
CHARLES DESMARAIS *Art*

The year's biggest weekend for art fairs and galleries

It's the weekend for art fairs in San Francisco, a festival season that has taken hold in just a few years. It drives a week of exclusive preview parties, already under way, and generates an array of public art events throughout the Bay Area so extensive that no single human could do justice to them all. But it sure is fun to try!

Ramekon O'Arwisters' "Mending #16" is part of his new series of crochet built around broken pottery, on view through Feb. 10.

The art fair called **Fog Art and Design**, which opens Thursday, Jan. 11, and runs through the weekend, started four years ago as a low-key, design-inflected event, with a gala opening party to support programs at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art. It has grown in stature to include some of the country's

Desmarais continues on E5



David Schmitz / Patricia Sweetow Gallery

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Desmarais from page E1

most influential galleries, but its organizers have chosen to keep it relatively small in scale. Forty-five dealers are slated to show this year.

It's a good strategy to contain the fair to its original Festival Pavilion home at Fort Mason Center for Arts and Culture. The pavilion is just the right size and layout to alleviate the fatigue that results from stumbling through the mega-fairs put on in Miami; New York; Basel, Switzerland; and some other cities. And for visitors to this region, there is no more iconic venue than an old military pier jutting into San Francisco Bay.

Unless, that is, someone puts on a fair at the Palace of Fine Arts. That's what **Untitled**, offspring of a Miami event, decided to do for this, its second San Francisco outing, to be held Friday through Sunday, Jan. 12-14. **Untitled** was created to take up the slack left on the other side of Fog's tight exhibitor policy, which excludes a lot of excellent dealers who want to reach West Coast collectors but can't make the 45-gallery cut.

The palace is a glistening relic of San Francisco's 1916 Panama-Pacific International Exposition, designed by one of history's most important Bay Area architects, Bernard Maybeck. The weekend's event restores the structure to its original purpose, lost over the century since its construction: to house an ambitious short-term exhibition of contemporary art.

Both fairs present rich schedules of public talks, films and seminars on aspects of contemporary art. Other than that similarity, however, the difference last year between Fog and **Untitled** was stark.

Fog was laid-back and as close to elegant as extensive carpeting, warm lighting and spectacular flower displays can make a cavernous warehouse space. With roughly half the galleries showing inventive furniture and other design objects, it had a homey feel unlike any fair I have attended across the world (the closest is the Art Show, presented in early March by the Art Dealers Association of America at New York's Park Avenue Armory).

Untitled was energetic in a way that many people loved but that drove me mad — though a bad head cold didn't help. I am hopeful that the new venue — **Untitled** was held in Pier 70's frigid, windy steel shelters last year — and better personal health will make a big difference.

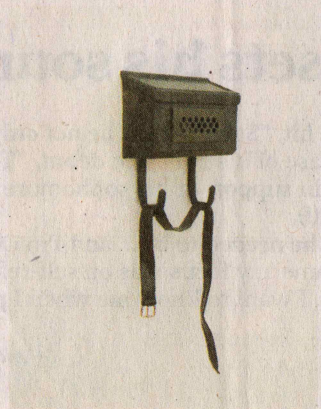
It's a broad generalization, but not entirely a false one, to say that Fog presents the more established galleries, while **Untitled** tends toward the smaller, newer, scrappier places.

A brand new event, much smaller than the other two, is the **East Cut Art Fair**. Describing itself as "a boutique pop-up art fair," the event will take place Friday-Sunday, Jan. 12-14, at 160 Spear St. It will present artists represented by four reputable dealers that fall just outside the San Francisco establishment: Chandra Cerreto Contemporary and Slate Contemporary, both based in Oakland; Mill Valley's Seager Gray Gallery; and George Lawson, who closed his brick-and-mortar space last year and

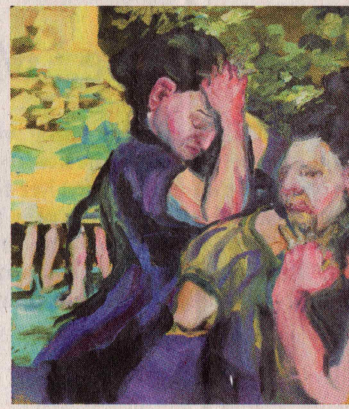


Ratio 3

A 2017 work by Ryan McGinley — “arguably the most important photographer in America,” according to GQ — from his exhibition “Paradiso,” opening Saturday, Jan. 13.



