

## VOGUE

# Here's What to Go See at This Year's Frieze Art Fair

By Hamish Bowles | May 3, 2018



Lyle Ashton Harris, *Constructs, Suite of Four* (#10, #11, #12, #13), 1989. Photo: Courtesy of Salon 94, New York

It was a perfect day for the ferry from 35th Street to the Frieze art encampment on Randall's Island, although once inside the espace éphémère, things became decidedly sultry. The VIP breakfast in the Saks Hospitality lounge was a genteel affair—until the clock struck 10:00 and the hard-core collectors, curators, and dealers (Maja Hoffmann, Howard and Cindy Rachofsky, Adam Lindemann, et al.) hit the floor running. I looked up and realized that I had been left practically alone in the dust, foolishly nursing a cup of coffee and a Danish pastry. I soon sped off in an attempt to take it all in—or at least as much as I could—and by 2:00 p.m., I had a wish list of pieces juggling for space in the gallery of my dreams.

The African-American experience figured large in this year's Frieze, and there were some real revelations. I was blown away by the vibrant, joyous '60s paintings of Emma Amos (Ryan Lee Gallery), and by Lyle Ashton Harris's 1989 work *Constructs, Suite of Four* (Salon 94). The great photographer Gordon Parks's *Doll Test, Harlem* (1947; Jack Shainman Gallery) is a heartbreaker, and I was frankly electrified by the eviscerating image assemblages of Arthur Jafa's 2018 *HA Crow prints* (occupying a wall at Gavin Brown's enterprise).

There was also a preponderance of pieces that subvert, or at least harness, traditional crafts and reveal the human hand at work in this automated age. In this genre, I loved the work of the Palestinian-American Jordan Nassar, who created a convivial Arab majlis (seating area) to showcase his traditional Palestinian cross-stitch embroideries used to depict ravishingly colored landscapes (*Anat Ebgj*), along with Nick Cave's fringed *Tondo* (2018; Jack Shainman Gallery). I'm also excited by the provocative sculptures of Phyllida Barlow (*Host II*, 1986–1989, at Hauser & Wirth), and Lynda Benglis (*Silly, Silver Pink*, 2015; Cheim & Read).

At Ceysson & Bénétière Gallery, I loved discovering the work of the *Supports/Surfaces* movement that emerged in Paris in the '60s and used household fabrics, clothing textiles, and repurposed wood fragments as a base for art. Dismissed as merely decorative at the time, their work seems prescient today—especially striking were pieces by Louis Cane, Patrick Saytour, André-Pierre Arnal, Marc Devade, Claude Viallat, and Jean-Pierre Pincemin.

Frankly, I covet one of Tom of Finland's explicit homoerotic drawings, which fetishized a certain extravagantly muscled and endowed iteration of the all-American male and helped form an aspirational gay paradigm in the later 20th century. Los Angeles's David Kordansky had an admirable selection of work by Touko Valio Laaksonen—the aforementioned "Tom"—from the 1940s through the '80s. And on the subject of queer art, I'd also be more than happy with one of David Hockney's early drawings, as exquisite and tender as Ingres, showcased by Offer Waterman London and including a 1970s study of the artist's great friend, the fashion designer Ossie Clark—or with a small, ravishingly painted portrait by Paul P. (*Untitled*, 2017), at Maureen Paley (where I was also intrigued by the work of Felipe Baeza).

Talking of academic precision (and, for that matter, the African-American experience, and indeed the queer experience), I have also long admired Kehinde Wiley's work (recently brought to a new level of national prominence through his leaf-bowered portrait of President Obama). *Issa Diatta* (2017; Stephen Friedman Gallery) is a ravishing example of Wiley's ennobling portraiture.

And while we are thinking of the White House in all its iterations, from the sublime to the ridiculous, I'm not sure I can live without Marilyn Minter's *Trump Plaque* (2017; Karma gallery) immortalizing one of the unforgettable pieces of rhetoric of the 45th President of the- United States.