

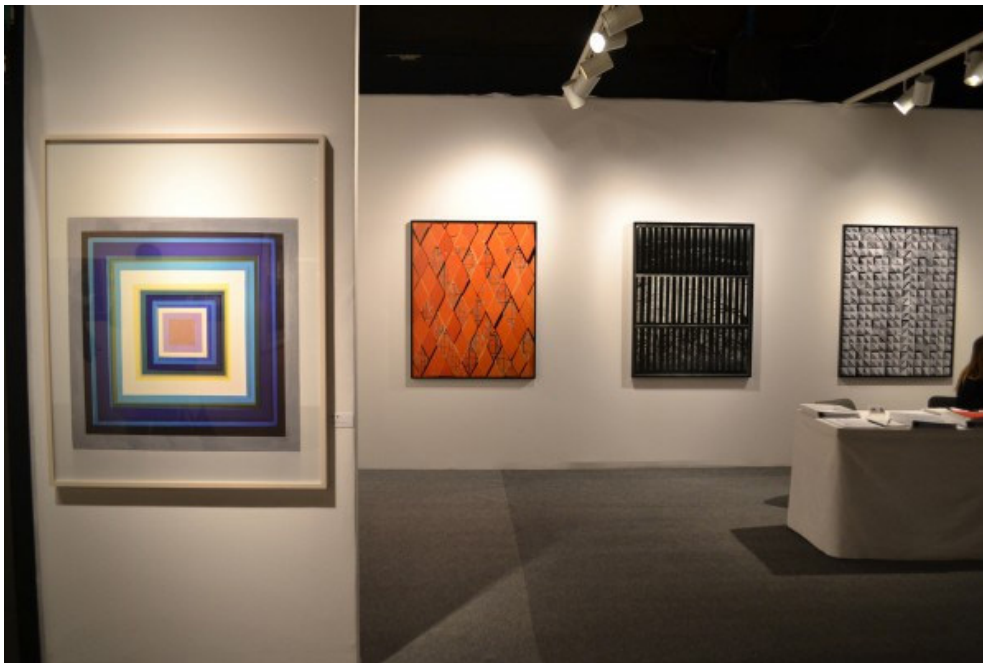
M+B

Gallerist

At the AIPAD Photography Show, Bits of Museum Shows, Past and Present

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By Andrew Russeth



Works by Jessica Eaton and Hannah Whitaker at M+B. (Photos by The New York Observer)

If you haven't had the chance to see the photography shows that New York museums have staged recently, the Association of International Photography Art Dealers fair, which runs at the Park Avenue Armory through Sunday, offers quite a few opportunities to get up to date, since many of its more than 80 exhibitors have brought works by photographers that have popped up in the city recently. (And, of course, if you have been assiduous in your museum going, you'll have the chance to revisit work, and perhaps come across a few surprises.)

Works by Charles Marville, the pioneering 19th-century French street photographer who is now the subject of a stunning retrospective at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, for instance, are on view at London's James Hyman gallery and New York's Hans P. Kraus Jr., which also has a haunting albumen print of a weary-looking Sir John Herschel by the Victorian-era photographer Julia Margaret Cameron, whose own superb Met survey closed in January. (Kraus is presenting what amounts to a handy little précis of the history of early photography, including landscape drawings that Herschel made using a camera lucida—a precursor to the camera. They're strange treats.)

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Over at New York's Edwynn Houk Gallery, you can find a characteristically lascivious print by the wily Californian Robert Heinecken, who is the subject of a not-uncontroversial retrospective at the Museum of Modern Art. Nearby, Chicago's Stephen Daiter Gallery has a diptych by Dawoud Bey from his "Birmingham Project" series that features in this year's Whitney Biennial—tender portraits of an older woman and young girl. (The latter, just nine, is the age of victims of a 1963 church bombing in Birmingham, Ala., the former is the age that the victims would be today.) Yancey Richardson, of New York, also has strong portraiture in the form of razor sharp photos of LGBT women taken by the South African Zanele Muholi, which won her the 2013 Carnegie International's Fine Prize for an emerging artist.

If you haven't caught the Museum of the City of New York's show of Martin Wong's graffiti collection, you still have plenty of time (it's open into August), but a nice little preview is on view at New York's Steven Kasher gallery, which has long photos from the first half of the 1980s by Henry Chalfant that show full subway cars bombed with spray-painted patterns and designs. Invigorating stuff.

Those hunting for more contemporary art-leaning fare will find it at David Zwirner, which has filled its booth with works by James Welling, Stan Douglas, Gordon Matta-Clark, Thomas Ruff and Philip-Lorca diCorcia. Mr. diCorcia latter's offerings include four little Polaroids—sexy portraits, a handsome street scene in broad daylight—mounted on aluminum. Meanwhile, Los Angeles's M+B has of-the-moment works by Jessica Eaton and Hannah Whitaker that serve up photographic geometric abstractions.

The majority of dealers have taken a scattershot approach, showing a wide array of work, which means that there are plenty of hidden little gems to stumble across. Among the ones I saw: an otherworldly 1921 Edward Weston platinum-palladium print from Vienna's Galerie Johannes Faber of three nude women—dancers for Marion Morgan—hanging out near a pool, two tiny ambrotype portraits of samurais from the late 1860s by an anonymous Japanese photographer at New York's Charles Schwartz Ltd., and a sextet of completely absurd, complete chic fashion photographs at London's Eric Franck Fine Art by Norman Parkinson, including one of a model astride an ostrich.

And then there are the works that inevitably sneak up on you at any photography fair—traces of life that you don't want to look at, but can't turn away from, that shock you in the present. One example: at London's Daniel Blau gallery, there is a sequence of six images that show two reputed spies being led up to a post, standing before a firing squad and being shot dead by Fighting French forces in 1943, in Aleppo, Syria. But then, thankfully, you can break your gaze and, just inches away, find all sorts of other images to spend time with, like snapshots from the surface of the moon that were taken by NASA astronauts.