

DLK COLLECTION

From one photography collector to another: a venue for thoughtful discussion of vintage and contemporary photography via reviews of recent museum exhibitions, gallery shows, photography auctions, photo books, art fairs and other items of sometime interest to photography collectors large and small.

TUESDAY, JANUARY 3, 2012

➔ Top Photography Venues in New York in 2011

I reviewed photography shows at 83 different venues in and around New York in 2011. When you step back and think about the scale of that number, it certainly says something about the tremendous diversity of galleries and museums committed to photography in one form or another that we have at our disposal in this great city. We are blessed with specialist photography galleries of all shapes and sizes, contemporary art galleries with strong photography programs, and museums of all kinds that regularly show photography.

In past years, I have tried to get granular with my statistical analysis of these various places, taking averages and tallying totals, in the attempt to discover unseen patterns and trends. This year, I have returned to a more straightforward approach: simply adding up the total number of stars I awarded to photography shows at a venue over the course of the year. The fact is that this method rewards both extremes in quality and show to show consistency fairly equally, without resorting to trying to build in zeros for those shows I didn't review. I'm happy to report that the results below seem to realistically separate the wheat from the chaff.

The clear winner this year for overall strength of programming was Pace/MacGill Gallery. Of the total of 7 shows the gallery put on this past year, I reviewed 4 and issued a grand total of 8 stars. While there was a cluster of other strong galleries at 6 stars apiece (7 different venues at this score), no other venue in New York delivered as much. I think we would all expect to see names like Janet Borden, Yossi Milo, Bruce Silverstein, and Yancey Richardson among the leaders, given their recent historical strength, but I'd also like to single out newer galleries like Higher Pictures and Sasha Wolf Gallery, who have emerged from the pack with thoughtful and consistently intelligent programming.

With the exception of MoMA at 6 stars (padded a bit by 2 stars for a rehanging of the permanent collection), our museums were particularly weak this year. In general, not only was there a notable absence of blockbusters and scholarly retrospectives, these venues didn't deliver the depth of photographic programming we have generally come to expect. Many galleries roundly bested these institutional players with their offerings. Notable absences from the lists below include both the Whitney and the Guggenheim, and contemporary stalwarts Marian Goodman, Gagosian, Pace, Gladstone, Paula Cooper, Sean Kelly, Robert Miller, and 303. None of these usual suspects had more than a single 1 STAR photography show in 2011, and several had none at all. Perhaps this is just a quirk of longer term scheduling, so here's hoping to see them again in 2012, with the kind of quality photography we know they can deliver.

The complete data set is below, with gallery name, followed by total number of review stars earned over the course of the year (including only those venues with a total of 2 stars and above):

Specialist Photography Galleries

Pace/MacGill Gallery ([here](#)): 8
Janet Borden, Inc. ([here](#)): 6
Higher Pictures ([here](#)): 6
Yossi Milo Gallery ([here](#)): 6
Yancey Richardson Gallery ([here](#)): 6
Bruce Silverstein Gallery ([here](#)): 6
Sasha Wolf Gallery ([here](#)): 6
Hasted Kraeutler ([here](#)): 5
Danziger Gallery ([here](#)): 4
Amador Gallery ([here](#)): 3
ClampArt ([here](#)): 3
Edwynn Houk Gallery ([here](#)): 3
Deborah Bell Photographs (now closed): 2
Bonni Benrubi Gallery ([here](#)): 2
Howard Greenberg Gallery ([here](#)): 2
Steven Kasher Gallery ([here](#)): 2
Hans P. Kraus Jr. Fine Photographs ([here](#)): 2
Robert Mann Gallery ([here](#)): 2

Contemporary Art Galleries

Jack Shainman Gallery ([here](#)): 6
Salon 94 Freemans/Bowery ([here](#)): 5
Wallspace ([here](#)): 4
David Zwirner ([here](#)): 4
Matthew Marks Gallery ([here](#)): 3
Metro Pictures ([here](#)): 3
Sikkema Jenkins & Co. ([here](#)): 3
Tanya Bonakdar Gallery ([here](#)): 2
Cheim & Read ([here](#)): 2
Gallery at Hermes ([here](#)): 2
McKee Gallery ([here](#)): 2
Murray Guy ([here](#)): 2
Friedrich Petzel Gallery ([here](#)): 2
Andrea Rosen Gallery ([here](#)): 2
Sonnabend Gallery ([here](#)): 2
Bryce Wolkowitz Gallery ([here](#)): 2

Museums

Museum of Modern Art ([here](#)): 6
International Center of Photography ([here](#)): 4
Brooklyn Museum ([here](#)): 3
Jewish Museum ([here](#)): 3
Metropolitan Museum of Art ([here](#)): 3
Artists Space ([here](#)): 2
Bruce Museum ([here](#)): 2
Museum of the City of New York ([here](#)): 2
Florence Griswold Museum ([here](#)): 2