

# Stephen Friedman Gallery

AnOther Magazine  
The Best Things to See at Frieze London 2021  
Daisy Woodward  
15 October 2021

## AnOther

### The Best Things to See at Frieze London 2021

Our guide to the must-see booths at this year's festival, from a 90s boy band pastiche to a showcase of Nigerian portraiture.

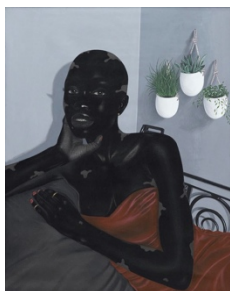


Image: Johnson Eziefula, *The Virtual Valentine*, 2021© Johnson Eziefula/ Courtesy The Breeder, Athens and Ross-Sutton Gallery, New York.

After a year's forced hiatus, Frieze London has returned to Regent's Park, offering up displays from some of the world's best galleries in celebration of contemporary art's most brilliant beacons. Ahead of what's set to be a bustling weekend for the fair as event-starved art lovers descend on its booths, we've put together a handy list of some of its highlights to help you navigate the vast floor plan, spanning esteemed favourites and

fresh talent alike.

Deborah Roberts at Stephen Friedman

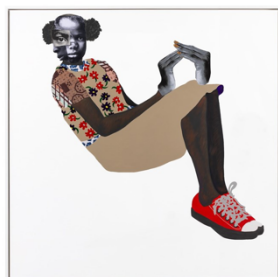


Image: Deborah Roberts *'Laying my burdens down'*, 2021 Mixed media collage on canvas 177.8 x 177.8cm(70 x 70in). Copyright Deborah Roberts. Photo by Paul Bardargjy. Courtesy the artist and Stephen Friedman Gallery, London.

Ahead of her first institutional solo show in Europe, opening at The Bluecoat in Liverpool next week, Stephen Friedman gallery gives us a sneak peek at a new series of paintings by the brilliant African-American artist Deborah Roberts. As with Roberts' previous work, the large-scale pieces depict Black children, beautifully composed, in collage form, from found imagery and hand-painted details. Each one features an array of skin tones, hairstyles, facial features and clothing in a powerful exploration of what the gallery terms "the challenges encountered by Black children as they respond to social constructs perpetuated by the white gaze and western visual culture".

Sin Wai Kin at Blindspot Gallery

Sin Wai Kin – the new non-binary name of the Canadian-born, London-based performance artist previously known as Victoria Sin – went all-out 90s kitsch for their project at Blindspot Gallery. Sin describes themselves as "using speculative fiction within performance, moving image, writing and print to interrupt normative processes of desire, identification and objectification", and here that manifests itself in the form of a curtain-haired boy band, sporting the drag artist's signature, Chinese-opera-style face paint. Made up of four distinct characters, each symbolic of one side of Sin's multifaceted personality, the band gifts viewers with a new single, performed as a two-screen music video replete with some seriously nostalgic Backstreet Boy-style moves, and life-sized foam cut-outs of themselves.

Glen Wilson at Various Small Fires

Various Small Fires' booth is dedicated to the eye-catching photo-sculptures of California-based artist Glen Wilson. The Venice resident salvaged rusting gate frames from demolished buildings in gentrified areas, using these as the mounts for evocative large-scale photographs captured in his local area. Depicting figures carrying buckets of water or frolicking in the sea, these snapshots were printed onto resin, divided into strips, and then woven to reform the image – to striking, cinematic effect. "The image is never a dispassionate document [in my

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work] but rather a sign of negotiation,” Wilson has said, “the punctuation of an idea, a representative object indicating multiple meanings”.

Athens gallery The Breeder has chosen to spotlight a number of exquisite portraits by a selection of contemporary Nigerian painters, including Johnson Eziefula, Victor Ubah, Adegboyega Adesina, Barry Yusufu and Deborah Segun. Painting styles range from the cubist-meets-Afrofuturist (Ubah) to the self-coined contemporealist (Eziefula), but shown together – playfully interspersed by a number of marble sculptures, including, rather bafflingly, a penis by Man Ray – they highlight some of the most exciting depictions of the contemporary Nigerian experience.

