



Galeri Gmurzynska, celebrating 50 years with a new exhibition

DESIGN ART

Art Basel Miami Beach: Galerie Gmurzynska birthday celebrations

The German gallery toasts 50 years with a dazzling retrospective at Art Basel Miami Beach this week, says Caroline Roux



BY CAROLINE ROUX
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There are many ways to flag up a 50th birthday, and [Galerie Gmurzynska](#) which opened its doors in Cologne in 1965 has chosen to celebrate its half a century (and three generations of women gallerists) with an exhibition of 150 extraordinary artworks on its stand at [Art Basel Miami Beach](#) this week. Brought together by the Italian super-curator Germano Celant, the works have been installed floor-to-ceiling in salon-style groupings that range from the sublime to the highly unexpected. Whoever thought that a gazillion dollar Miro from 1972 would ever sit quite so close to a glittery self portrait by Sylvester Stallone from 1975?

Stallone is one of the gallery's more unlikely artists – its founder Antonina Gmurzynska originally specialised in the



The gallery was founded in Cologne in 1965

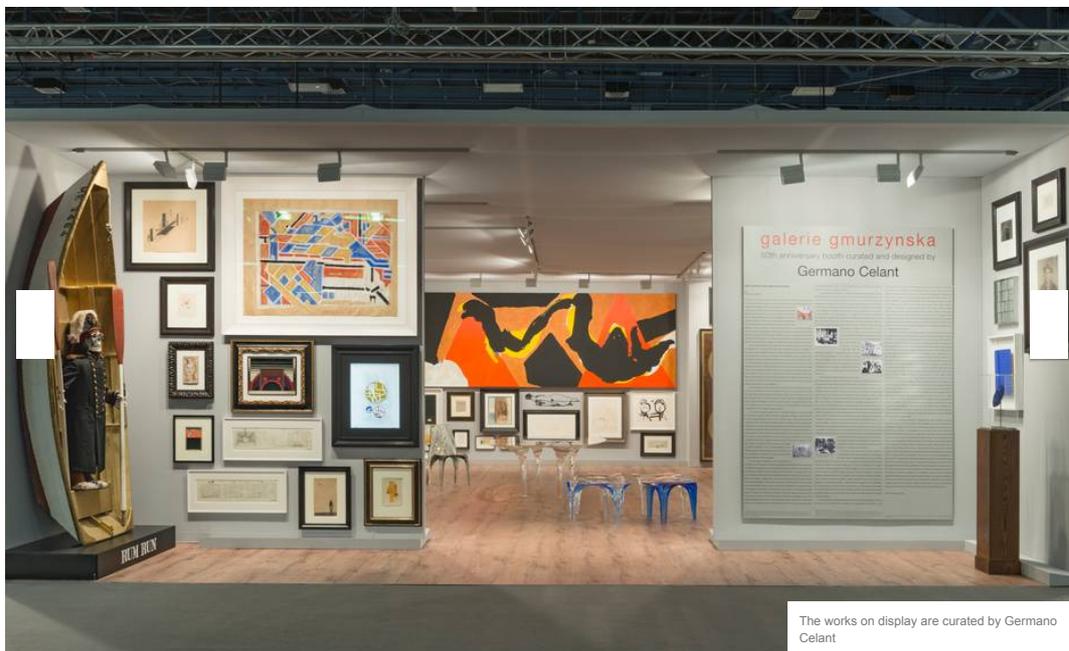
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Russian avant garde and there's plenty on show here, from Rodchenko's dynamic photography to colour studies by Ilya Chashnik. But the movie star (about to make a serious come-back in *Rocky* follow-up *Creed*, apparently) has been a frequent presence on the booth, as has the gallery's friend Princess Michael of Kent.