Et al. etc.



Bass & Reiner Gallery

Sculptures by Dan Herschlein and drawings by Alexandria Tarver in a show opening Saturday, Jan. 13.

Ray Mack's “Keys” will be in a dual exhibition.

whose website says he is “on sabbatical and the exhibition program is temporarily suspended.”

In the galleries

Many art galleries in San Francisco will open exhibitions this week and over the weekend. Here is a selection of exhibitions I have seen and recommend highly, followed by a list of shows I intend to see before they close. Admission is free to all, and all are in San Francisco. Check the gallery website for public hours.

Recommended and open now

Fraenkel Gallery, 49 Geary St. <https://fraenkelgallery.com>. “Art and Vinyl: Artists and the Record Album From Picasso to the Present,” through March 3. A Josef Albers record jacket that looks like the percussion on the LP inside must sound: That's just one of the terrific, mostly rare objects in this lighthearted review of designs by Jean-Michel Basquiat, Sophie Calle, Jean Dubuffet, Marlene Dumas, Yves Klein, Barbara Kruger, Sol LeWitt, Chris Ofili, Ed Ruscha, Cindy Sherman, Andy Warhol and many others.

Brian Gross Fine Art, 248 Utah St. www.briangrossfineart.com. “Leo Valledor: A New Slant,” through Feb. 24. Valledor (1936-89) brought geometric abstraction to a high pinnacle over his long career, and this exhibition is an excellent overview. His “Ezistance” (1986) is a confounding visual puzzle requiring great force of will to accept that it is hung flat against the wall. Be sure to ask

to see the painting in the office, another stunner.

Patricia Sweetow Gallery, 315 Potrero Ave. www.patriciasweetowgallery.com. “Ramekon O'Arwisters: Mending,” through Feb. 10. O'Arwisters has brought the venerable craft of crochet into the realm of high art. In this new work, he builds his soft sculpture around broken bits of pottery, mourning their damage and attempting, futilely, to heal them at the same time.

Nancy Toomey Fine Art Gallery, 1275 Minnesota St. <http://nancytoomeyfineart.com>. “Miya Ando — Oborozuki (Moon Obscured by Clouds),” through Feb. 22. Gossamer, dreamlike images of clouds that seem lightly breathed onto their supports are, surprisingly, photographs, albeit printed by unconventional processes.

Rena Bransten Gallery, 1275 Minnesota St. <http://renabranstengallery.com>. “Rupert Garcia: Rolling Thunder,” through Feb. 24. A survey of five decades of paintings and prints on the theme of war by one of the Bay Area's most accomplished artists, by which I mean that the work combines commitment to technique and to conscience in equal measure.

Open now and worth a visit

Haines Gallery, 49 Geary St. <http://hainesgallery.com>. “David Maisel: Proving Ground,” through Feb. 24. I haven't yet seen this one, but Maisel is a reliably challenging photographer. This new work is the product of a 15-year project, we are told, “investigating the landscape and architecture of a

classified military site in a remote region of Utah's Great Salt Lake Desert.”

Romer Young Gallery, 1240 22nd St. www.romeryounggallery.com. “Evan Nesbit: Perishable Gestures,” through Feb. 17. The practice of “painting” as part photo-mechanical, part laboriously handmade seems to consume artists everywhere these days. I want to know more about Nesbit's work than one can tell from a computer screen.