Ndaye Kouagou at Nir Altman

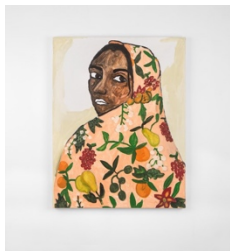


Image: Frieze London 2021 Shirley Villavicencio Pizango. Courtesy Ginsberg Lima

At the heart of the Unworlding section – a platform for emerging artists – a satirical video work by Paris-based artist and performer Ndayé Kouagou shows on a series of screens, presenting passers-by with a fictional TV programme, dubbed Good People TV. The three-part piece stars Kouagou, who faces us front-on like a news anchor to deliver advice on becoming a good person. This ranges from “swallowing your own fluid” rather than others’ to deciding whether to live your life as a comfortable person or an uncomfortable one. Kouagou chooses the latter – “comfortable people make me uncomfortable”, he quips, a searing statement that demands a moment of introspection from visitors to the esteemed art fair.

Shirley Villavicencio Pizango at Ginsberg Lima

Offering a small, welcome sojourn back into summer, Ginsberg Lima gallery has dedicated its stand to the lush, brightly hued paintings of Peruvian-Belgian artist Shirley Villavicencio Pizango, who grew up in the Amazon before moving to Ghent in her late teens. Villavicencio Pizango works in an expressive, flattened style, applying her brushwork to intimate portraits of family and friends and geometric still lifes imbued with Peruvian symbolism. Deliberately reminiscent of the work of modernist icons Matisse and Picasso, the artist explains that her paintings “co-opt [these artists’] broad visual language as a system with which to interrogate the representation of non-white figures within Western European portraiture”.

Do Ho Suh at Lehmann Maupin

Lehmann Maupin Gallery is showcasing the work of two artists this Frieze, Liza Lou and Do Ho Suh, in timely musing on themes of “home, the passage of time, and loss of control brought on by the Covid 19 pandemic”. Multidisciplinary Korean artist Suh is best known for crafting exact replicas of transitional interior spaces, like hallways and corridors, in colourful polyester and steel sculptures. In this instance, we are invited to roam his breakfast nook, rendered in pale pink mesh, which is presented alongside a number of intricately sewn sculptures and sketches from his Specimen series, depicting “household objects found consistently, but with subtle variations from country to country, in homes around the world”.

Issy Wood at Carlos/Ishikawa

Rising American painter and pop star Issy Wood’s uncanny close-ups are captivating audiences at the Carlos/Ishikawa booth. Wood’s is a world of antique trinkets (watches, fur coats, porcelain) and pop culture references (a depiction of the “help me”-inscribed goy’s teeth from A Serious Man features here, for instance) rendered in a classical style and washed-out colour palette. The results are surreal and unsettling, funny and idiosyncratic – an absurdist critique of consumerism that’s hard to look away from.

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Mary Beth Edelson at David Lewis, NY

At David Lewis's stand, there is a chance to reflect upon the early work of the American feminist art pioneer Mary Beth Edelson, who passed away earlier this year at the age of 88. An array of black-and-white self-portraits,

taken on North Carolina's Outer Banks in 1973, find the artist in the nude, striking dramatic poses inspired by Predynastic Egyptian statuary. Each has been adorned with colourful paint or felt-tip pen markings, which act as a sort of costume, reflecting what Frieze writer Debra Lennard describes as "a central concern of 1970s feminist theory: the performance of the self".

Noémie Goudal at Edel Assanti



Image: Noémie Goudal Les Mécaniques - Tropiques III, 2020 100 x 80 cm C-print Edition 2 of 5 plus 2 artist's proofs Courtesy of the artist and Edel Assanti

The climate crisis is a recurring theme throughout this year's Frieze, with many works and stands shining a light on the ill effects of our actions upon our planet, with a tangible urgency. Perhaps the most memorable of these is *Below the Deep South*, a film by French artist Noémie Goudal, showing on a vast screen at Edel Assanti. What at first glance looks to be a verdant tropical jungle soon reveals itself as an installation that is being engulfed by spreading flames – a window onto our doomed future if action isn't taken, fast.