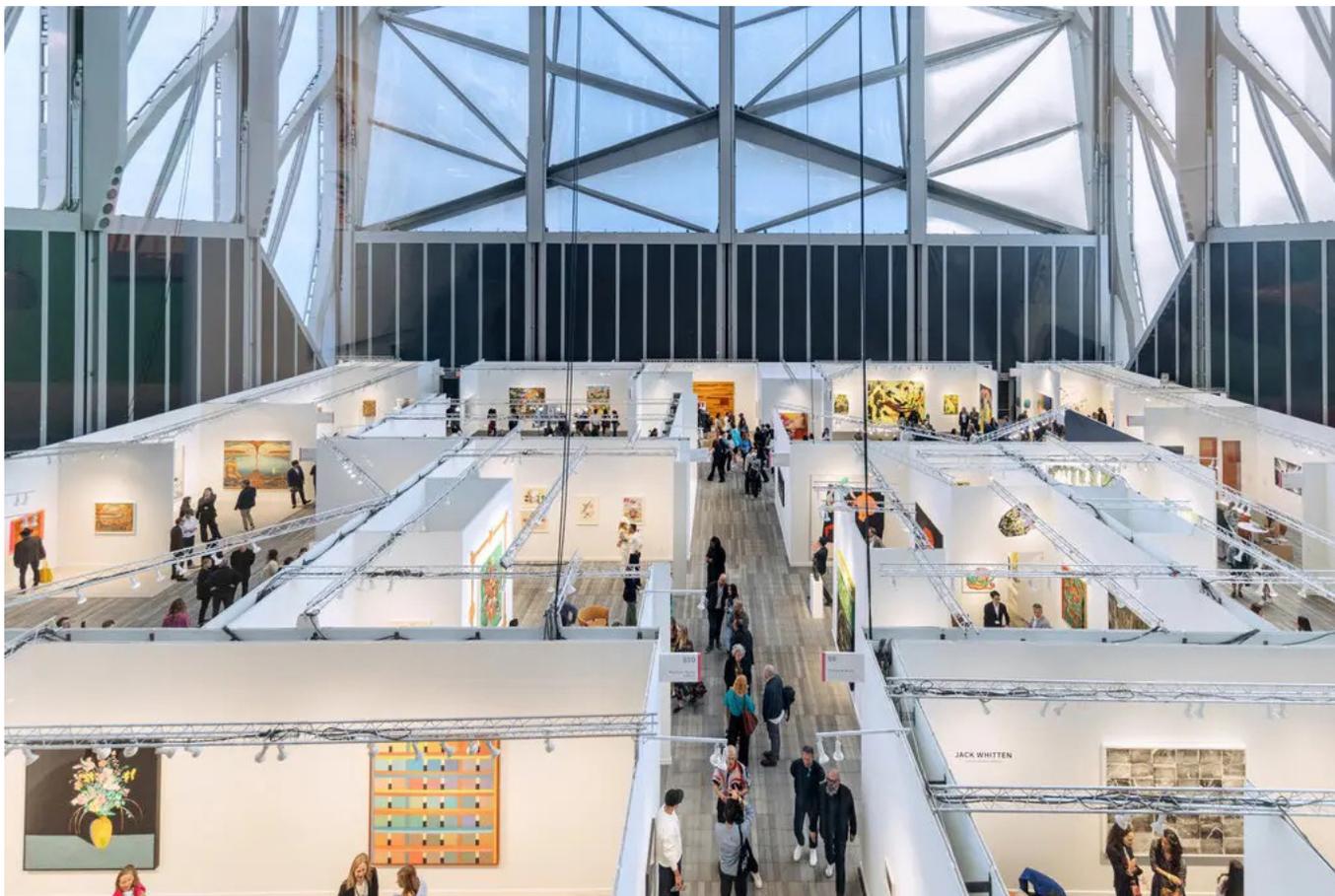


# The New York Times

## At Frieze New York 2023, One-Person Shows That Shine

Exciting work from emerging artists exploring environmental change, and proof that much of the most innovative work of the past half century has been by women.

By Holland Cotter



At roughly half its original size — 69 galleries this year — the Frieze Fair, now located at the Shed, makes for a doable walkabout spread over three floors. Credit...Jeenah Moon for The New York Times

At its debut in 2012, Frieze New York, a spinoff of Frieze in London, came off as an imperious enterprise. The fair commanded an island in the East River. Getting there could be difficult and expensive. And once there, negotiating the miles of pedestrian aisles formed by some 120 galleries made for a humbling degree of exertion.

This has changed. The fair, which is on view till Sunday, is now reachably moored in Manhattan, a block or so from the Hudson, at the Shed on West 30th Street. At roughly half its original size — 69 galleries this year — it makes for a quite doable walkabout spread over three floors. Apart from now-standard “V. I. P.” perks, highfa-lutin’ is downplayed.

Which, of course, makes sense. Art fairs are trade fairs. On the supply side, professionals gather to market and mingle, to compete and compare, to roll out product and hope that it sells. On the demand side, collectors get a one-stop scan of new retail and a chance to drop cash if they like what they see.

Even for those who aren't in the business of selling or buying, fairs are transactional events. For the admission fee you put down — and it's a lot of money now, \$55 and upward just to get in the door — you expect a vitalizing viewing experience. And Frieze New York 2023 delivers that, specifically in the form of a baker's dozen of solid one-person shows, and in a historical group whose quietly impassioned spirit threads through the fair.

