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**ART BOCA RATON ANNOUNCES SUCCESS OF INAUGURAL FAIR  
*14,000 Attendees, Stellar Sales and Dates Announced for 2017***

**BOCA RATON, FL – (March 28, 2016)** – Art Boca Raton took place for the first time March 18-21, 2016 at the International Pavilion of the Palm Beaches at the Research Park at Florida Atlantic University with 42 galleries exhibiting and 14,000 attendees. “This is one of our most successful contemporary art fair launches in the past 20 years,” said David Lester, co-founder and co-organizer of Art Boca Raton.

Lee Ann Lester, co-founder and co-organizer said, “We were delighted to kick off this first year of Art Boca Raton with significant galleries from New York, London, Paris, Miami, Tel Aviv, São Paulo and Bogotá exhibiting important 20<sup>th</sup> century masters such as Lichtenstein, Warhol, Alex Katz, Botero, Donald Baechler, Basquiat, James Brooks, and Robert Nakin alongside today’s contemporary artists such as Robert Indiana, Richard Meier, Julian Opie, Dale Chihuly, Wesselmann and Damien Hirst. Universally, exhibitors reported strong sales to collectors from New York, Chicago, Miami, Naples, Vero Beach, and a year-round and winter residents of Boca Raton.”

A 50,000 square foot custom-built temporary structure was erected in less than a week and provided an exemplary setting for the regional, national and international galleries. The on-site lecture series and documentary screenings drew capacity crowds and the café was a hub for chatting, negotiating and excellent meals throughout the fair. Ample self-parking and valet both just steps from the front entrance made visiting Art Boca Raton convenient.

“Our goal this first year of Art Boca Raton was to create an elegant, relaxed, welcoming atmosphere for potential buyers and collectors as well as the community at large, and to provide an opportunity for the Boca Raton Museum of Art and Art School to raise funds through the opening night Vernissage. FAU students and faculty were our guests at the fair. The support of Mayor Haynie and the City of Boca Raton, the Chamber of Commerce, the Palm Beach County Cultural Council and the Tourist Development Council was invaluable,” says Lee Ann Lester, co-founder and co-organizer, Art Boca Raton.

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## **ART BOCA RATON WRAP-UP/2**

“We carefully curated the gallery selection to suit the city of Boca Raton and from the success of the fair we hit the mark and exceeded everyone’s expectations. The attendees, collectors, exhibitors, artists and the organizations and institutions we worked with complimented us over and over again – and sales supported this fact,” continues Lester.

Galleries are signing up for the second edition of Art Boca Raton, slated for March 15-19, 2017. “The fair brought out seasoned and new collectors that were new to our gallery. We are pleasantly surprised at the attendance and interest in the works we brought and look forward to doing it again next year,” said Mark Borghi, Mark Borghi Fine Art.

“Art Boca Raton was an outstanding event. It was impressive to see the world-class contemporary and creative artwork being showcased. We’re fortunate to have an event of this caliber in our City and look forward to many years to come,” says Susan Haynie, Mayor, City of Boca Raton.

### **Highlights:**

- Visionary Award was presented to Elaine Baker, co-owner of Baker Sponder Gallery (Boca Raton) in honor of Ms. Baker’s, “vibrant presence in the Florida art world and internationally for more than five decades, her vision and dedication is an example to all,” said Lee Ann Lester.
- Art Boca Raton sponsored a stellar light show on opening night projected on the entrance to the 50,000 square foot structure.
- Pushkin Gallery (Santa Fe, NM) exhibited an outstanding body of work by Boris Chetkov and reported, “good sales activity and a very strong response to Chetkov’s work. Attendance was steady and high for a debut fair,” according to Kenneth Pushkin.
- “I was happily surprised at the amount of traffic and thrilled to see collectors from Miami, Palm Beach and New York at the show. We had nonstop traffic all four days and sold 4 of the five Alex Katz works we displayed as well as some Donald Sultan pieces. The future looks bright for Art Boca Raton,” says Gary Santoro, owner, Vertu Fine Art.
- Habatat Galleries of Royal Oak, Michigan exhibited sculptures by Clearwater, FL based artist, Marlene Rose and sales were brisk. “The City of Boca Raton really embraced this prestigious event and art aficionados came out in droves,” said Ms. Rose.

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## **ART BOCA RATON WRAP-UP/3**

"The addition of Art Boca Raton to our cultural offerings and lengthening our successful winter season into March in the Palm Beaches, proves that visitors and residents benefit when high quality Art Shows call Palm Beach County home," says Glenn Jergensen, Executive Director Tourist Development Council Palm Beach County.

"Art and scientific research go hand in hand so the Research Park at FAU was delighted to host Art Boca Raton this year. Bringing 14,000 lovers of art in to proximity with the entrepreneurs who in 2015 generated \$849 million for Palm Beach County's economy is a wonderful combination, and of immense value to the whole community," stated Andrew Duffell, president & CEO of the Research Park at FAU.

"This inaugural Art Boca Raton has proven to be a significant addition to our community's cultural and economic assets and emblematic of the tremendous strides we have all achieved in raising the bar on art and culture in our community. The Boca Raton Museum of Art is proud to have played a role in making this first year a great success, and we look forward to partnering with Art Boca Raton 2017," says Irvin Lippman, Executive Director, Boca Raton Museum of Art.

Art Link International (Lake Worth, FL) is a veteran exhibitor at Art Palm Beach, sister fair to Art Boca Raton. Owner Howard Brassner said, "Nothing beats a first year fair that seems like a long time running fair. Tons of people, lots of sales. Already successful follow-up! Only Lee Ann and David Lester could make that happen."

"Art Boca Raton was a success in every regard. It was beautifully designed, the company was wonderful and the response to our artists' work was overwhelmingly positive. We are looking forward to next year," says Melissa Marr, Gary Lichtenstein Editions at Mana (New Jersey).

**Next Level Fairs** is the parent company for Art Palm Beach, 20<sup>th</sup> edition of the fair is scheduled for January 18-22, 2017 and the Second edition of Art Boca Raton is slated for March 15-19, 2017. Next Level Fairs curates sophisticated, event driven fairs attracting global attendance, supported by an international marketing and branding strategy in coordination with local museums, collectors and galleries. [www.nextlevelfairs.com](http://www.nextlevelfairs.com).

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**Editor's Note: Hi-res images available upon request.**