CULTURED

5 Artists You Need To See at the Dallas Art Fair

By Kenneth Turner

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As the Dallas Art Fair opens to the public, 'CULTURED' spotlights five pieces, and artists, who are not to be missed this year.

It's April in Texas, and hope springs eternal for the dealers set up at the Fashion Industry Gallery for the Dallas Art Fair. Back in the day, the art world seasons were loosely defined by the Fall and Spring auctions, with gallery exhibitions in the major hubs and a climax in Basel. In a post-Covid world laced with economic uncertainty, fairs across the globe march on, undaunted by their previous constraints. Who longs for the days of Gavin Brown's art fair presentations of "cocky poetry," or the time—as the late, great Ted Bonin quipped—"when nobody talked about the market"? It's been 18 years since addled collectors chased Urs Fischer's addictive art around Miami, and 15 since the Dallas Art Fair was launched. Thursday night marked the VIP opening, benefitting Dallas institutions including the Dallas Museum of Art, the Nasher Sculpture Center, and Dallas Contemporary. As crowds gathered, gently raising their Lallier again and again, swishing and swaying through Instagram, TikTok, and Twitter, the presentations got underway. Here, CULTURED highlights five noteworthy works by young artists for the Big D crowds.

Cynthia Daignault

Building on her epic serial installation, As I Lay Dying, at the New Museum's 2021 Triennial, Baltimore-based Cynthia Daignault presents a monumental canvas, X:Y, 2023, with Los Angeles's Night Gallery. The 4 by 8-foot tableau, luxuriously painted in oil on linen, depicts a high meadow and mountain scene worthy of Paramount Pictures overlaid with aspect ratio framing devices. The piece calls into question the viewer's perception of the natural and mediated world and has been shown in Texas at the Blanton Museum of Art and the Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth, as well as the Crystal Bridges Museum of Art in Arkansas and the FLAG Art Foundation in New York.

Raphaela Simon

Presented by German powerhouse Max Hetzler, Raphaela Simon's work, Säge, 2022, continues the Berlin-based artist's tightrope walk between representational and non-objective painting. Employing a basic figure-ground relationship, Simon breathes life into the mundane objects she chooses to paint, surfacing and resurfacing the picture plane with a sincere reverence for her medium and surprises that awaken the viewer. Her geometry, never ruled or masked, exudes a charming wonkiness, deftly executed. With solo exhibitions under her belt at Parinaz Mogadassi's Tramps in London and New York, along with Hannah Hoffman's breeding ground in Los Angeles, Simon is set. Next month, she will open an exhibition, "Blaue Nacht," at Fondazione Giuliani in Rome

on May 10, 2023.

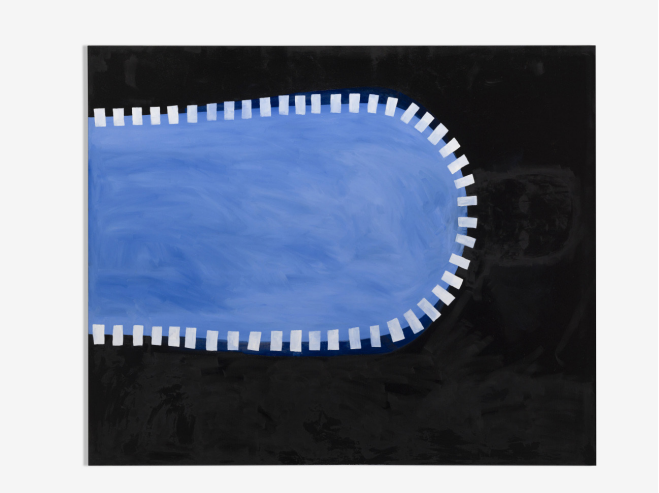
Wilder Alison

Wilder Alison's stained and stitched paintings are a complex beauty to behold. While their crafted patchwork finds its roots in Suffragette Movement-era quilts and banners, the staining of vivid color into a controlled geometry more aptly situates itself amongst the canon of Helen Frankenthaler and Frank Stella. With TBD, 2023, the slashing, mirrored composition is tinged with an electric palette and countered by a deep, earthy tone. Alison, equipped with an MFA from Bard College, enjoyed every artist's dream rite of passage with a one-person show at New York's White Columns in 2019, followed by exhibitions with Fierman in New York and Lateral Roma in Rome, and is presented at the Dallas Art Fair by Gaa Gallery.

Cynthia Daignault, X:Y, 2023. Image courtest of the artist and Night Gallery.

Claudia Keep

Marsden Hartley, Fairfield Porter, Alex Katz, Lois Dodd, Ann Craven, and Leidy Churchman are all world-famous painters who have spent time in Maine. Enter Claudia Keep! Her paintings range from intimate interiors to close-up depictions of nature, each bathed in a signature light. Lovingly painted on a diminutive scale, the works have an immediacy that operates in the gap between experience and memory. Working from cell phone pictures that she takes herself, the methodology adds a consistent space to her pieces. The Bryn Mawr grad's group exhibitions include Gotham stalwarts like Blum & Poe and Venus Over Manhattan. In Dallas, she is presented by New York's March Gallery.



Raphaela Simon, Säge, 2022. Image courtesy of the artist and Max Hetzler.

Gracie DeVito

When looking at Kunst Land 1, 2022, by Gracie DeVito, one can't help but think of the German Expressionists. Its palette appears to be lifted from the period, abused by brushes literally ramming pigment through the canvas. In fact, the Los Angeles-based artist often employs paint rags for support, soiled with the residue of cleaned brushes and rumpled paint tubes. Cy Twombly's influence hides between the strokes. The result: an odd but elegantly shaped canvas, alluding to nature while maintaining the authenticity of pure abstraction. Presented at the fair by Tif Sigfrids from Athens, Georgia, DeVito earned an MFA at the California Institute of the Arts and is currently showing paintings in Los Angeles at Overduin & Co.

Wilder Alison,TBD, 2023. Image courtesy of the artist and Gaa Gallery.

Claudia Keep, April 20th Later Afternoon Snooze, 2022. Image courtesy of the artist and March Gallery.

Gracie Devito, Kunst Land 1, 2022. Image courtesy of the artist and Tif Sigfrids.