



Alan Peppard on John Sughrue, Linda Marcus, Nastia Liukin and others

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By ALAN PEPPARD / The Dallas Morning News apeppard@dallasnews.com apeppard@dallasnews.com

Tired of the IV drip of bad news from CNBC? This weekend's Dallas Art Fair is a chance to release your inner Elvis: Shoot the television and enjoy something uplifting.

An impressive metamorphosis has overtaken the Fashion Industry Gallery in the Arts District. Showrooms that normally hold clothes are filled with an array of art from 35 galleries across the nation.

Thursday night, the swells poured into FIG for the Dallas Art Fair's opening gala. There, they could inspect a cavalcade of contemporary art – works as humble as an inexpensive lithograph or as august as a Mark Rothko oil painting.

"My sense is that the collector community was surprised by the quality of the art and the presentation of the installation," says Art Fair co-founder **John Sughrue**, owner of FIG. "They embraced the fair. This is a step in the direction of Dallasites feeling secure buying fine art in Dallas."

Among those crowding the opening gala were **Linda Marcus**, widow of Neiman Marcus chairman Stanley Marcus, philanthropist **Nancy Dedman**, *D Magazine* publisher **Wick Allison**, Sotheby's exec **Warren Weitman**, SMU trustee **Linda Pitts Custard** (daughter of energy titan **Frank Pitts**) and former Greenhill School headmaster **Phil Foote** (in from New York) and his wife, **Mary**.

The fair closes this afternoon at 5.