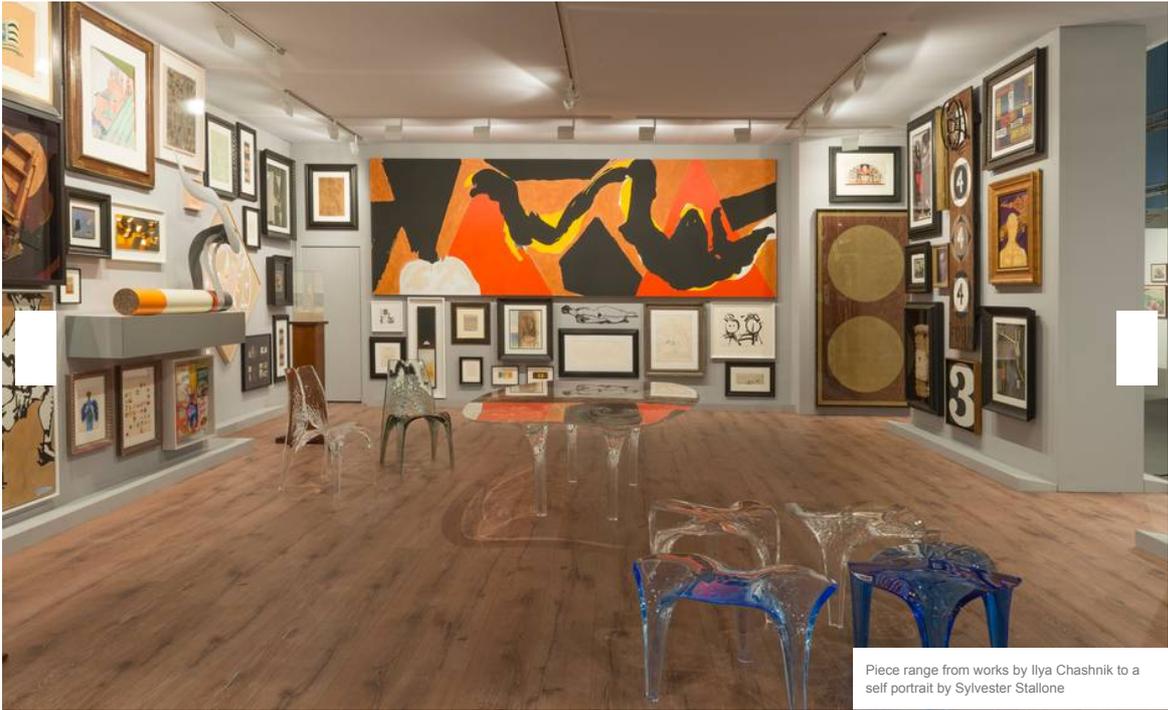
Mr Celant was originally invited by the gallery to create a book to mark its 50 years.

"I went into the gallery's archive and it was like being in an avalanche," he says. "How can you control 50 years of work? It's impossible." Rather than buckling under the pressure, he pulled out 150 favourites. "I treated the walls like a chess board, moving pieces around until they fit. It was important for the installation to be driven by the art itself. I've tried to make a show that focuses on ideas, not on value. And I agree, an art fair is a strange place to do that," he smiles. "But I just want people to think. Yes, this is product, but it's also history."

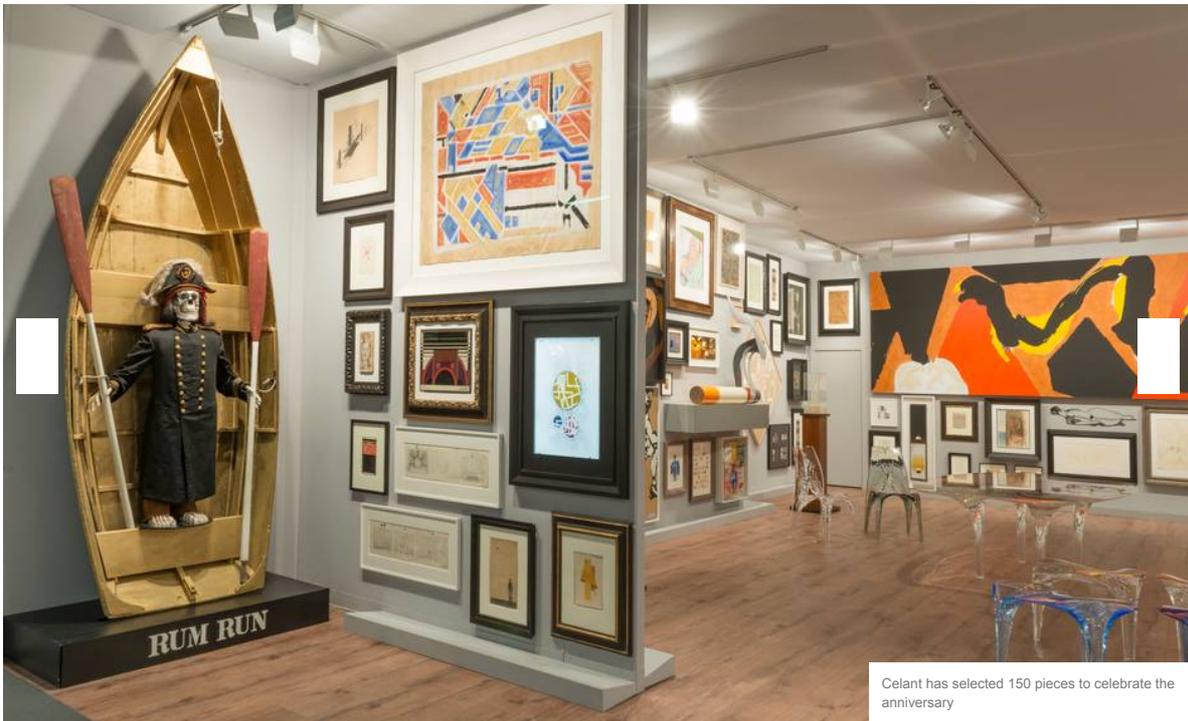
Visitors who have digested the 100 plus years of art inside the booth, will get a further surprise on its outer walls. Here, Celant has hung a multitude of photographs by his friend Karl Lagerfeld dating from the 1970s and including Jeff Koons and Jack Black. "I don't see why the inside and the outside of the booth have to connect," shrugs Celant. Though its unlikely that this art world heavyweight doesn't have a message in mind. Didn't Joseph Beuys say everyone's an artist?



