Art Basel

by Preya Shah

Art Basel was hosted in Hong Kong for the fourth time this year and attracted more people than ever before, selling out tickets. The number of visitors went up by 17% to 70,000 since last year.

Sammi Ng, a student from HKU, expressed her annoyance, saying there were "too many people and the waiting time was too long." She went on to say, "The guidelines are unclear. One of the artists shouted at me when I tried to take a photo beside the artwork" despite there being no signs prohibiting visitors to do so.

There were 239 galleries exhibited at the fair, by established and emerging younger artists alike. An amateur, Sanidhya Baid, an HKU student who had never visited an art gallery before was in awe of the artwork on display, especially the sculptures. "The sculptures of humans were very unrealistically real; the way they did the skin and everything made them look alive."

In general, Jhalak Shah, a student from HKU with a strong passion for art summarised her trip to the fair, "Not only the physical art, but the entire ambience was inspiring."

Valerie Hui, a university student in the UK commented on the vast display saying, "I think they should separate the artwork into different categories so that people would understand the themes of the painting easily." Ng added a remark regarding the ambiguity of the artwork, "There is a lack of descriptions beside the artwork so unless you join the tour, you have no idea what the artwork is about." Baid, on the other hand, said that, "Art in an expression where one abstract is different to different people."

The artwork at the fair was arranged to be showcased in booths to create distinct galleries owned by their founders. The galleries displayed work for sale from Beijing, New York, Brazil and South Africa, to name a few.