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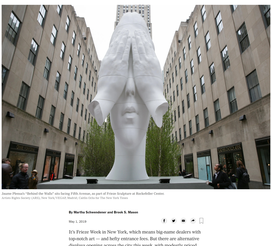
The New York Times

FRIEZE WEEK 2019

Affordable Alternatives to Frieze New York and Tefaf

This week's main art fairs are a bit pricey, but looking is free (or nearly) at Frieze Sculpture at Rockefeller Center and alternative fairs in Brooklyn and Manhattan.



Joanne Pitman's "Behind the Walls" site facing Fifth Avenue, as part of Frieze Sculpture at Rockefeller Center.
Adam Kuylen-Stoelen, left for The New York Times; Damon Dahlen for The New York Times

By Martha Schwendener and Brook S. Mason

May 2, 2019

It's Frieze Week in New York, which means big-name dealers with top-notch art — and hefty entrance fees. But there are alternative displays opening across the city this week, with modestly priced works by established and emerging artists. (These fairs are easier on the pocket and a little less overwhelming for casual browsers, too.) Here is a guide to some of them.

Frieze Sculpture at Rockefeller Center

The Abstract Expressionist Ad Reinhardt once quipped that sculpture is what you bump into when you back up to see a painting. He hadn't met tourists with cellphones in Rockefeller Center, though. The spring wave typically passes for photos with Paul Manship's gaudy golden "Prometheus" (1934). But this year the champion of humankind has plenty of competition: Frieze Sculpture at Rockefeller Center, an offshoot of the Frieze New York art fair on Randalls Island, is presenting 10 contemporary artists placed around the complex, ready for endorsement on your smartphone.

At the complex's north end, Hank Willis Thomas's two bright metal sculptures recreate talk bubbles in comic strips. (Visitors promptly adopted them as frames for photographing themselves.) Outside 30 Rockefeller Plaza, Paulo Nazareth's tall canoe sculpture memorializes Tommie Smith raising his fist at the 1968 Mexico City Olympics. It's moving to see visitors posing in a similar gesture of solidarity.

"Parlor X," a 1974 bronze sculpture by Joan Mitch, is among the works on display at Rockefeller Center.
Adam Kuylen-Stoelen; Damon Dahlen; Getty Images; Getty Fine Art; Getty Archival Assets
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