



This photo shows booth of FA Gallery from Kuwait, from Istanbul Contemporary.

Turkish collectors think very 'small'

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As the sixth Contemporary Istanbul art fair comes to an end, Turkish galleries are very proud to have sold everything they had. Many international galleries, however, cannot boast the same success.

"I think Turkish collectors appreciate Arabic art, but they don't buy it," said an FA Gallery seller who could not sell any art during the fair. However, Kerimcan Güleriyüz, the owner of The Empire Project Gallery, thought the opposite: "I think Turkish people do not appreciate Arabic art. They always want to buy Western art. However, they do not know that Turkish art and Western art do not go with each other. There are really nice pieces from Middle Eastern art."

Another problem that the fair faced this year was the lack of foreign visitors. "There are not enough foreign collectors," said Jasmine Jankossen. "I have not seen many foreign collectors," she said, and the few works she managed to sell were sold to a Greek collector. "Turkish people are not eager to buy any in-

ternational art."

Özlem Ünsal, a representative of Dirimart gallery, said the Turkish gallery had sold a number of paintings. "However, we sold those paintings to our usual customers."

While many Turkish galleries were satisfied with the fair results, the Gulf countries' galleries, which are this year's exclusive guests and the featured theme of the art fair, had little success.

This year the fair hosted more galleries from Iran. However, the Iranian galleries were not satisfied with their performance; Maryam Majd, the representative of the Assar Gallery from Tehran, said Turkish collectors only bought from Turkish artists. The fact that Turkish collectors are closed to Middle Eastern art is a problem, since the fair is an international one.

One of the gallery owners from Tehran said that if foreign galleries stopped coming to the show, the event would cease to be an international fair. The fair was visited by 47,000 people and 2,100 collectors. Within the first two days, 62 percent of the works of art were sold. ● HDN