

Michael Delgado, "All roads lead to Frieze," *Apollo*, May 2, 2025

APOLLO

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1. *Sliced Stones*, 2018, Kishio Suga (b. 1944), stone, variable dimensions

The lifespan of Frieze New York could well be divided into pre- and post-pandemic. From its first edition, in 2012, until 2019, it was a mammoth affair, with up to 200 galleries jostling for space in a huge tent on Randall's Island. Since the pandemic the fair has been radically slimmed down and returns to the Shed in Hudson Yards this month as the smallest fair in Frieze's worldwide roster.

Some 68 galleries from 28 different countries are returning to the Shed for this year's fair. The change in scale has, however, allowed Frieze to lean more heavily into the artist performances it commissions, which have become something of a signature. Last year, for the first time, it partnered with the High Line (which runs past the Shed) to show a piece by Matty Davis. This year, says the fair's director, Christine Messineo, the three performances – by Pilvi Takala, Carlos Reyes and Asad Raza – will be even more immersive than before. Reyes's piece, for instance, will make use of the 'places we encounter but maybe don't pay close attention to' – lifts, cloakrooms, hallways, escalators, or, in other words, 'the places you have to walk through in order to actually see the art'.

This sense of openness, of forging connections and blending different spaces, is key to Frieze's ethos, which is to be embedded in the cultural life of the city. One notable way that this is borne out this year is in the fact that many galleries are bringing work by artists who have concurrent institutional shows on in New York. Visitors will be able to see art by Jennie C. Jones, Rashid Johnson, Jack Whitten, Jeremy Frey, Christine Sun Kim, Amy Sherald and Kishio Suga (Fig. 1), all of whose work can be seen in museum shows in or near the city this year, from the Guggenheim to the Met and beyond. Even in the Focus section, which highlights younger galleries, the trend is apparent: Mitre Galeria, based in Belo Horizonte, returns again this year with work by the sculptor Luana Vitra, who has a show at the Sculpture Center this month.

Anxiety in the art market about the potential effect of the Trump administration's tranche of tariffs is understandable, and things could yet take a turn for the worse for fairs such as Frieze. At time of writing, however, Frieze says that the tariffs have not affected participation at the fair and, indeed, this edition is as international as it

has ever been. Just under half of the galleries exhibiting have no presence in New York, and Messineo stresses not just the global range of exhibitors but also the fact that many international galleries have chosen Frieze New York as the place to introduce emerging artists to a US audience. Among these is Singapore-based Yeo Workshop, which is bringing a series of delicately embroidered textiles by the Balinese artist Citra Sasmita, who recently had her first solo exhibition in the UK, at the Barbican Curve.

Among Messineo's personal highlights at the fair is the Paris-based artist Malo Chapuy, whose work is being shown by mor charpentier. Chapuy paints almost uncanny interpretations of early Renaissance paintings – 'They're so beautiful,' Messineo says – that, on closer inspection, refer to modern concerns such as climate change. From the performances to the galleries and everything in between, 'surprise encounters' are what energises Messineo – and what keep Frieze New York thriving. **A**

Frieze New York takes place at the Shed from 7–11 May (www.frieze.com).

AROUND THE GALLERIES

Gallery highlights

Rosemarie Trockel

7 May–14 June
Gladstone Gallery, New York

The German artist has always had a penchant for the satirical: in perhaps her most famous series of works, she created ‘knitted’ paintings which aped the aesthetics of male-dominated minimalist and abstract art in a more traditionally ‘womanly’ medium. This two-part show in New York develops her long-standing interests. Gladstone is showing new works while Sprüth Magers (8 May–1 August) is displaying a mixture of old and new pieces.

William Kentridge: A Natural History of the Studio

1 May–1 August
Hauser & Wirth, New York

Self-Portrait as a Coffee Pot, the South African artist’s witty and meandering nine-part film, shot in his studio during lockdown, was highly acclaimed when it came out on MUBI last year. The artist’s first show at Hauser & Wirth in New York is a companion piece of sorts, presenting the film in full, as well as drawings and sculptures that inspired, were shown in or helped Kentridge plan the film (Fig. 2).

Randy Wray: Prehistory

2 May–22 June
Karma Gallery, New York

The American sculptor and painter works over his pieces for months or years; some of the paintings on display here have been a long time in the making. Wray’s distinctive work blends figuration and abstraction and has been described as functioning like Rorschach tests. A selection of his oil-on-linen paintings are on show at Karma’s 22 East 2nd Street gallery, while another of Karma’s spaces, at number 188, is displaying works on paper.

Tomma Abts

Opening 1 May
David Zwirner, New York

Abts has spent the past two decades perfecting her highly specialised, patient painting method. She begins almost every painting on a canvas of 48 × 38cm, with limited colour palette and no idea what it will look like. She works slowly, building layers of paint to create strikingly textured paintings that are almost a Platonic ideal of abstraction. This show, her fourth outing with David Zwirner, debuts a selection of new works.

Fairs in focus

Photo London

15–18 May
Somerset House, London

The 2025 edition of Photo London is one of milestones: the fair itself celebrates 10 years of existence while its venue, Somerset House, is marking 25 years since its public opening. Alongside the usual roster of established and emerging galleries bringing photography from the early 20th century to now, there is also a special anniversary exhibition, ‘London Lives’, which highlights the varied ways photographers have chronicled the capital.

The American Art Fair

10–13 May
Bohemian National Hall, New York

TEFAF and Frieze are the headliners of New York’s art scene this month, but the American Art Fair offers a more minimalist kind of pleasure. Returning to the splendid Bohemian National Hall on the Upper East Side, the fair hosts 17 exhibitors, mainly showing American works from the 18th–21st centuries, including paintings by Joseph Stella (Avery Galleries) and ornate 18th-century Cuzco-school works produced in Peru (Robert Simon Fine Art).