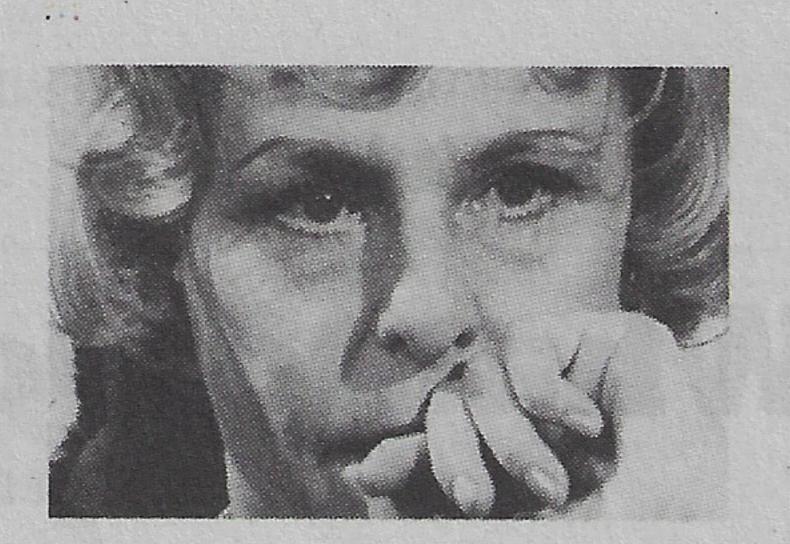
A curated new guide to events this month.

BY ERIK PIEPENBURG



Coolly damning
Leni Riefenstahl,
Nazi glorifier.

BY MANOHLA DARGIS



Michael Keaton's
Batman suit
could be yours.

BY EMMANUEL MORGAN



NEWS | CRITICISM

Weekendarts

The New York Times

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 5, 2025 C1

ART FAIR REVIEW

In a wobbly market, exhibitors at the largest global art fair are leaning toward colorful, Instagram-worthy works for maximum appeal.







GUS ARONSON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Doowon Lee's felted works for ACA Galleries at this year's Armory Show at the Javits Center. They include, at center, "Moonlit Night: Tiger and Frog" (2025), mixed media on wool.

Standouts Among the Crowd-Pleasers

SEPTEMBER IS BUSY for the art world in New York. Hometown galleries open their important shows, and a cluster of fairs bring together collectors and galleries from around the world. The Armory Show, which gathers more than 200 exhibitors from 35 countries at the Javits Center through Sunday, is the largest, and it remains an unparalleled opportunity to sample the global art scene.

But while dealers and artists alike may believe in art for art's sake, they also have to make it work as a business. And that business, at the moment, is wobbly. Though it remains enormous, this year's Armory fair,

the second since its acquisition by Frieze, is slightly smaller than last year's, and it's really anyone's guess whether collectors will buy. So it's no surprise that most of the galleries approached this year's Armory conservatively, reaching for brightly colored, easily approachable art in well-worn 20th-century genres that will translate to Instagram. (There are also many dead artists, whose markets and perch on art history may seem more reliable.)

Along with several special sections, including Focus, curated by Jessica Bell Brown to highlight artists from the American South, there are enough fine artworks here to keep you occupied for hours. Eric

Firestone (416) has a particularly strong group show, there's an exquisite Raymond Saunders painting at Andrew Kreps Gallery (104), and the array of Gee's Bend quilts and monumental Thornton Dial installations in the Platform section is a fair unto itself.

The real problem is the sheer size of the place. It's almost impossible not to feel overwhelmed. So Walker Mimms and I went in early and chose 13 exceptional booths to look for. Your experience will differ, but it's enough to get you started.

WILL HEINRICH

Our selections, Pages 8-9.

The Armory Show 2025
Through Sunday at the Javits
Center in Manhattan.

At the fourth edition of the Independent 20th Century, thrilling finds sit beside the

usual stars. Page 10.

Hine Arr

ART FAIR REVIEW

Standouts Among the Crowd-Pleasers



DOOWON LEE/ACA GALLERIES

Doowon Lee's "Gimyeong Jeoljido" ("Still-Life Painting of Scholarly Objects and Seasonal Symbols"), 2025, mixed media on wool.

ACA Galleries (124)

The saturated, nocturnal colors and intimidating tigers of the self-taught Korean artist Doowon Lee's felted paintings and carpets are powerfully suggestive of Thornton Dial, whose own work is on monumental display in the **Platform** section (though without any tigers). But their distinctly fuzzy texture is all Lee's own, giving the pieces, which also portray peacocks, frogs and eggplants, the same sort of potent ambiguity as the tigers. *WILL HEINRICH*



Lyndsey Ingram (139)

Sarah Graham's large-scale pencil drawings of banana plants look straightforward enough, like the kind of exercise an art student might turn to if she were lost in the jungle. What makes them so appealing is both their material lushness — the way their green and brown cross hatching fades into the bulbous modeling of the leaves — and the frank evidence they offer of the human hand at work. (If their vision of a natural good chopped up into approachable pieces constitutes a subtle art-fair critique, that's all right, too.) WILL HEINRICH

Sarah Graham, "Musa acuminata (paper) VI," 2025, charcoal and colored chalk on handmade paper.



"Deep Sea Kiki," 2024, by the Brazilian artist known as assume vivid astro focus.

