

KEEPING UP WITH THE GUTHMANS

Notable Chicagoans **Jack** and **Sandra Guthman**—whose art collection includes pieces by heavyweights like Jasper Johns, Gerhard Richter, Thomas Struth, and Jim Dine—share their thoughts on Art Basel Miami Beach.

MICHIGAN AVENUE: With the proliferation of art fairs that now seemingly fill the calendar, what do you think differentiates Art Basel Miami Beach from the other shows?

Sandra Guthman: Art Basel Miami Beach is attractive to the art collector because it continues to be the home for the world's best galleries, showing the best art of the moment.

MA: Some originally thought Miami to be an unlikely home for a world-class contemporary art fair, but the city has proven to be the ideal location, famously undergoing a cultural rebirth, in part because of Art Basel's success. Why do you think Miami makes such a great backdrop for an art fair?

Jack Guthman: Because of the increasingly strong contemporary art scene that exists there, which includes many museums that always have great shows in conjunction with the fair. I have great respect for Bonnie Clearwater's program at Museum of Contemporary Art, North Miami (MOCA, North Miami) and always plan a visit while I am there. Also, there are the renowned private collections. And the weather doesn't hurt either!

MA: What are your favorite activities when attending the show?

SG: We always enjoy walking through the Public Art section of the fair—the work there is challenging. The Theaster Gates installation and Andrea Bowers's beach "market" were particularly memorable from last year's show. In terms of non-art-related activities, we always make plans to attend local restaurants with friends from around the country.

MA: The two of you have an impressive collection, seemingly dedicated to acquiring up-and-coming artists. What specifically appeals to you about supporting and living with works of this genre? And what was the catalyst for focusing on the collection of photography?

JG: We focus on young artists because they capture the moment. They speak to social, political, and contemporary issues, all of which appeal [to us]. Also, they are willing to take risks, and so are we. With



Jack and Sandra Guthman photographed in their home in Chicago.

regard to photography, these artists think conceptually and create visually, which to us is a compelling combination. We had been intrigued by Xaviera Simmons's work for some time, then found—and bought—an image for our collection at David Castillo's booth. Same story with Kate Gilmore, whose work we had followed and admired, coincidentally also at David's stand.

MA: Jack, you sit on the Museum of Contemporary Art board and both you and Sandra are legendary within the

Chicago art community for your philanthropy. What is special to you about the Chicago institutions and group of collectors?

JG: Legendary just means old! What is special about Chicago is the people here who are part of the art world and are collaborators; they each support a broad group of institutions, and there is a passion about not just contemporary art but Chicago's place in the art world both nationally and internationally.