

At the Park Avenue Armory, home to the art fair with the deepest roots in Europe, five names wooed our critic, cutting through the star system.



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By Walker Mimms

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It has been 10 years since the mighty European Fine Art Foundation threw a tentacle across the ocean from Maastricht to Manhattan, to install a twice-annual (but now merely annual) fair at the Park Avenue Armory.

How drastic the change. In 2021, TEFAF shed the old master and pre-modern half of their New York program. This year, via 88 dealers foreign and domestic, it skews modern and contemporary. It also skews big-name: with Basquiat, Hockney, Lucio Fontana, Ed Ruscha, Cy Twombly, Yayoi Kusama and Warhol, it can make a casual walk through feel overly market-safe, but a search will uncover TEFAF's old-world wisdom and esoteric delights.

Find the craft. Among jewelry and furniture booths, you can still be surprised by a vase of dried flowers encased in resin by the Polish designer Marcin Rusak (**Carpenter's Workshop Gallery, Stand 303**).

Other exhibitors pull lineage out of their living artists. Both **Karma (211)** and **Pace (340)** situate the tidy domestic realist Dike Blair (b. 1952) in different traditions, alongside the folkways of Milton Avery in one and the photorealism of Richard Estes in the other.

Upstairs, in the splendid Gilded Age clubrooms that TEFAF occupies, you'll find the acerbic, dusky-oil paintings of the Italian Ida Barbarigo (1920-2018) at **Axel Vervoordt (206)**, that make magnificent use of the historic wood and ironwork surrounding them.

I went looking for artists I had never heard of. Five stopped me cold.

Eva Helene Pade (b. 1997)



Eva Helene Pade's "Opstand (Surge)," 2026, oil on canvas. Eva Helene Pade, via Thaddaeus Ropac gallery; Photo by Pierre Tanguy

Do not miss: At **Thaddaeus Ropac Gallery (345)** Eva Helene Pade of Denmark contributes three tall canvases from 2026, with life-size nudes engaged in underworldly, perhaps allegorical activities: a hunt, a kiss and some sort of ceremony. While recalling 19th-century forebears Paul Gauguin and Thomas Dewing, Pade has her own vision. And chops. She knows how to shroud the academic nude in a tantalizing mythological vagueness. In "Opstand (Surge)," her women are waiting, killing, pregnant, weeping, exalting, lit by purgatorial reds and yellows. Our future may yet be bright.

Anna Zemankova (1908-86)



Anna Zemankova, "Untitled," 1965-73, pastel on paper. via the estate of Anna Zemánková and Gladstone

At **Gladstone Gallery (344)** there are two dozen delicate herbal drawings by the Czech artist Anna Zemankova, a dentist by training who shelved her painting hobby to raise children, then returned to it after an empty-nest emotional crisis. In what seems a riff on the passion flower, she traces her outlines in ballpoint pen, then colored pencil, sometimes pastel, with a sense of cheer that reflects their 1970s origins. Together they seem an act of devotion.

