

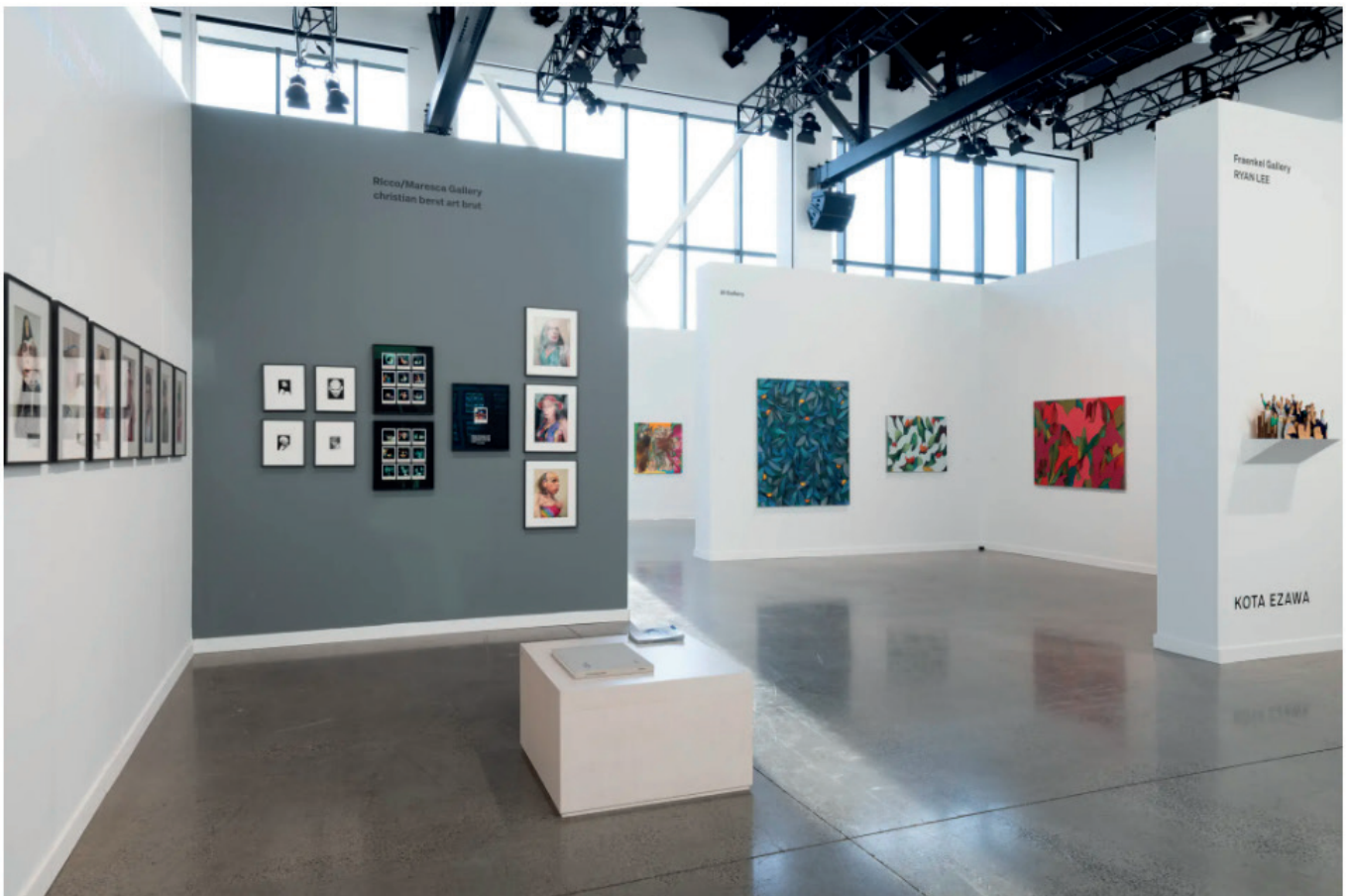
# The New York Times

ART FAIR REVIEW

## An Embarrassment of Style at the Independent

This year's fair is in overdrive, with exhibitors taking big swings in dozens of directions. Use our critic's personal playlist to find your way around the floor.

