

LOVE ART FAIR: FUN, UNPRETENTIOUS AND... AFFORDABLE

Here's just a taste of what to expect from more than 40 exhibitors
 BY FRAN SCHECHTER APRIL 17, 2015 3:51 PM

LOVE ART FAIR, Friday-Sunday (April 17-19), at the Direct Energy Centre (100 Princes, Exhibition Place), \$12, stu/ars \$10, under 16 free. loveartfair.com

The second annual Love Art, the offshoot of affordable art fairs in Britain, functions as a colourful, fun and unpretentious intro to the art market for new collectors and an opportunity for the more experienced to clue in on Canadian and international emerging artists.

There's stuff to appeal to a variety of tastes: photography and printmaking; ceramics and textiles; landscape, pop and abstract painting. The long space, with three rows of booths, feels less daunting than similar events in the Convention Centre, and there are helpful talks geared to beginners about buying and appreciating art, plus creative activities for kids. In addition to gallery fare, you get a chance to see work selected by indie curators and check out in-person art sold by online retailers.

Here are a few highlights from the more than 40 exhibitors:

Independent curator Arianne Di Nardo has selected **six female artists** who are recent grads of OCAD, York and Guelph U. She's juxtaposed sophisticated works in a variety of media that speak to each other by playing with linear or fiber-like elements: Mary Grisey's braided and woven textile pieces made with natural dyes and hanks of horsehair, Annyen Lam's intricate cut-paper depictions of plant roots and architecture, Stephanie Flowers's anatomical-organ-shaped porcelain with jump-rope-like hanging veins of red cord. Di Nardo will address solutions to the art world's gender imbalance in a Saturday panel on how woman can succeed in the field.



Mary Grisey, Remains Of The Ephemeral IV

From Monterrey, Mexico, comes Calvi Studio, with a focus on textiles and a mandate to provide income for local weavers. Its display includes Francisco Toledo's grimacing ear of corn made of needle-felted wool, a powerful indictment of GMO agriculture's despoiling of this Mexican food staple. His framed, laser-cut interpretations of jewellery also make a strong statement about precious metals and heritage crafts.



Francisco Toledo, Against GM Maize

Needle-felted wool sculpture is done locally, too, by Marjorie Campbell of Alison Milne Gallery. Campbell's fantastic white fox is so real that I feared it might be taxidermy until I noticed the woolly creature's long black eyelashes. The Toronto gallery, which started off as a photography venue, also shows Maureen O'Connor's staged photos of wild animals in interiors and Nissim Ben Aderet's black and white linear paintings. Tel Aviv-based Ben Aderet will be on hand doing live painting at the fair.



Maureen O'Connor, The Visitation

Toronto's Graven Feather presents live demos of letterpress and linocut printmaking on mini-presses set up in three booths, as well as a small selection of prints made at its Queen West studio.

UK's Eystorm is an online art retailer of prints by established and emerging artist. Exuberant silkcreens by Alexander McQueen collaborator Jacky Tsai, a Chinese artist based in London, combine lush Chinese florals with figures from Asian mythology and Western comic books.



Jacky Tsai, Save Empress Wu

Montreal's Viva Vida Gallery has work for those who appreciate more traditional landscapes and still lifes, as well as quirky drawings and abstractions. David Kelsey paints winter woodland scenes in the Canadian mould, but he also excels at funky Quebec street scenes dominated by classic cars.



David Kelsey

Some of the prices – ranging up into several thousand for larger works or better-known artists – might seem high to those who haven't bought art before, but they really are reasonable by art-world standards, and the fair also provides info on how to negotiate payment plans.

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