

Diddy buys a Brett Murray

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The Spear artist offers ironic thanks to Luthuli House

Rap mogul, businessman and serious art collector Sean Combs – whose stage name is P Diddy – most likely had Brett Murray's name on his list when he visited the massive Art Basel Miami exhibition in Los Angeles and bought a work called Manifesto from the artist's collection that gave the world controversy over The Spear.

Murray, for his part, is delighted by the news, but doesn't know much about Diddy's work.

When contacted by City Press, the satirical artist said: "It's an

interesting end to a very uncomfortable and difficult year.

"I guess I should thank my marketing company, Luthuli House. This is celebratory news. I hope he bought it because of the work, not the controversy."

Murray's representative gallery – Goodman Gallery – said Diddy likely singled out the work before visiting their booth at the trendy art fair.

When the ANC and Goodman signed an agreement to end The Spear saga, they did so in front of Manifesto, which – ironically, according to Murray – is a wall



The Goodman Gallery's Liza Essers and ANC spokesman Jackson Mthembu in front of the painting bought by musician P Diddy || PHOTO: LEON SADIKI

sculpture reading "promises promises promises".

The world's press was at the Goodman that day and images of the work were run in several papers, including the LA Times.

Goodman Gallery's Emma Laurence said: "Most celebrities pinpoint booths they want to visit beforehand because the fair is so huge.

"He didn't even come into our booth last year, even though one of the celebrities in his group, a film producer, came in and bought a work by Kudzanai Chiurai,"

Most likely, Diddy knew of The Spear drama and wanted to support the artist, even though he is known for acquiring only the top end of contemporary art on offer, including the likes of Damien Hirst and Takashi Murakami.

Laurence said: "Possibly he sees Brett Murray as a rising artist to invest in."

Another attraction could have been the price. Manifesto was on sale for a relatively low \$15 000 (R130 000).

Asked if he was a fan of Diddy's work, Murray yesterday responded: "I'll be honest, I don't really know his music. I've heard he has a TV show but I've never watched it because I don't have DStv"