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The Ricco/Maresca Gallery and Christian Berst Art Brut (left) and i8 Gallery (back right) at the Independent art fair. Alexa Hoyer/Independent



By Will Heinrich

May 9, 2024

The Independent is a stylish affair. Carefully curated and relatively small, it can always be counted on to look good, but this year its style is in overdrive. Occasionally it's pinch-hitting for substance, mere showiness with nothing behind it. Sometimes, as in **Ruby Neri's** bravura ceramic sculptures in the fair's special 15th-anniversary "15x15: Independent 2010-2024" exhibition, which is taking place at Spring Studios in TriBeCa, visual pizazz hits a kind of critical mass, becoming substance in itself.

Most often, though, these 172 artists showing with 89 exhibitors are taking big swings in lots of directions — severe abstraction, obsessive figuration, decaying sneakers — so that making a list of standouts was nearly impossible. The following eight booths are more like a personal playlist to get you moving around the floor. (Note that there are no booth numbers.)

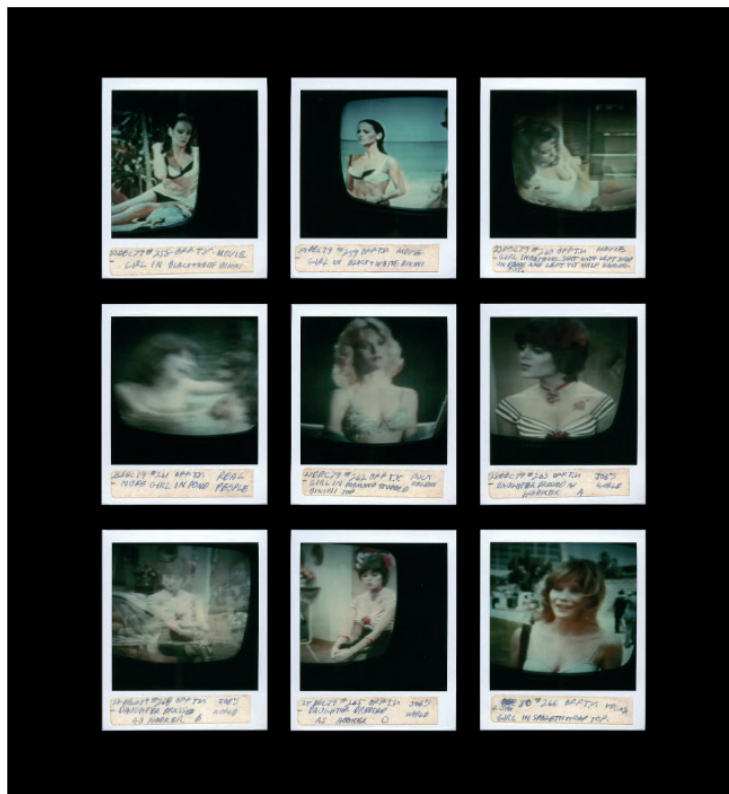
But don't forget to explore the corners, too, where you'll find **Margot Samel** showing trompe l'oeil paintings by **Olivia Jia**; the Houston-based publisher and gallery **F** selling **F. Richard Coldwell's** dystopian art-world novel "[Lies From the Flies on the Wall](#)"; and "Moby Dick" with drawings by **Alex Katz** at the **Karma Bookstore**.

# SIXTH FLOOR

## Ricco/Maresca Gallery and Christian Berst Art Brut



Tomasz Machcinski's self-portraits at Ricco/Maresca Gallery and Christian Berst Art Brut. Alexa Hoyer/Independent



Tom Wilkins, "My TV Girls #034," from 1978, Polaroid shots of women on TV. via Ricco/Maresca and Christian Berst Art Brut

For me, the fair's most memorable event will be the American debut of the Polish photographer Tomasz Machcinski (1942-2022), who started dressing up in character and shooting thrilling, dangerous and vital self-portraits in the early 1960s. His astonishingly emotive and variable face, as everyone from Gandhi to Hitler as well as numerous men and women sprung only from his own imagination, has to be seen to be believed. Machcinski's self-portraits are presented alongside a strangely beguiling trove of Polaroids of women on TV by Tom Wilkins (1951-2007), also enjoying its first American showing. Jointly presented by New York's Ricco/Maresca and Christian Berst Art Brut from Paris.

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Par Will Heinrich

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