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Frozen Art

Up to London to the modern art fair, Frieze; bereft of soul, or even mild interest for the most part with the exception of one superb tapestry by Grayson Perry, highlighting - ironically in the circumstances - the evils of consumerism. Perry himself, a transvestite, was there, dressed like Bo-Peep or Widow Twanky, complete with pink clogs and shaven legs. Since he has become famous he has turned rather serious. He dresses the part of the eccentric artist, but his eyes betray the pressure of too much fiscal stimuli. At one point he was introduced to the famous filmmaker Baz Luhrmann, but barely acknowledged the author of *Strictly Ballroom* and *The Moulin Rouge*, so intent was he on courting those collectors he already knew. Tracey Emin was parading a mystery blond on her arm, nose in air like a hostile camel, and Nick Rhodes from Duran Duran, whose hair has changed from ash-blond to ash. As hordes of Germans and Americans swished around looking for trinkets on which to spend their bonuses, some prices drooped even the most robustly upright shoulders. One photograph by John Baldessari, the Californian conceptual artist, was selling for 200,000 euros. It only measured about eight inches by six, and was a photo of a woman in a dress, or rather, the top half of a woman in a dress, who was not looking at the camera. Even the rich Italians who were toying with buying it, whistled through their teeth at the price, while the salesman insisted on its "uniqueness of vision."

One good thing to come out of my visit to this crucible of modern art though, is that it has made me realise that Tom's work is no more crap than all the other things being sold for tens of thousands of pounds. I would offer to become his dealer, but, as usual, I know there's no way he would ever want to make money.

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