

Art



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10 Reasons To Visit The Outsider Art Fair

By Sehba Mohammad on January 29, 2015

The 23-year-old Outsider Art Fair takes over Center 548 in Chelsea starting today and through the weekend. It features an assortment of 50 galleries from eight countries. This event is not like mainstream art fairs, chock-a-block with flashy names and over produced artwork, instead it features artists who create work from outside the confines of art institutions. This includes self-taught and folk artists, as well as marginalized and psychologically compromised creators. Since outsider art is removed from art circles it has a visceral and unpretentious quality. The work is often made using rudimentary mediums and the techniques used are atypical, reflecting the raw strength of the creative act.

This year's fair mixes virtually unknown artists with respected outsider names such as Swiss farm hand Adolf Wölfli, who started creating art after he was institutionalized for hallucinations, and Bill Traylor, the self-taught African-American artist who spent much of his life as a slave in Alabama. Also on display is the group exhibition, *I Had Possession Over Judgment Day*, featuring five artists whose work deals with paranoia. There are also panel discussions, film screenings, and an **after-party** hosted by Young Folk, the young patrons of the American Folk Art Museum. Below are ten exceptional outsider artworks to keep an eye out for while perusing the fair.

Untitled (Woman with Urn), (circa 1970)



A mixed media work by artist Larry Lewis is on view at the booth of New Haven-based Fred Giampietro Gallery.

Yellow Portrait (2014)



Vancouver-based artist and musician Andy Dixon's painting can be seen at the booth of London-based Rebecca Hossack Art Gallery.



See self-taught sculptor Gérard Cambon at the booth of Judy A. Saslow Gallery, who are based in Chicago.

Jan Runhaar (2006)



Dutch artist Marianne Schipaanboord's watercolor-and-pencil work is on display at the booth of Een Nieuwe Wind, Netherlands.

A boat cabin (1995)



The booth by Galeria Estação from São Paulo shows work by Brazilian artist Alcides Pereira dos Santos.

(Almighty God), Most Valuable Player...Bill Gates (2012)



Painter Kwame Akoto's interestingly titled artwork can be found at the booth of Ernie Wolfe Gallery, Los Angeles.

Nabuchodonosor (2014)



French art teacher Josette Exandier compiled bones, feather, and other material to make the artwork. This piece is on display at Parisian Galerie L'Inlassable's booth.

To Go Where He Went (2013)



An oil, spray paint, chalk, graphite, and latex work by Matthew Kirk is displayed at the booth of Louis B. James, New York.

I AM A Gourd (1982)



Howard Finster's adorable vegal sculpture can be seen at the booth of Ames Gallery, Berkeley.

My Wife On The Phone (2014)



Artist Maya Margolina's video projection inspired by self taught artist Eugene Von Bruenchenhein debuts at the Outsider Art Fair after-party at Bar Americano.

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