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VULTURE

Three Sentence Reviews of Marlene Dumas, Dan Colen, and 11 Other Art-World Big Shots

By Jerry Saltz May 31, 2018 2:49 pm



Photo: Marlene Dumas/Courtesy David Zwirner

To coincide with several big art fairs and last week's massive auctions, many larger galleries mounted shows of their bigger artists. So let's read the tea leaves on the upper end of the food chain.

Huang Yong Ping

Bank of Sand, Sand of Bank Gladstone Gallery

Critic Peter Schjeldahl coined the term "festivalism" in 1999 to describe the by-then already ubiquitous style of huge works produced by large teams of artist-assistants for big biennials and galleries, works that capture our attention for a frisky minute with their scale and ambition — and then almost instantly fade to blah. Huang Yong Ping's huge, 20-ton sand-and-concrete re-creation of a neoclassical/colonialist Shanghai building fits the festivalist bill to a tee — and in fact was originally created almost 20 years ago for the 2000 Shanghai Biennale that marked the ascent of this now-well-known artist. Once upon a time, this piece was said to "interrogate" colonialism and appropriation, but whether or not its politics can still be gleaned at all, the thing is an impressive sight here in the middle of Chelsea — for about a minute.