

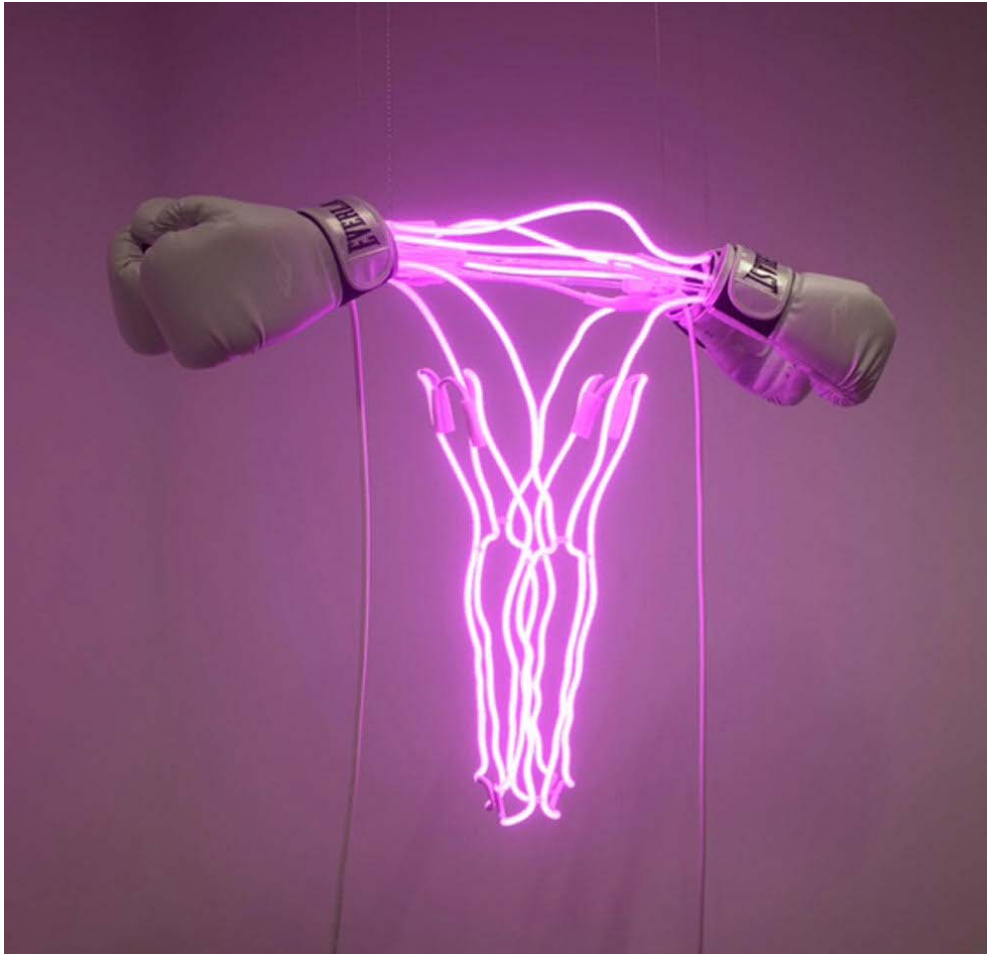
# FORT GANSEVOORT

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## Female Artist Take Their Rightful Place at PULSE Miami Beach

By Sarah Cascone

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Zoe Buckman, *Champ*. Courtesy of Sarah Cascone.

Amid the 25-odd art fairs taking place in Miami this week, PULSE Miami Beach stands apart from the competition with its focus on single-artist presentations, and an impressive contingent of work by female artists.

Strong feminist statements are to be found at every turn: Zoe Buckman's *Champ*, a giant neon pair of ovaries with boxing gloves, packed a literal punch as one of the PULSE Projects pieces, in the rear of the north tent. At Sienna Patti of Lenox, Massachusetts, photographs by Lauren Kalman, in which she's covered her privates in gold leaf, added an air of elegance via the ornamentation of an orifice.

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Erica Prince, Transformational Makeover. Courtesy of Sarah Cascone.

In another project, Erica Prince presented her piece Transformational Makeover, which aims to give women a new perspective on their appearance and identity by radically altering their appearance through hair and make-up.

At Christopher Moller Gallery, young Capetown artist Tony Gum remade herself in the image of Frida Kahlo, but clad in her own family heirlooms. “It’s supposed to speak to how women are multi-faceted,” the artist told artnet News.

The predominance of such work is no accident. “I think it’s really important to support and work with women,” director Helen Toomer told artnet News. “I just think that should be the norm.”

