

FORT GANSEVOORT

NEW YORK

VULTURE

The Best New York Art Shows of 2024

Outsiders, Renaissance masterpieces, crazy quilts, and more.

Jerry Saltz – December 6, 2024

In November, Sotheby's made history when it sold a painting made by artificial intelligence for a million bucks. Ai-Da robot, "the first humanoid robot artist to have an artwork auctioned by a major auction house," created a portrait of Alan Turing that resembled nothing more than a bad Francis Bacon rip-off. Still, Sotheby's described the sale as "a new frontier in the global art market."

As I look back on the year in art in New York, in which big claims were made for found art and appropriation and scraps of things being sewn to other scraps of things, I feel there is much, technically speaking, that an artificial intelligence could copy. But what AI is missing (besides, you know, real originality or human consciousness) is the ability to deliver that electric hit of what Werner Herzog calls "ecstatic truth." From the Renaissance all the way up to the scrappy capers of Jamian Juliano-Villani and Klara Lidén, we saw that humans continue to go where no machine has gone before.

#7: Yvonne Wells, Fort Gansevoort



Yvonne Wells, *That's Me*, 2000, Assorted fabrics, 92.5 × 73 inches.
© Yvonne Wells. Courtesy of the artist and Fort Gansevoort, New York.

This self-taught 84-year-old Alabama-based living treasure created abstract quilts that spoke of beautiful and conflicted American histories.