

PARTIES

Jane Fonda Proves She's the Ultimate Gallery Girl by Raising \$10 Million in a Single Night at Gagosian Beverly Hills

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Jane Fonda Linnea Stephan/BFA.com

In between LA's weekends of rainstorms, the clouds parted Tuesday night for Jane Fonda, Gagosian, and Christie's *Art for a Safe and Healthy California*, a ticketed event at the Beverly Hills gallery to raise funds to support California's fight to protect neighborhoods from toxic oil drilling. Hundreds of attendees, including some of the hosts, like Larry Gagosian and Aileen Getty, and co-hosts Wendy Schmidt and Chrissy Teigen and John Legend, came out in support of the activist and her grassroots environmental campaign.

"We, the Campaign for Safe and Healthy California, were told that the big oil companies were looking to spend \$200 million to overturn a bill that Governor Newsom signed to protect people living in what the oil companies call 'sacrifice zones,' [communities next to oil drilling areas]," Fonda told *Vogue*. "If people know the truth, they won't vote to keep oil wells drilling next to schools, and daycares, and playgrounds. We just need to get the word out, because \$200 million can get a lot of TV ads out there. We can't match that, but we don't have to spend as much, because we have the truth."

Fonda's idea for an art auction to raise money in support of the cause quickly gathered momentum. She first approached her friend Ed Ruscha, who agreed to donate a piece, paving the way for others like Frank Gehry, Catherine Opie, Alex Israel, Kenny Scharf, Jonas Wood, Marilyn Minter, and more, to donate pieces, which amounted to a total of 30 works from 30 artists.

"When Jane said she wanted to do an event to help fight big oil, I was immediately on board—her enthusiasm is just contagious," said Derek Blasberg, who, through his role at Gagosian, also helped with outreach for the event. "The vast majority of [gathering these works for auction] was Jane's doing, though. There's no assistant. It's her sending every email. She's a force of nature."

Passing through the gallery's current Basquiat show led to a tented pop-up space atop the gallery's parking lot where guests could view the art. Five works—by Francesca Gabbiani, Mark Grotjahn, Marilyn Minter, Catherine Opie, and Ed Ruscha—sold at the event, raising more than \$10 million. The campaign funds raised to date total about \$17 million. The additional works will be sold at auction through Christie's in May, and Gagosian will continue with a selling exhibition this summer.

The event continued to the VIP rooftop, where a packed crowd sipped champagne and Pellegrino and munched on caviar blinis while seeking shade from the 6 PM pre-summer sun.

Downstairs, the event officially kicked off with remarks from gallery owner Larry Gagosian. "I'm not used to charging people to come to my gallery, but it's an idea I think has some merit," he joked. "Tonight, we've raised \$300,000 just in ticket sales." After everyone applauded what a great start the benefit was off to, Gagosian introduced Fonda as "the hardest working woman I know, and a national treasure."

Indeed, Fonda's efforts were able to rally a roster of support to fight the cause, with a packed house that included Maria Shriver, Michael Govan and Katherine Ross, Judd Apatow and Leslie Mann, Mayor Karen Bass, Jamie Tisch, Mary Steenburgen, Shephard Fairey, and many more. After speeches from Fonda, Nalleli Cobo, Dr. Lorenzo Gonzalez, Chris Lehman, Wendy Schmidt, Greg Sarris, and Chrissy Teigen, John Legend performed to the intimate audience, singing "Redemption Song," "Here Comes the Sun," "All of Me," and "Wonder Woman"—a fitting tribute to Fonda and her tireless efforts.



Linnea Stephan/BFA.com