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Culture Monster

ALL THE ARTS. ALL THE TIME

What do Eli Broad and Mike Kelley have in common? Power, says ArtReview

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If the art world were a horse race, then the annual power lists that art magazines generate toward the end of year would really matter. Who placed and who didn't? Who inched ahead of whom? Which dark horse upset the race?

But seeing that the art world is only *part* horse race, it's hard to know exactly how to take rankings such as ArtReview's newly released Power 100 for 2010. Except as amusement, or maybe as shorthand for some of the year's most inescapable (not to say inevitable) trends.

According to this year's list, and almost every critic in the country, 2010 was the year that performance art went mainstream. Hence Performa founder RoseLee Goldberg (No. 9) and art star Marina Abramovic (35) climbed the list, and the elusive event-based artist Tino Sehgal (44) makes his debut.

In 2010 Jerry Saltz reached the point of near-ubiquity, thanks to his run on Bravo's "Work of Art" and free-for-alls with Facebook friends, on top of his New York magazine reviews. So this year the anonymous judges behind the list gave Saltz (75) the edge over his wife, New York Times critic Roberta Smith (80).

It was also a year in which L.A.'s most prominent collector, Eli Broad (8) made news on several counts, first for helping to bring Jeffrey Deitch (12) on board as MOCA's new director and then for firming up plans to open his own museum next door.

The other L.A. choices:

-- Artist Mike Kelley (26), for "revealing America's creepy underbelly in a way that looks as easy as pumpkin pie." (Yes, ArtReview is a British magazine.)

-- Dealers Tim Blum and Jeff Poe (33) for their choice of artists and for serving as an anchor for Culver City's galleries

-- Collector Eugenio Lopez (38) for sharing the wealth and sending his enviable art collection on tour to U.S. museums in "Where Do We Go From Here?" (The answer is Miami and Cincinnati and not L.A. at least not yet.)

-- Hammer Museum director Ann Philbin (52) for partnering with LAXART to launch a new biennial in 2012 and for keeping the museum "solvent" in turbulent times.

On the list last year, but bumped from 2010: LACMA director Michael Govan and artist John Baldessari, whose retrospective "Pure Beauty" opened at the Tate Modern in 2009. Did I mention this magazine comes out of London?

--Jori Finkel

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