

ARTFORUM

DIARY

FRIEZE-FRAME

February 26, 2019 • Los Angeles • Trinie Dalton at Frieze Los Angeles 2019



View of Hannah Greely's *High and Dry*, 2019.

HOLLYWOOD HAS ITS MOMENTS. Just when you think Tinseltown has exploded into an overpriced, overdeveloped, overcrowded nightmare, the sun peeps through the clouds onto Griffith Park's Hollywood sign, then the snowcapped Angeles Crest mountains in the distance, and the spring-rain-cleaned boulevards glow anew with the promise of discovery so that average folk and A-listers alike can nestle once more into LA's apocalyptic, disorienting glamour. Hollywood's posh movie studios feign immunity to this dysfunctional cycle, however: Inside iron gates are immaculately groomed grounds, with golf carts buzzing around to deliver beautiful people into warehouses packed with highly designed sets: a well-oiled, easygoing, and elegant machine that is total artifice.

This month, the art world caught a glimpse of this weird ecology. To establish an art fair at Hollywood's arguably most scenic studio felt somehow totally natural, like pairing a good zin (the Frieze Fair) with Manchego nibbles (Paramount). Forced food metaphors aside, Frieze LA now takes the crown as the fair to drag LA citizens out of disparate bubbles to convene and gawk at offices in which Paramount Pictures

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producers devised such epic culture changers as silent films, talkies, and Star Trek. (RIP with a Vulcan salute to Leonard Nimoy, our favorite art-collecting Spock.)

For those who are sick to death of art fairs, Frieze LA offered fresh fantasy. The vernissage was subject to pouring rain but still jovial, with attendees scrambling building to building under Frieze-distributed umbrellas. With my baby strapped to me in a Keith Haring carrier—my pathetic attempt at wearable art in this new mommy realm—I made it to zero preparties, films, or late-night ragers. So I missed Raf Simons at the Sprüth Magers dinner for Sterling Ruby, Beyoncé and Jay-Z at the UTA Artist Space bash, all the soigné literati at Glenn Ligon and Hamza Walker’s conversation at Regen Projects, the cute dance party/Arthur Jafa book launch at the Underground Museum, and the artist-heavy inauguration of Susanne Vielmetter’s huge new downtown space. I heard David Kordansky’s Kulapat Yantrasast-designed expansion is going to give everyone in town a run for their money. But all of this is news through the grapevine. I didn’t even catch Walker’s impeccable lineup of Frieze Talks featuring the likes of Stanya Kahn, Catherine Taft, and Liz Larner with Ariana Reines. “Stay for my talk!” Kahn texted as I fed Juniper a boob. “I can’t, baby screaming :(You’ll be great, love you . . .,” I replied.

My new insight into the fair’s layered social fabric, as well as its themes and aesthetics, came from both the setting and the challenges of parenthood. Saturday was phenomenally sunny, and while kids and their discombobulated parents played on Paramount’s grassy lawns outside the café and gift shop—including families who couldn’t get tickets to the sold-out fair—I surveyed the indoor aisles with my usual zest for summary. The best booths were those that pushed the historical riff on LA’s art history: Jeffrey Deitch’s 1960–1970s Judy Chicago presentation; Hauser & Wirth’s installation of Mike Kelley’s 1999 *Unisex Love Nest*; David Zwirner’s wall of surprisingly optimistic, colorful, and flowery Raymond Pettibons; and the Pit’s DIY representation of LA’s emerging greats. I was glad to hear the Pit’s co-owner, Adam Miller, report that sales were robust.

The real deal was in the back lot, where Ali Subotnick’s Frieze Projects platform gave not only LA artists the chance to reimagine a faux New York cityscape but also alleyways and storefronts new life. Paul McCarthy’s three-story *Daddies Tomato Ketchup Inflatable* made me feel like Barbie wandering through some perverse Barbie townhouse, while Trulee Hall’s green papier-mâché snake, *Infestation*, winding its way in and out of building windows, recalled aliens conquering humanity in horror films. But Hannah Greely’s cartoonish aqua-resin hanging lines of sculptural objects, *High and Dry*, cheered the grim LA style, as did Sarah Cain’s pretty New Wave redo of a Brooklyn brownstone, *I touched a cactus flower*, in which she layered every indoor surface with abstract paintings cued to a Maui and Sons surfwear palette, complemented by sunlight cascading through a stained-glass window. Although I didn’t make it to Andrea Zittel’s High Desert Test Sites gem and mineral show, it was clearly a hit. Her Instagram later read: “I just sold pyrite to Billy Idol!” Only in LA. Revel yell.

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