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Galleries and an Auction House Follow Collectors to Florida

Pace, Acquavella and Sotheby's are opening seasonal spaces in Palm Beach.



As the birds fly south for the winter, some of the art world will undertake a similar migration: [Pace Gallery](#), [Acquavella Galleries](#) and [Sotheby's](#) are opening seasonal gallery spaces in Palm Beach, Fla., a hub for wealthy vacationers.

They'll all open in [the Royal Poinciana Plaza](#), a shopping destination there, in early November and stay until spring. Planned exhibitions feature big names: The first at Pace will be of [James Turrell's](#) work; Acquavella will open with the show "[Masterworks: From Cézanne to Thiebaud](#)"; and the first presentation at Sotheby's will include paintings by Andy Warhol and Jean-Michel Basquiat, as well as Rolex timepieces and midcentury furniture. This all comes on the heels of summer when Pace, Sotheby's and other art world institutions opened [seasonal spaces in the Hamptons](#) — following collectors who had fled New York because of the pandemic.

"The success of our East Hampton space met and exceeded expectations, so we thought, 'How can we continue this model in a location appropriate for the season?'" said Adam Sheffer, vice president of Pace. "Given how vital South Florida is for the international art ecology, and given the great museums there, and the collector base, it seemed like a logical choice." Mr. Sheffer said more of Pace's clients were spending extended time in Florida.

Why not head to Miami Beach, which typically hosts the Art Basel fair in December and is already on the art world map? "We have a lot of clients in Miami as well, so it's not really one versus the other," said David Schrader, the global head of private sales at Sotheby's. "We thought this would be a compelling destination." Eleanor Acquavella, whose gallery has never had a physical space outside New York City, said that her family had long-term ties to Palm Beach. "We happen to know a lot more people in Palm Beach," she said.

Despite recording [more new daily coronavirus infections](#) recently than New York, Florida's [restrictions on businesses](#) are looser. All three institutions said they would be taking extra sanitary precautions, requiring masks, limiting attendance and enforcing social distancing in their new spaces.

So far, following the seasonal patterns of wealthy collectors has proved to be a success for big galleries and auction houses. Mr. Schrader said the East Hampton space enabled Sotheby's to engage more casually with clients. "They would come in in golf outfits and bathing suits and flip-flops, so it was much less formal, and there was more dialogue about art objects," he said.

Mr. Sheffer said he noticed something similar at Pace's East Hampton space — a move away from the special-events-based calendar that has brought collectors into the galleries over the last few years.

"And let me tell you," Mr. Sheffer said, "it's been good for sales."