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# The New York Times

## AN EXPANSIVE ART HISTORY AT THE INDEPENDENT ART FAIR

In its second edition, the boutique fair's 20th-century focus brings unseen masterpieces to New York.

By Will Heinrich

### James Fuentes

It's not surprising that Ed Baynard (1940-2016), a painter experiencing a posthumous career upswing, was also a graphic designer. The acrylics and watercolors in this decade-spanning presentation make vases, bowls and gracefully springy flowers look as sharp as paper cuts. But they aren't quite flat. Detailed rose petals, in one untitled 1978 piece, float atop dark green stems with such precisely observed droops that they're almost still quivering. As much as they recall wallpaper or woodblock prints, their effect is most like a silent garden seen through a pane of glass.



At the James Fuentes booth: "5 Roses/Painted Roowood Pottery," 1978, and "Untitled," 1990, by Ed Baynard. Tony Cenicola/The New York Times

# artnet



Ed Baynard's presentation at James Fuentes's booth at the Independent 20th Century art fair. Photo courtesy of James Fuentes.

## AT INDEPENDENT 20TH CENTURY, A REWARDING ROSTER OF SELF-TAUGHT ARTISTS SHARE THE SPOTLIGHT WITH A CONCEPTUAL COFFEE KLATCH

The fair's second edition trains a sustained eye over the recent past and offers a corrective to historical blind spots.

By Annie Armstrong

On the preview day of Independent 20th Century, the frenzied energy of this week's packed schedule of openings, parties, and art fairs hadn't yet permeated the steel beams of the Battery Maritime Building (a.k.a. Casa Cipriani South Street), where dealer James Fuentes was drinking a cold beer early in the afternoon, looking relaxed.

It had been a satisfying start for the New York-based gallerist. "I love showing in this space the most," he said of the fair's spacious, stylish location. "The space is beautiful, and even though we have to compete with the Armory Show this year, there's still been a lot of good people who have shown up today."

Behind him, a booth brimming with buoyant watercolors by the late Ed Baynard evoked still lifes by Matisse and Cézanne, though the artist is best known as a designer who worked closely with musicians like the Beatles and Jimi Hendrix.

The invitation-only fair premiered last year with a stated mission to champion artists and international avant-garde movements from between 1900 and 2000, with an emphasis on highlighting "lesser-known narratives" from that period. The fair is the second in New York City founded by Elizabeth Dee, who launched Independent in 2010 with curator Matthew Higgs. The fall counterpart to the contemporary-inclusive spring show, this year's edition offers a corrective to historical blind spots, with presentations of approximately 50 artists whose careers map onto various eras of the 20th century.

Some of these figures saw success in their lifetime, others, less so. Key areas of focus this year include women artists; modernists from the Americas, South Asia, and the Caribbean; the Italian avant-garde; and—accounting for around 25 percent of the show this year—self-taught talents.

In the latter category is the American multidisciplinary artist Allan Wexler, whom you can find around the corner from Fuentes at Jane Lombard Gallery's booth. His work there is perhaps the most conceptual work

at this painting-heavy fair.

At the center of the booth sat a table with four cups of coffee on it, each connected to one another by a membrane of tubes. The work, *Coffee Seeks Its Own Level*, was created by Wexler in 1990, and includes a performance aspect: The work is activated when four people sit down at the table and raise each cup of coffee to fill each other's cups as well as their own.

"It's about communication and community and how tables both keep us separate and bring us together, and the choreography of human interaction," said Wexler, who was on hand to see the performance for the first time since 1990.

Around the piece were other artworks that riffed on how humans relate to one another, drawing from Wexler's architectural training. One such piece is a reconstruction made in 2021 of the same china coffee cups used in the table piece, which Wexler recast by draping paper over the cup and rebuilding it from small slivers of the paper. "There's a 30-year difference between these two pieces—but the cup stayed the same," he noted.

Other standouts from around Independent 20th Century included historical figures from the island of Vanuatu at Venus Over Manhattan's booth (which had people chattering: "How could they have possibly gotten those over here?!"); a powerful group presentation at Ryan Lee of pastels by three feminist artists—Camille Billops, Vivian Browne, and May Stevens—that appear whimsical at first but reveal their power as you look harder; and surreal paintings and sculpture by the Brazilian-born Miguel dos Santos, making his U.S. debut at Galatea's booth, which was painted a glowing pale pink.

Buzz from other gallerists seemed to conclude that the real knock-out booth was James Barron Art's presentation of leather paintings by self-taught artist Winfred Rembert. Rembert's skillful mastery of tooling leather came from the five years he spent incarcerated in Cuthbert, Georgia.

After getting out early on good behavior, Rembert married and moved to Connecticut, where his wife encouraged him to record memories of his childhood. The resulting imagery is both jocund and heartbreaking, depicting nights out at jazz clubs or afternoons on the playground, but also touching on the more painful aspects of his past, picking cotton and serving on a chain gang.

"He tools the leather, and then paints these images over them," Dylan Everett, director of James Barron Art in Kent, Connecticut, told Artnet News. "They're joyful, and they're also intense. They're all incredible."

*Independent 20th Century runs through September 10 at Casa Cipriani, 10 South Street, New York.*

# ARTnews



Ed Baynard, *Untitled*, 2013.  
Photo : Ed Baynard, 'Untitled', 2013.

## ART HISTORY GETS (ANOTHER) REWRITE AT THE SECOND-EVER INDEPENDENT 20TH CENTURY

By Tessa Solomon

The second-ever Independent 20th Century art fair in New York, dedicated to artists and during that timeframe, has returned in reliably elegant form.