In some ways, it may seem like PULSE, now in its 12th year, has been eclipsed by younger satellite fairs such as UNTITLED or NADA, but in reality, Toomer’s leadership has changed the equation. At PULSE, one can see more traditional paintings and sculpture alongside digital art

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and performance installations. There are also non-profits in the mix, and a design booth from Kinder Modern.



Tony Gum, "Free Da Gum." Courtesy of Christopher Moller Gallery.

"The fair has been criticized in the past for being too eclectic," she admitted. "That's the whole point—art is so subjective!"

One of the fair's more unusual works is Anne Spalter's Miami Marbles, helium-filled balloons covered in canvas that the artist has decorated with digitally-manipulated images shot during Miami Art Week 2015.

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Anne Spalter, Miami Marbles. Courtesy Sarah Cascone.

It's PULSE's first stab at a specially-commissioned project, and it makes for a striking entryway to the fair. Download a special app, and the images will magically move when viewed through your phone. Even without the added layer, Toomer pointed out, "They don't look real! They look superimposed!"

PULSE has also made space for video art, in the PLAY sector, which is more approachable than ever with its super comfy, darkened screening room full of Casper mattresses. The ten short films were culled from some 800 submission received in response to the fair's first open call.

Curator Jasmine Wahi, who selected the featured works with Rebecca Jampol, told artnet News that PLAY's overarching theme is "socio-politically oriented work within the context of social constructs such as race, body identity queerness or gender, and beauty." (The two run Newark's Gateway Project, which has its own booth at fair with its Project for Empty Space gallery.)

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Wahi highlighted Andy Fernandez's film *Sandra*, which intercuts a 1960s police training video with the eerily footage of the arrest of Sandra Bland, who killed herself in prison after being jailed following a routine traffic violation. "A lot of times at art fairs you end up preaching to the converted," she admitted, "but I hope it's a wake up call to understand the systemic nature of inequity in our society."

Also worth a watch is a short film presented by #endHIV, a enigmatic dance piece from choreographer Ryan Heffington and director Blake Martin, narrated by Julianne Moore, that effectively illustrates the ravages of the HIV virus on the body's immune system, and the workings of a new vaccine that could potentially cure it.

The organization's co-chair, Adam MacLean, described the project to artnet News as "combining art, advocacy, and science," and pointed out that fair was perfectly timed to World AIDS Day, celebrated December 1.

it's one of several non-traditional exhibitors in the fair's Points section, which also features New York's School of Visual Arts and alumni from YoungArts. At the latter booth, Toomer proudly pointed out an acquisition of her own, one of the delightfully-cartoonish \$300 pieces by 18-year-old Wade Winslow. It's one of a number of artworks singled out by Perez Art Museum curator Maria Elena Ortiz as one of the institution's PAMM Picks.

The rest of the tent is dedicated to solo artist booths, eligible for the \$2,500 PULSE Prize, and "conversation" booths that juxtapose the work of two artists, such as the contemporary, anime inspired work at Black Ship. The gallery had already sold five pieces by Kuro Fune, who works in the traditional Japanese craft of nihonga, painting in animal-based pigments on rice paper glued to wooden boards.

Among the Prize nominees, Rashaad Newsome's wallpapered booth at DeBuck Gallery is a brightly-colored showstopper. Don't miss his *Shade Compositon (Screen Tests)* on the back wall, a hilarious video work featuring black women making disgusted expressions over and over again.

The wallpaper theme is extended by Bradley Wood at Sim Smith Gallery, where the artist has collaged black and white images drawn from everything from '70s porno mags to 18th-century French paintings. It's a helpful guide to what has inspired Wood's stylish paintings of elegant women in beautifully appointed interior spaces.

The gallery also has the booth across the aisle (the only exhibitor pulling double duty), featuring British artists Tim Garwood and Jonathan McCree. Smith is making its PULSE Miami Beach debut after three years at CONTEXT thanks to a sold-out first PULSE New York outing in March, and was already off to a good start.

"We've had a lot of pre-sales—way more than normal," owner Sim Smith told artnet News.