Several of the solos are on the first of the fair's three levels. And in two, installed close to each other, a history of contrasts plays out. Hauser & Wirth has assembled a small, gorgeous, somber survey of painting, sculpture and drawing by Jack Whitten (1939-2018), a Black artist who early fled the Jim Crow South of his birth, never to return, and who, thanks to an unwelcoming market, has a low art world profile until quite late in his life. Now he's a huge presence.

Across the aisle from Hauser's beautiful tribute David Kordansky's booth is packed with the exuberant carvings and digital collages of Lauren Halsey, a young California artist who makes embattled Black life in her native Los Angeles the very engine of her work and whose career, at 36, is currently, literally, flying high: An installation by her commissioned for the Metropolitan Museum's roof garden debuted earlier this Spring, and it's a hit.

Mary Lovelace O'Neal, who has a show of six large paintings at Jenkins Johnson is from Whitten's generation and also Southern-born. At an early point she felt compelled to turn gestural abstract, to which she was attracted, into a political as well as personal medium, and the two are inseparable in her art. The young African American artist Naudline Pierre, who shows at James Cohan, follows O'Neal's expressionist lead but moves it in a mytho-spiritual direction, turning Cohan's booth into a grotto-like chapel of rich colors and swirling figures.

Elsewhere it's great to see two very different New York artists showcased in sterling midcareer. The solid, organic abstract forms of the painter Suzan Frecon carve out a zone of formal concentration at David Zwirner. And Nan Goldin, with her gridded photo assemblages at Gagosian, the gallery she recently joined, takes a victory lap after the successes both of the Laura Poitras film in which she stars and the performative activism it documents.

Performance, like video and conceptual art, doesn't really work in an art fair context. But sculpture does, or can, and it's good to see some here. The New York artist Matthew Ronay's solo at Casey Kaplan is a single 24-foot-long work called "The Crack, the Swell, an Earth, an Ode." Composed of dozens of bruise-colored, organic looking (think fingers, fungi) toy-size components, it stretches across the space like a doomsday horizon line.

As in the case of Villa, the work of the artist June Clark has had, up to now, limited exposure in New York, although it was once her home. She was born in Harlem in 1941, but relocated to Canada during the tumultuous 1960s. Despite, or because of, this driven departure, native country remains a critical subject of her art, evident in the aggressively spiky assemblages and threadbare Old Glories brought to Frieze from Toronto by Daniel Faria Gallery, whose booth is part of a section called Focus on the fair's second floor devoted to one-person shows organized by galleries that have been in existence fewer than 12 years.

I recommend lingering at some of these: at a gallery called Barro, based in Buenos Aires and New York City, which is showing Mónica Giron's knitted wool forms of endangered birds of Patagonia, where she was born; at Toronto's Cooper Cole, which has Jagdeep Raina's little handsewn embroideries evoking, in words and images, life in a Kashmiri diaspora; at Capsule Shanghai, populated by Liao Wen's spookily sleek, wood-carved cyborgs; and at Mitre Gallery where you'll find Marcos Siqueira's images of rural Brazil, painted with pigments made from local earth.

The fair also has lots of show, some carefully selected and shaped, others — at Victoria Miro, Thaddeus Ropac, Michael Werner — straightforward inventory displays. But one group show, installed at Michael Rosenfeld's booth (D10) on the fair's third floor, is exceptional.

All the artists included are women; all the works date from 1973, the year that abortion was legalized by *Roe v. Wade*. None of the art directly refers to that; in fact, only a few pieces are overtly political in any way: a tiny pistol-packing assemblage by Betye Saar and a fantastic, prophetic drawing by Nancy Grossman of a face turning into a gun.

But the sheer formal variety of work at Rosenfeld by still underknown figures like Hannelore Baron (1926-1987), Mary Bauermeister (1934-2023), and Lenore Tawney (1907-2007), is radical, disruptive of art historical norms. Collectively it confirms a reality the market has consistently ignored or suppressed: that much of the most imaginative and innovative work by anyone anywhere in the past half century has been by women.

Is recognition growing? Is the art establishment making some corrective noises? It's good at doing that. What I can say is that a close, careful sweep through Frieze New York 2023 turns up treasures you probably wouldn't have found in such quantity just a few years ago.

**These include dynamite paintings by Harmony Hammond and Joan Semmel at Alexander Gray's booth, and an exquisite Bethany Collins text piece there.** Jac Leirner's skinny, spear-like collages at Esther Schipper (Berlin) and Fortes D'Aloia & Gabriel (Brazil) are reminders that this Brazilian artist's first major New York survey recently opened at Swiss Institute here and is on view through Aug. 27.

The painter Trisha Baga, now in space-travel mode, also has a doubleheader (at Société and Gió Marconi). And you'll find brilliant one-off items tucked away everywhere in the show: a small leather-and-twine hanging by Leonor Antunes at Galeria Luisa Strina; in a luscious lobster-red Mary Heilmann painting at 303 Gallery; in a metal sculpture by Kathleen Ryan at Karma with a crystalline spiderweb hidden inside, and, at Miguel Abreu, a tabletop version of Pamela Rosenkranz's electric pink "Old Tree," which stands, at full height, on the High Line outside.

It's exciting, walking through the show, to experience this slow-building choral effect, worth the price of admission. Now what should change is the current steep price, which puts Frieze New York beyond the reach of a wide audience — including a crucial audience of young artists — just as surely as its island location did years ago.