

CRISTIN TIERNEY

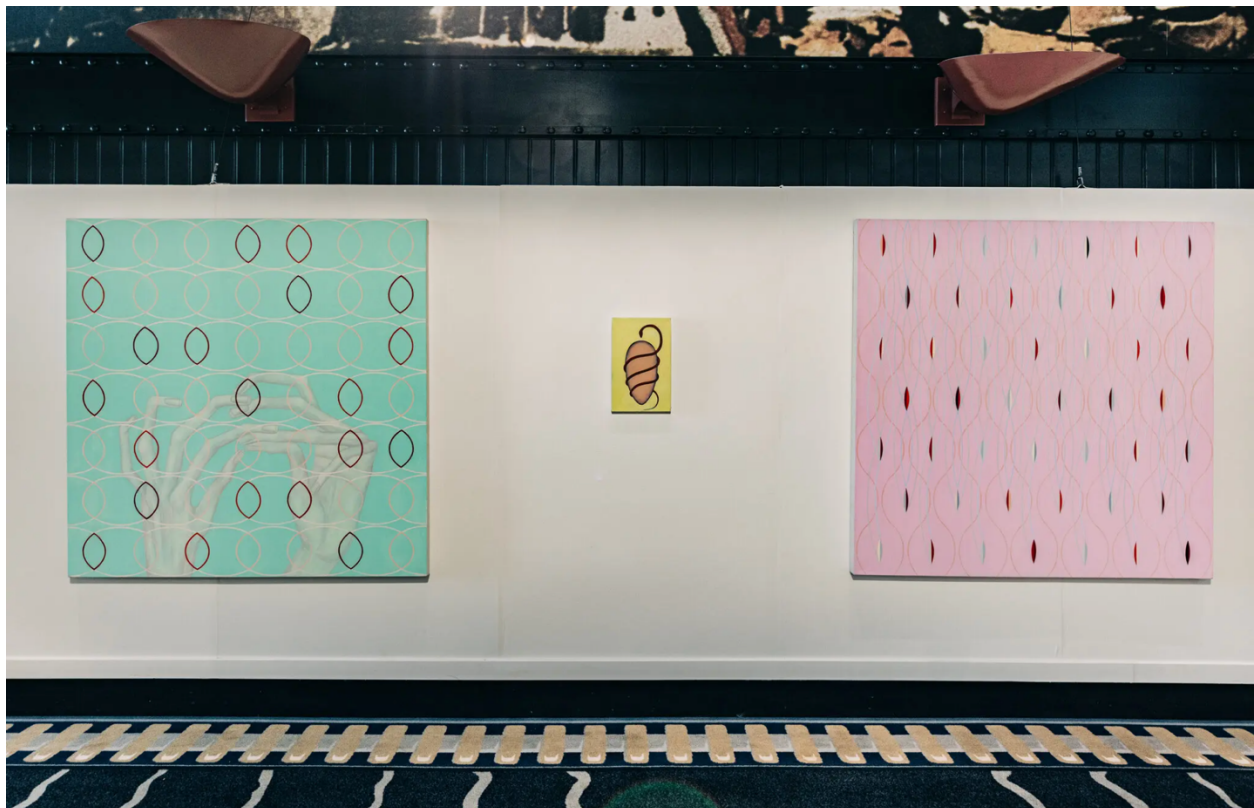
The New York Times

Art Fair Review

Picasso Prints and Brazilian Brilliance at the Independent

The fair's third 20th-century-focused edition charts a careful line between safety and excitement.

By Will Heinrich, September 5, 2024



From left, Audra Skuodas's *Vibrational Vulnerability — Weaving Hands*, 1999; *Untitled (Snake and Lingham)*, 1990; and *Womb Wounds Series* 1999, from 1999, at Cristin Tierney Gallery x Abattoir Gallery. Jeenah Moon for The New York Times

Despite oversaturation, market wobbles, the relentless pace, the sheer expense and every other complaint you may hear this week from a gallerist on a cigarette break, it's art fair time again in New York — but that's not without its merits. Fairs like Spring Break, Volta and Clio give younger and less established artists chances to see and be seen while providing city dwellers glimpses of what's happening elsewhere.

Independent 20th Century, a major fair held in a historical setting — the 1908 Battery Maritime Building at South Ferry, on the southern tip of Manhattan — adeptly walks a narrow line between safety and excitement. This year is the third edition, and its tight curation features 32 exhibitors, some of which are sharing booths and nearly half of which are Independent 20th Century debuts.

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The 20th-century focus guarantees that you'll find plenty of familiar names. Pablo Picasso is here (with a fine lineup of prints at John Szoke Gallery), as are Karel Appel (blaring into your rods and cones at Almine Rech) and Sol LeWitt (with vibrant, curvy drawings at James Barron Art). And a strong contingent of Brazilian artists, along with a couple of female artists who never quite got their due, means you're likely to find some surprises, too. These are the booths I found most striking.

Cristin Tierney Gallery x Abattoir Gallery

Audra Skuodas (1940-2019) was born in Lithuania but spent most of her life painting in Oberlin, Ohio, where her husband, John Pearson, also a painter, taught. As if recapitulating the journeys of earlier abstractionists, Skuodas gradually shed figurative elements in favor of delicate pink and blue patterns of dots and sinuous lines. Unlike her predecessors, however, Skuodas wasn't using her ethereal geometries to transcend earthly pain. She was drilling into it, particularly in the floating, blood-red almond shapes of her 1990s *Womb Wound* series.