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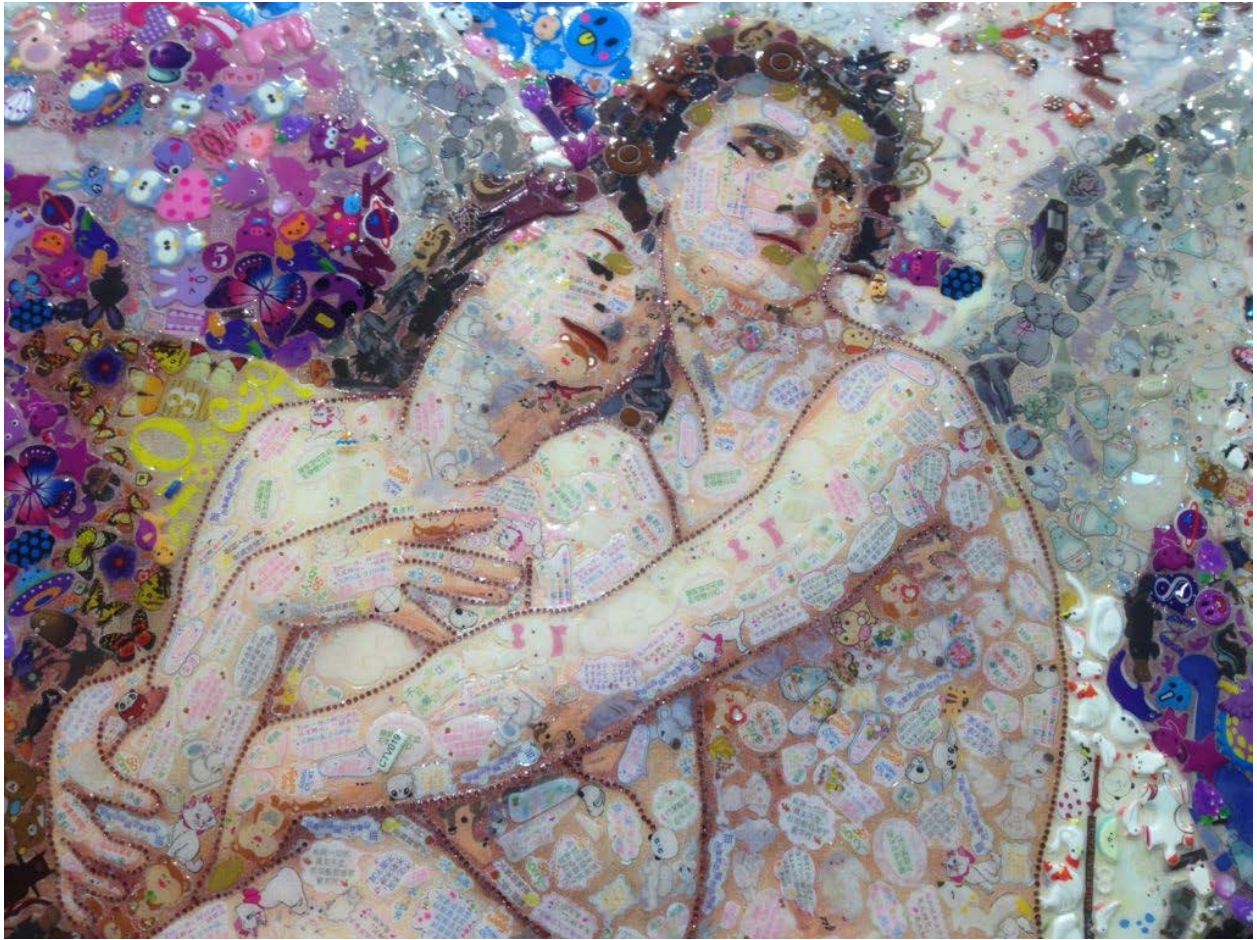


Vik Muniz, Musee d'Orsay (Rochefort's Escape, after Manet), 2016. Courtesy of Rena Bransten Gallery.

There are also several standouts in the fair's north tent, which such as Vik Muniz's Musee d'Orsay (Rochefort's Escape, after Manet), a \$34,000 photograph of a collaged reproduction of an Édouard Manet painting made using cut up auction catalogues at Rena Bransten Gallery.

The original, based on French politician Victor Henri Rochefort's escape, was historically significant, the gallery's Trish Bransten told artnet News, because "it was the first time that a historical painting was basically contemporaneous with the event. We thought it was timely—not that any of us want to go to jail for expressing what we believe."

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Detail of a crystal sticker work by Ye Hongxing at Art Lexing. Courtesy of Sarah Cascone.

A returning PULSE favorite was Ye Hongxing at Art Lexing, who debuted her largest work to date, a massive mandala created using glittery children's stickers. The gallery told us that she worked ten hours a day for six months to complete the colorful work, which is priced at \$60,000.