 and an untitled Jorge Pardo at \$80,000. New York dealer Anton Kern's stand (C10) likewise teems with sculptures, intended to interplay with his wall of landscape works; pieces by Jim Lambie and Matthew Monahan, two sculptors with plenty of buzz, sold early yesterday.

Like so much in the art world, real estate plays a factor here. As Benedikt Taschen, who collects sculpture by artists such as Jeff Koons and Marepe (and whose publishing house has heavily spurred design and architecture's cultural ascent), points out: "People have bought these huge homes, and they can't fill them only with furniture."

Marc Spiegler

***Isis Syndrome* by Kimberly Clark**

