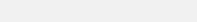


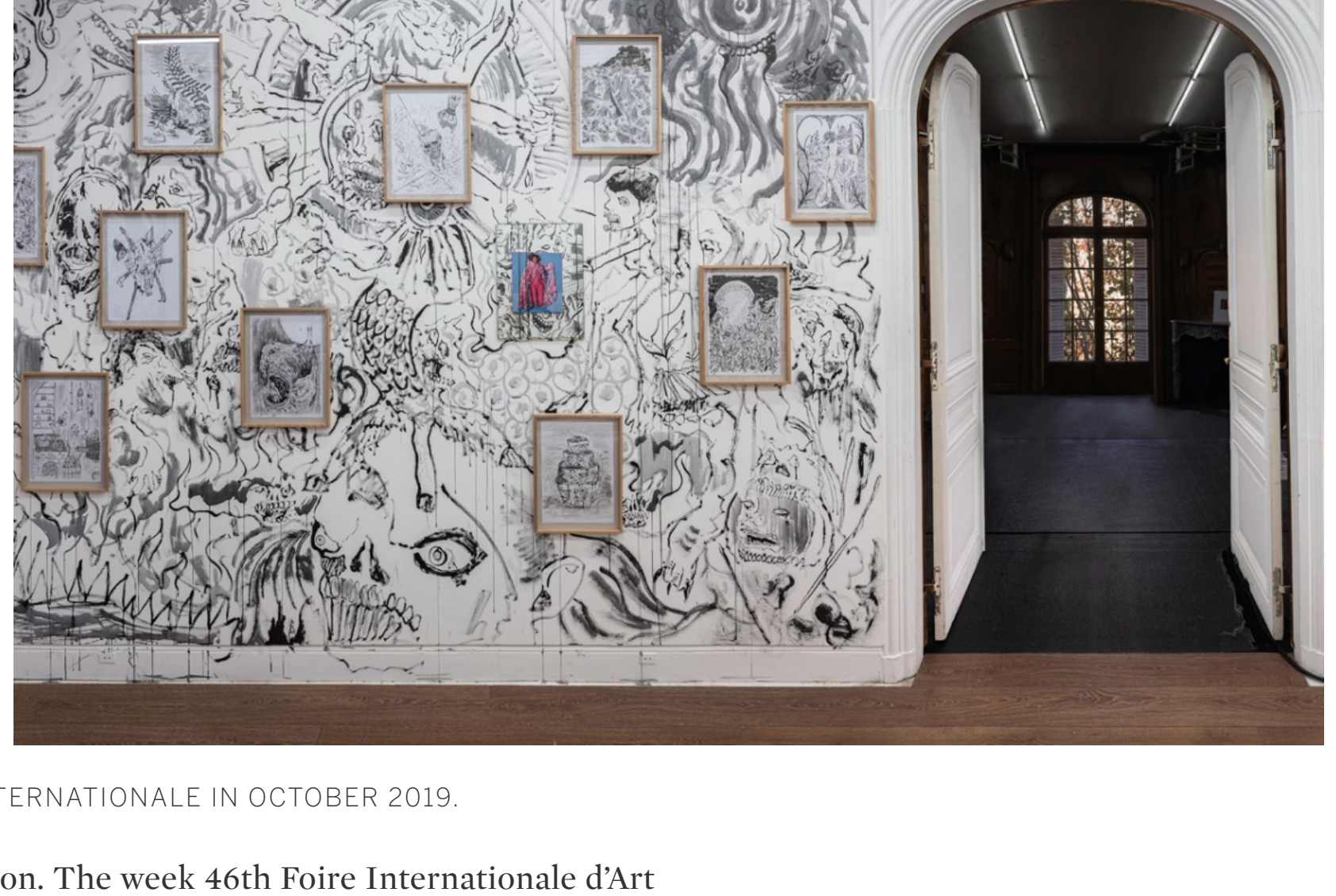
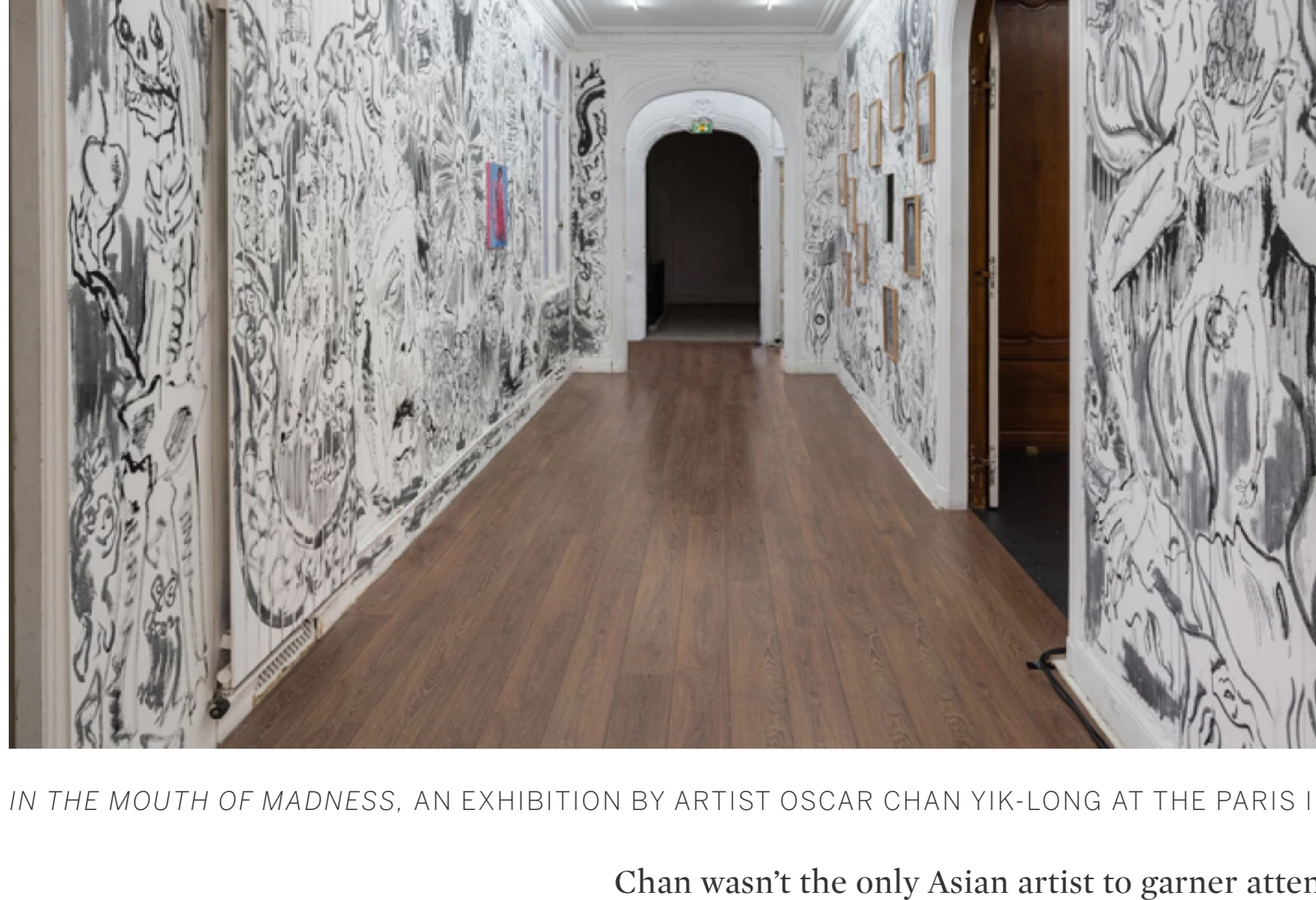
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Asian Art Takes the Stage in Paris