Fredric Snitzer Gallery (315)

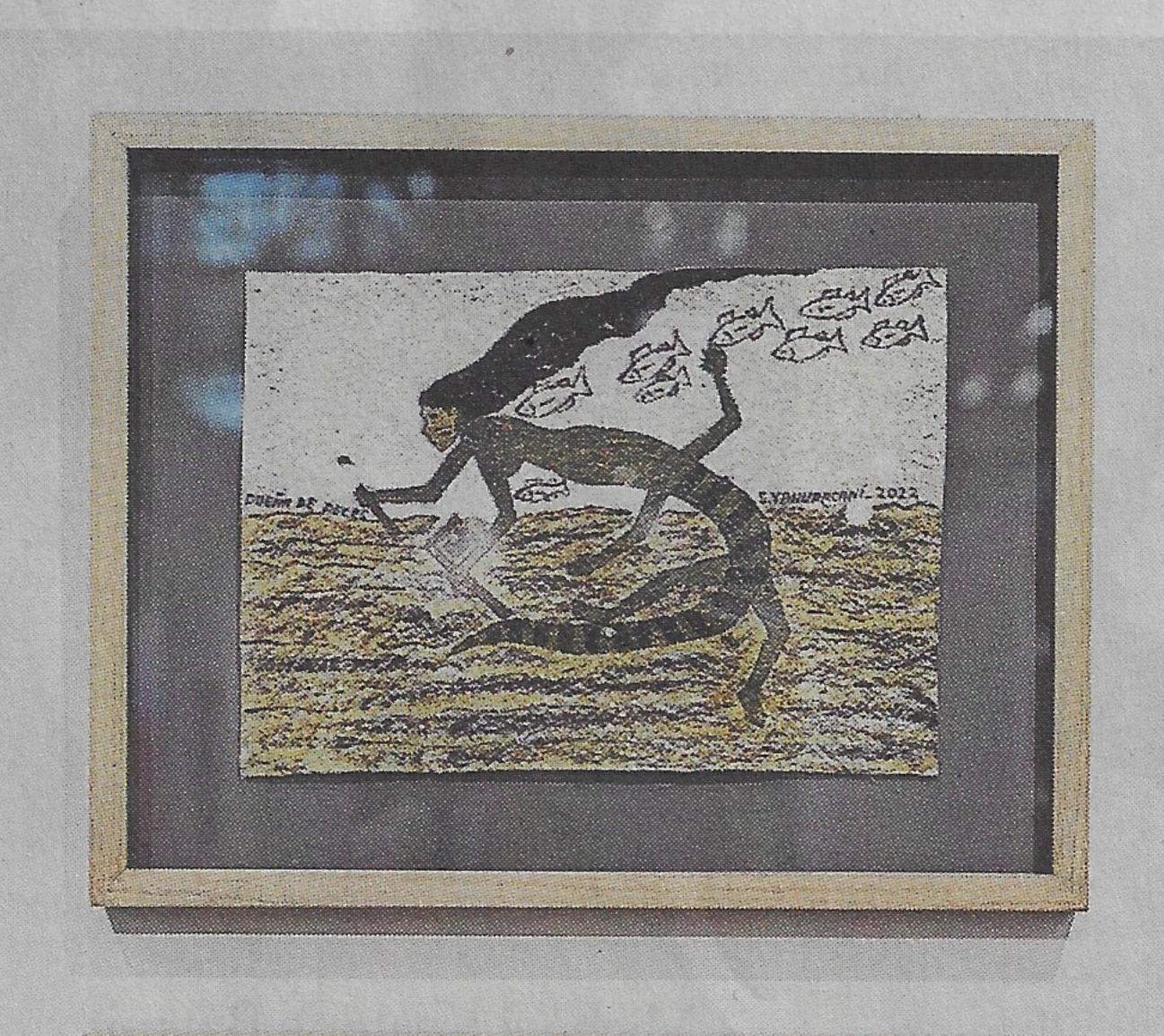
Three striking abstractions by the Brazilian artist known as assume vivid astro focus are the best of the sort of post-internet postmodernism you find so much of in this and other contemporary art fairs. Splashy colors and gestures in the mixed-media piece "Deep Sea Kiki" reprise the approaches of Abstract Expressionism, Pop Art and other 20th-century art movements as filtered through Photoshop and Instagram. But self-consciously crafty materials, like corrugated construction paper, add a sense of fun as well as a crucial note of irony. WILL HEINRICH



Jacqueline Surdell's "Suddenly, She Was Hell-Bent and Ravenous (After Giotto)," 2024.

Secrist/Beach (215)

"Suddenly She Was Hell-Bent and Ravenous," by Jacqueline Surdell, is a 14-foot-high remix of Giotto's "Last rendered in nautical line and torn-up shower curtains. The shower curtains, which Surdell sourced online, were proceed the Giotto painting, and between them and the knots you could read into the work all sorts of thoughts about persistence and perishability of visual culture, and social and financial systems of dominance. What really cauge though, was the work's explosive, and very welcome, exuberance. WILL HEINRICH



HEART TO ARM S. T. VEINARCEN

Crisis (F11)

Arranged into a vertical sort of narrative lot the details stacked like a Grandma Moses land Byzantine altarpiece, the barkcloth paintings tree shavings by Santiago Yahuarcani are grand political in tone, depicting Spanish phrase and situations of plunder in northern Amaz Yahuarcani was born in 1961 to the White H the Uitoto Nation. But they are also powerful works, and this rewards long viewing. In his mantis men, beasts and snakes, you sense a of oral history — an ancient anger that believed delicacy of these paintings, which up closed dense thickets of fiber, almost living. WALKE

The Armory Show 2025

Through Sunday at the Javits Center in Manhatta

Santiago Yahuarcani's barkcloth paintings, from top: "Dueña de Peces" ("Owner of Fish") and "Hombre Sol Roba el Fuego" ("Sun Man Steals Fire"), both 2022.