



Showstopping stands are fast becoming a trend among London gallerists at Frieze art fair, each one recreating a different world

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The “immersive booth” is already an overused term, yet its appeal is stronger than ever. It is the antithesis of the intimidating white cube model and, if done well, can create a holistic environment at a stand and keep visitors there, Instagramming away. What, if anything, is for sale on these stands is sometimes hard to tell, and indeed, the basic commercial purpose can seem unimportant. But do not be fooled; they are brilliant marketing stunts.

While the concept has been around for some time, it has gained momentum at Frieze in recent years, particularly after Helly Nahmad’s booth at Frieze Masters in 2014. Entitled *The Collector*, it recreated a fictitious Parisian collector’s home from the late 1960s. The duo behind it, the set designer Robin Brown and the producer Anna Pank, are back at Frieze Masters this year with a recreation of the UK Pop artist Peter Blake’s studio for the London gallery Waddington Custot.

“People have become more interested in building a private space within a public arena,” Pank says. “Building a whole world within an environment that is about selling art is challenging. *The Collector* was a hoarder’s flat—it was forensically accurate, and gathering the props took a long time.”

Also at Frieze Masters this year is a recreation of the eclectic home of the Italian artist Enrico Baj, who died in 2003, presented by London and New York-based gallery Luxembourg & Dayan and Milan’s Gió Marconi. Across the park at Frieze London, Hauser & Wirth has created a fictional Bronze Age museum.

The trend continues outside the fair, too. The London gallerist Pilar Ordovas, who is not exhibiting at Frieze, is staging the exhibition *Marilyn, Flowers, Lips, Gun, Mirror, Cactus* (until 16 December), displaying Pop art amid 44 glow-in-the-dark Gufram cactuses. “The idea of the ‘immersive’ exhibition is not new,” Ordovas says, “but I think part of its enduring appeal is that looking at art brings people together, and what better way to connect than via a shared experience?”