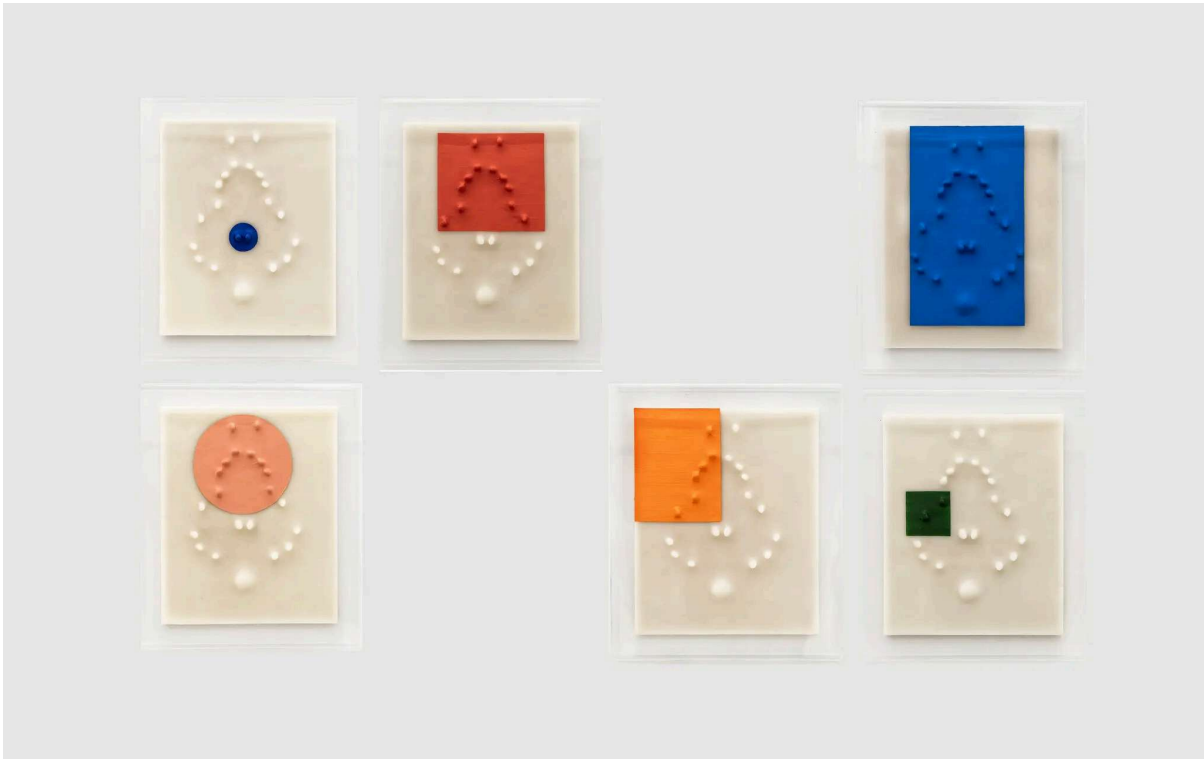
Ithell Colquhoun (1906-88)



Ithell Colquhoun, "Sunset Birth," 1942, oil on canvas. The Estate of Ithell Colquhoun, via Richard Saltoun, London, Rome and New York

You may have your own thoughts about an all-female exhibition. I do. But the selection at **Richard Saltoun (374)** of female Surrealists introduces some new names across the gender aisle from Dalí and Man Ray. The Indian-born British painter Ithell Colquhoun shines with a small 1942 canvas of abstract pastry-like shapes demonstrating paths of light, motion and anatomy. (Man Ray has a worthwhile solo booth at **Larkin Erdmann, 322.**)

Carlito Carvalhosa (1961-2021)



Carlito Carvalhosa, "Untitled (P41-19)," 2019, oil paint and wax on wood. Carlito Carvalhosa, via Nara Roelser

Poked and prodded as if by a prankster, the tall sheets of clean, minimalist aluminum at **Nara Roesler (208)** by the Brazilian conceptual artist Carlito Carvalhosa have been overlaid with Swiss-cheese layers of punched resin, or dented from behind, leaving pimples in their mirrored surfaces. Carvalhosa's work on blocks of wax are almost bodily. In some he has cast his fingertips into their placid surfaces. Two-dozen works from this unlikely sensualist offer a very welcome, very messed-with alternative to the material perfection associated with his predecessor Donald Judd, nearby at **Mignoni (302)**.

Olga Fröbe-Kapteyn (1881-1962)



Olga Fröbe-Kapteyn, “The Purifying Fires,” circa 1929, ink (reverse), Indian ink, gouache, and gold paint on card. via Charles Ede Ltd.

Incongruously, several dealers have brought antiquities into the modern mix. **Charles Ede (362)**, a dealer of ancient art from Egypt, Greece and the Roman Empire, does some of the best past-is-present blending of this fair, with works on paper from the 19th and early 20th centuries. Up front is a magnificent seated ibis from the Late Dynastic Egypt of gilt wood and bronze. He’s watching a trio 2,500 years his junior: rigorous abstract diagrams on cardstock, circa 1920, done in ink, gouache and gilding, illustrating the principles of yin and yang. These are three of 127 “meditation plates” by the Dutch mystic Olga Fröbe-Kapteyn. She first exhibited them at a Swiss humanist meeting house — until Carl Jung, disliking their use of black, advised their removal. Now they’re here, across millenniums.

TEFAF New York

Single-entry tickets are \$62.50 (\$25 for students); multiple-day entry tickets are \$83.50. May 15-19, Park Avenue Armory, 643 Park Ave., Upper East Side, Manhattan; tefaf.com.

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