This edition is again held at the Battery Maritime Building at the southern tip of Manhattan, steps from the Staten Island ferry send-off. It runs through September 10, coinciding with the Armory Show, which looms like an extravaganza of excess compared to this svelte affair. Like the inaugural edition, 32 exhibitors are spread across a single floor, from Vito Schnabel Gallery, to Venus Over Manhattan, and the Hauser & Wirth Institute, the nonprofit arm of the same-name mega-gallery.

It was difficult to choose the best booths, as most offer an opportunity to get acquainted with lesser-known avant-garde movements, or talented individuals who didn't make the final cut of art history. For every Warhol and Picasso, there is a cheery, sideways still life by the undersung German-born Edith Schloss (Alexandre), or a slick silhouette by the Italian artist Sergio Lombardo (1/9unosunove). If you're willing to pay the \$45 admission fee, below are a few other booths to seek out.

### James Fuentes

American artist Ed Baynard (1940-2016) is experiencing a market resurgence, and a quick glance at the decades-spanning group of acrylics and watercolors gathered here makes the why obvious. Baynard, who daylight as a graphic designer, made floral still lifes in the flat, graphic style of Japanese Ukiyo-e prints, which stress bold blocks of color to convey depth. In the striking "Untitled," from 1990, the delicate pink petals of an orchid pop against a green background. You almost expect them to rustle in the breeze.

# artnet



Ed Baynard, *Untitled* (1990). Photo: Jason Mandella. Courtesy of James Fuentes and Independent New York.

## INDEPENDENT 20TH CENTURY RETURNS TO NEW YORK THIS SEPTEMBER WITH AN EYE-OPENING FOCUS ON SELF-TAUGHT ARTISTS

**The much anticipated, invite-only fair continues its mission of championing artists and movements from the last century.**

By Artnet Gallery Network

Returning for its second edition this September 7–10, 2023, Independent 20th Century has announced a wide-ranging artistic program, complementing the fair’s presentations. Established as a bastion of 20th-century art, the fair brings to light important reevaluations, perspectives, and discussions around the century’s movements and artists. The artistic program promises to provide even more in-depth contextualization and insight into the period’s history, how it is understood, and highlight the gallery’s championing 20th-century art.

Like with Independent in September, participation in Independent 20th Century is by invitation only, with participants nominated by Matthew Higgs, the fair’s founding curatorial advisor, in dialogue with galleries and other fair leadership. Independent Founder Elizabeth Dee said, “Independent 20th Century is doubling down on its mission to reframe and broaden our understanding of the canon during this timeframe, and spark conversations that perhaps haven’t happened before, or are long overdue. A new public program and institutional partnerships will launch this year to support ongoing exchanges between contemporary artists and their legacies. We’ve paid special attention to our self-taught category this year, designed to expand our historical understanding across class, gender, and geographical divides. As the appetite from contemporary art audiences continues to broaden, we look forward to bringing Independent 20th Century back to New York City.”

Premiering at the forthcoming fair will be a program of discussions—with scheduling and institutional partners announced later this month—as well as a performance by American artist Allan Wexler, which will be free and open to the public. Within the fair, a number of thematic and categorical focuses will be highlighted, furthering the fair’s mission of exploring and expanding the 20th-century art historical canon.

Of particular importance in Independent 20th Century’s programming is the platforming of overlooked or underrepresented artists. Of the fair’s

presentations this year, 25% will be comprised of self-taught artists, a significant expansion from last year's iteration. Highlights include the U.S. debut of Brazilian artist Miguel Dos Santos by Galatea, and James Fuentes presenting the work of Ed Baynard, known largely for his still lifes—and his work as a graphic designer for The Beatles and costume designer for Jimi Hendrix.

There will also be a strong representation of artists from the Caribbean, South Asia, and the Americas, with 11 presentations by artists hailing from the regions. Corbett vs. Dempsey will present work by Cuban-American artist Emilio Cruz, an important figure in the rise of 1960s figurative expressionism in New York; Trinidadian artist Kenwyn Crichlow will have their work staged by Diane Rosenstein Gallery; and S94 Design will present for the first time in the city a series of ceramics by Myrtle Williams.

In addition to focuses such as women artists across the century and the Italian avant-garde, as well as offering a look at lesser-known works from canonical artists such as Andy Warhol at Vito Schnabel Gallery, Pablo Picasso and Joan Miró at Perrotin, and Sigmar Polke at Sies + Höke, Independent 20th Century promises something new to discover and learn.

*Independent 20th Century will be held September 7–10, 2023, at Cipriani South Street, New York.*

# Time Out

**ED BAYNARD****Time Out says**

A denizen of NYC's downtown scene of the 1970s, Baynard (1940–2016) was known for painting still-lives in flat, minimalistic shapes that borrowed from Japanese woodblock prints and other genres of decorative art. His work was also informed by his experience as a graphic designer for The Beatles, and as the designer for Jimi Hendrix's stage clothes. Perhaps because of its unapologetic pursuit of beauty, Baynard's work has been underrated, but as this show organized by critic Vince Aletti attests, it deserves another look.



Photograph: Courtesy White Columns



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# NEW YORK

## **HEAR ED MAYNARD**

*Dizzying minimalism*

By Jerry Saltz

*White Columns, 91 Horatio Street, through September 7*

The entire city owes a continuous thanks to White Columns for never failing to astound. See the late Ed Baynard's elegantly rhapsodic, kaleidoscopically colored paintings of simple still lifes. In a Zen-like dedication to depicting flowers in vases in open spaces, every line is just so, every millimeter of surface considered.