By Vivienne Chow

Through the doors of a Haussmann mansion on Rue Alfred de Vigny in central Paris, spectators would arrive at a corridor with almost every inch of the white walls covered with ink murals of Lovecraftian monsters and framed eldritch drawings. Curious visitors flocked to see *In the Mouth of Madness*, an exhibition by artist Oscar Chan Yik-long at the art fair Paris Internationale, which concluded its fifth edition in October. Many gaped at the murals while others were deep conversation with the staff of Gallery Exit, which presented the Paris-based Hong Kong artist's works at the fair.



IN THE MOUTH OF MADNESS, AN EXHIBITION BY ARTIST OSCAR CHAN YIK-LONG AT THE PARIS INTERNATIONALE IN OCTOBER 2019.

Chan wasn't the only Asian artist to garner attention. The week 46th Foire Internationale d'Art Contemporain (FIAC) opened the doors of the Grand Palais was coincident with other fairs, such as the Paris Internationale and Asia Now, which featured cutting edge artists presented by galleries the world over.



46TH FOIRE INTERNATIONALE D'ART CONTEMPORAIN (FIAC) AT GRAND PALAIS IN 2019. PHOTO: MARC DOMAGE

"The world has changed so much. It is not as boxed off as it used to be," said Jennifer Flay, director of FIAC, who recognises the need to diversify the Parisian art scene. Many of the works by Asian artists had been sold to French collectors during the first day of the fair, according to Flay.