Jenkins Johnson Gallery, 464 Sutter St. www.jenkinsjohnsongallery.com. “There Is No Alas Where I Live,” through Jan. 27. If The Chronicle's Sam Whiting liked it, then I want to see it.

Must-see, opening this weekend

John Berggruen Gallery, 10 Hawthorne St. www.berggruen.com. “Sarah Morris,” opening Thursday, Jan. 11, 5-8 p.m. Morris is an exciting abstract painter who has received wide notice, but this is her first West Coast exhibition.

Gallery Wendi Norris, 649 Old Mason St. www.gallerywendinorris.com. “Maria Magdalena Campos-Pons: If I Were A Poet,” opening Thursday, Jan. 11, 6-9 p.m. The first pop-up in a series Norris announced late last year, this one is in a Presidio National Park building. The Cuban-born Campos-Pons has not had a West Coast show, but her photographs and related works (video, performance) have generated excitement worldwide.

San Francisco Art Fairs

Fog Design and Art: 11 a.m.-7 p.m. Thursday-Saturday; 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Sunday. Jan. 11-14. \$25 online, \$30 at door. Fort Mason Center for Arts and Culture, Festival Pavilion, 2 Marina Blvd., S.F. (800) 454-6401. <https://fogfair.com>

Untitled, San Francisco:

Noon-8 p.m. Friday and Saturday; Noon-5 p.m. Sunday. Jan. 12-14. \$20-\$30; free for children under 12. Palace of Fine Arts, 3601 Lyon St., S.F. (646) 405-6942. www.untitledartfairs.com

East Cut Art Fair: 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Friday; 10 a.m.-7 p.m. Saturday; 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 12-14. Free. 160 Spear St., S.F. (415) 536-5880. <http://theeastcut.org/artfair>

Anglim Gilbert Gallery, 1275 Minnesota St. <http://anglimgilbertgallery.com>. “Judith Linhares: Out of My Head,” opening Saturday, Jan. 13, 6-8 p.m. Linhares is a Brooklyn artist by way of the Bay Area, and she is as beloved here today as she was when she left the region in 1980. This smallish survey at a gallery that has tracked her progress over those years promises to be a colorful reintroduction.

Ratio 3, 2831A Mission St. www.ratio3.org. “Ryan McGinley: Paradiso,” opening Saturday, Jan. 13, 6-8 p.m. The artist GQ dubitably called “arguably the most important photographer in America” is known for sexualized pictures of young men and women. It doesn't hurt to look — or does it?

Et al. etc., 2831 Mission St. <http://etaetc.com>. “Alexandria Tarver and Dan Herschlein,” opening Saturday, Jan. 13, 6-9 p.m. The ever-lively, often confounding gallery Et al. has a new offshoot, Et al. etc. This second show in the new space pairs a woman who draws with a man who sculpts, both naturalistically.

Bass & Reiner Gallery, 1275 Minnesota St. www.bassandreiner.com. “Salon: Ray Mack and Sarah Sarchin,” opening Saturday, Jan. 13, 6-9 p.m. In which we learn whether a tiny gallery can contain a two-person exhibition of paintings nearly bursting with expressionistic color and gesture.

Don Soker Contemporary Art, 2180 Bryant St. www.donsokergallery.com. “Elisabeth Ajtay: Variations,” opening Saturday, Jan. 13, 4-6 p.m. Insect-like sculptures fashioned from discarded umbrellas, along with their portraits in photographs, seem creepy enough for me to want to see them in the, um, flesh.

Root Division, 1131 Mission St. <https://rootdivision.org>. “15-Year Anniversary Exhibition,” opening Saturday, Jan. 13, 7-10 p.m. One of the Bay Area's liveliest nonprofit visual arts organizations supports youth in several forms, giving gallery space and teaching experience to emerging artists in return for their work with young kids. Root Division shows are always fresh and inventive, and worth a visit.

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