

Fair Report: The ADAA Tilts Toward the 21st Century

by Sarah P. Hanson 07/03/14 12:06 PM EST



Petah Coyne's "Untitled #1388 (The Unconsoled)," 2013-14 at the Galerie Lelong booth.
(© Petah Coyne/ Courtesy Galerie Lelong/ Photo by Christopher Burke Studio)



Angelo Rognoni's "L'attesa del fante (Waiting Sentinel)," 1917. Courtesy Adler & Conkright Fine Art

Click [HERE](#) to see a video report from The Art Show.

Museum-quality works at an inviting, domestic scale abound at this year's American Art Dealers' Association Art Show at the Park Avenue Armory, from a much-admired series of Ad Reinhardt black paintings at David Zwirner—six not-quite-monochromatic squares, the artist's only known such works on paper—to a grouping of tabletop sculptures in metal by the late Anthony Caro at Mitchell-Innes & Nash and a small yellow Mark Rothko at Manny Silverman Gallery. A few booths succeed in canny juxtapositions, like Cheim & Read's Louise Bourgeois/Gaston Lachaise mashup or Bortolami's pairing of Daniel Buren and Richard Aldrich. But solo shows, this fair's bread and butter, are more satisfying. Although the Art Show

has in the past seemed like a refuge from much of the flavor-of-the-moment fizz of the (actual) Armory Show across town, contemporary names like Dana Schutz (at Petzel) and Kehinde Wiley (at Sean Kelly) are gaining ground on the blue chips. And there are undersung gems to rediscover, too—below, my picks for standout presentations.

Adler & Conkright Fine Art | Numbers and Letters

In step with the Guggenheim's current exhibition "Italian Futurism 1909–1944: Reconstructing the Universe," Adler & Conkright has unveiled several very rare, wartime text-and-image drawings by Futurists Giacomo Balla, Fortunato Depero, and Angelo Rognoni, including Rognoni's *L'attesa del fante (Waiting Sentinel)*, 1917. These are in harmonious conversation with an assortment of abstract, rhythmic works from the 1910s through '30s by a grab-bag of non-Italian practitioners: Janos Teutsch, Germán Cueto, Fernand Léger, and Sonia Delaunay, whose large, chromatic canvas *Rythme coloré*, 1946, claims pride of place behind the desk.

Alexander Gray | Jack Whitten

For the gallery's debut at the fair, Gray chose to feature the African American abstractionist Jack Whitten, whose 1970s works may have Richter-philes and fans of recent process-based contemporary acrylic painting (e.g., Michiel Ceulers) doing double takes. "He's really pushing the horizontal gesture pretty far here," says Gray, noting that Whitten will be the subject of a retrospective at the Museum of Contemporary Art, San Diego, in the fall. The works here are led by the brick-and-umber-hued *Sorcerer's Apprentice*, 1974, which was included in Whitten's 1974 solo exhibition at the Whitney.

Galerie Lelong | Petah Coyne

A faux-botanical lattice in lacquered white, woven with branches and dotted with red and cream mums, gives way to a darker fantasy within the booth, with a matte black chandelier providing a perch for a stately yet foreboding peacock. Coyne's title, *The Unconsoled*, borrows from the Kazuo Ishiguro novel of the same name, which also leads its protagonist and its readers through the looking glass.

James Reinish & Associates, Inc. | Modes of Modernism: Realism and Abstraction in 20th Century Art

James Reinish's booth is a buffet for anyone hungry for delightful morsels by the big names of early 20th-century American art: Fairfield Porter, Alfred Henry Maurer, Marsden Hartley, Thomas Hart Benton. Chief among these works is a blazing square canvas by Georgia O'Keeffe, *The Red Maple, Lake George*, circa 1920. A bronze Elie Nadelman sculpture and drawing from the esteemed collection of Alice Kaplan anchors the front. Bauhaus-inflected India-ink drawings by Russian émigré Louis Lozowick look particularly fresh.

Pavel Zoubok | Women Collagists

Collage is in abundance at this fair, but nowhere does it receive a better treatment than in Zoubok's thematic booth, which proposes the medium as especially relevant to the fractured experience of 20th-century women. Here, a candy-colored Lynda Benglis drawing from 1979, stuck with feathers and thread, mingles with meticulous, dollhouse-like dioramas by Addie Herder and May Wilson's humorous photomontaged "Ridiculous Portraits"—society paintings pasted with her own face and sight-gag extras like a lace-edged hankie shoved into

her mouth.

Peter Freeman, Inc. | James Castle

The Idaho-based Castle, a self-taught outsider artist who died in 1977, left behind a trove of absorbing works made from materials within easy reach—discarded packaging, string, soot from burned twigs. Their subjects are obscure or entirely personal; one group of untitled, undated drawings centers on what seems to be a single woolen coat with four buttons, either worn by a figure viewed from behind or sketched alone, catalog-style. Presented en masse, the delicacy of these tiny books, drawings, and assemblages transcends their rube beginnings.

PPOW | Martha Wilson

A suite of never-before-exhibited 1970s-era works made in Halifax, Nova Scotia, reveals the roots of the performance artist's paradoxically playful yet dead-serious investigations of the private and social self. Typewritten proposals and ephemera—including audience “comment cards” from what was presumably a live performance—now function as prescient works on paper, while a diaristic color chart and documents of the various identities (male, female, and not necessarily either) assumed by Wilson offers a provocative aperçu of a proto-Cindy Shermanesque figure, sure to be catnip for the many museum curators roving the aisles.

Marian Goodman | Jeff Wall

These smallish lightboxes dating from the late 1990s and early 2000s remind you that Wall, better known for his virtuosic, elaborately staged gatherings of people and props, is equally adept at documenting fleeting moments and discarded objects on the fly. He makes a crushed can of peas and sauce, its body rent and oozing on the asphalt, positively mortifying in its tragedy.