"I know we have a much bigger Asian audience coming, too. There are people from Japan, Taiwan, China, Bangkok, the Philippines, Hong Kong... There is a much more diverse group of people at this year's opening, and there is a huge degree of interest in Asian artists."

- JENNIFER FLAY, DIRECTOR OF FIAC



JENNIFER FLAY, DIRECTOR OF FIAC. PHOTO: MAX TETARD.

There are various reasons for the changing profile of the Parisian art world. Major galleries have been opening or looking for new spaces in the French capital, [The Guardian reports](#). David Zwirner has just opened its first outpost in continental Europe in Paris, White Cube plans to open a viewing room early next year, and Pace Gallery and Hauser & Wirth are said to be "looking" for opportunities.



46TH FOIRE INTERNATIONALE D'ART CONTEMPORAIN (FIAC) AT GRAND PALAIS IN 2019. PHOTO: MARC DOMAGE

It might be too early to predict how things will develop in Paris. Even so, galleries from Asia are already hopping on the bandwagon to establish their presence and network. At Asia Now, the Columns Gallery from Seoul presented a solo show of renowned Indonesian artist Heri Dono, featuring large-scale paintings as well as his signature kinetic sculptures. The gallery's founder Dong Jo Chang also introduced an upcoming collaboration with Eisa Jocsen, best known for her eerie installation *Becoming White*, which investigates migrant affective labor of Filipino performers at Hong Kong Disneyland. This work, together with Dono's kinetic sculptures, was featured in last year's Bangkok Art Biennale.

Jakarta-based ROH Projects made an impression at Paris Internationale with *Beto* by Indonesian art collective Tromarama. A critical look at the concept of nationality, the sound installation comprises melodicas suspended from the ceiling and connected to software that responds to tweets with the hashtag "#nationality."



YUKINORI YANAGI, *GROUND TRANSPOSITION* - 26°31'12"N 128°12'8"E (CAMP SCHWAB, HENOKO, OKINAWA); 36°43'38"N 118°9'10"W (MANZANAR, CALIFORNIA) - 1987/2019. © YUKINORI YANAGI, COURTESY OF THE ARTIST AND BLUM & POE, LOS ANGELES/NEW YORK/TOKYO

At FIAC PKM Gallery from Seoul showed a range of works from some of the best recent names from South Korea, including Lee Bul's installation *Study for Aubade V* at 20-percent scale of the original, crystalline paper sculptures from Chun Kwang Young's *Aggregations*, plus paintings by Yun Hyong-keun and by Cody Choi. Blum & Poe made an ambitious presentation of Japanese art from the 1980s and 1990s. Among the highlights was Yukinori Yanagi's 1994 installation *America*, a monumental work made up of 36 gigantic glass ant-farms filled with coloured sand forming the patterns of national flags.



YUKINORI YANAGI, *AMERICA*, 1994. PHOTO: VIVIENNE CHOW.

"We have more Asian participants but still, it's something that needs to be reinforced," said Flay who hopes to expand Asia's presence at the fair. "I come from New Zealand, the Asia-Pacific region. It is obvious to me than a regular French or European person that how dynamic and vibrant of that part of the world is."

About the Author

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Vivienne Chow is a journalist and cultural critic based between Hong Kong and Berlin. She is the founder of the non-profit educational initiative [Cultural Journalism Campus](#).



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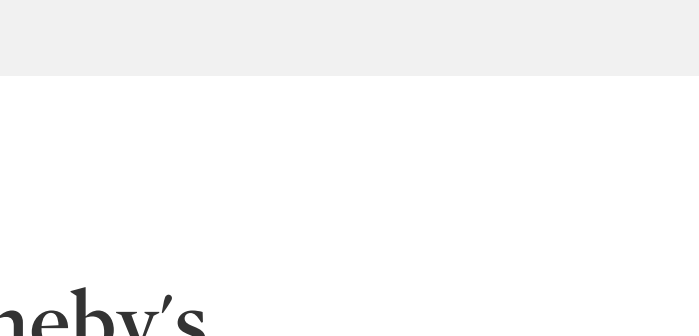
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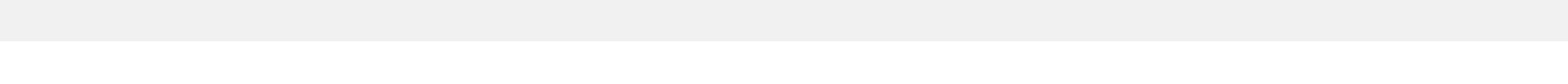
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