The works on display are curated by Germano Celant



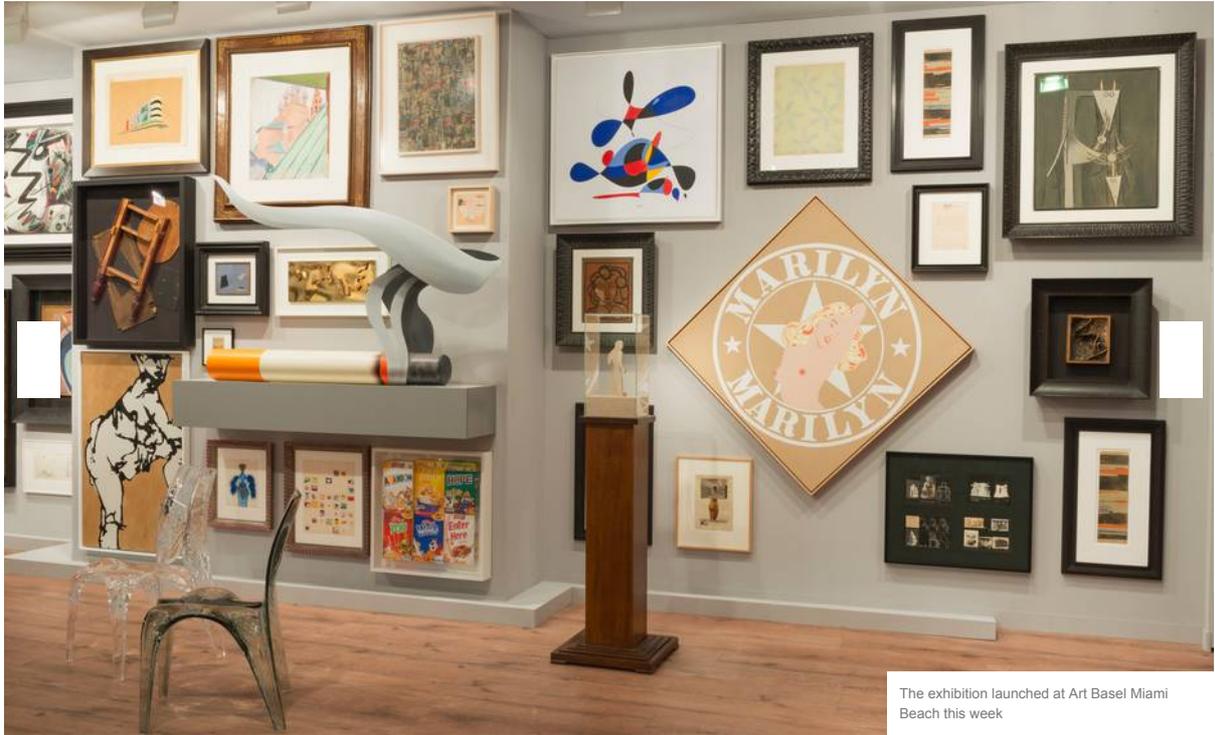
Piece range from works by Ilya Chashnik to a self portrait by Sylvester Stallone



Celant has selected 150 pieces to celebrate the anniversary



The works include photographs by Karl Lagerfeld from the 1970s



The exhibition launched at Art Basel Miami Beach this week