

10 Must-See Gallery Shows During Armory Week

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Alice Neel's watercolor "Woman on a Train," ca. 1940, currently on view at David Zwirner.
(© The Estate of Alice Neel/Courtesy David Zwirner, New York/London)

After you've hit peak fairtigue, avail yourself of the wealth of exhibitions that will be on view in New York during Armory Week. There's plenty of blockbuster museum fare — from the multimedia Bjork retrospective at MoMA to the subtly moving On Kawara show at the Guggenheim — but here are our picks for the best of the gallery scene.

Analia Saban at Tanya Bonakdar, through March 21 (521 West 21st Street)

(<http://www.tanyabonakdargallery.com/exhibitions/analia-saban-backyard>)

In "Backyard," this inventive Argentinean artist uses a sink to make an abstract painting; shreds, scrapes, and melts photographs; treats marble like a textile, draping it over wooden beams; and intricately cuts paper to render everyday landscapes.

Peter Saul at Venus Over Manhattan, through April 18 (980 Madison Avenue, Fl 3)

(<http://venusovermanhattan.com/exhibition/from-pop-to-punk-2/>)

This 80-year-old eccentric master has inspired several generations of imitators, many of whom would be cowed to see these frenetic and hilarious paintings and drawings from the '60s and '70s. The subject matter is dark — crucifixions, electrocutions, war — but the often Day-Glo palette won't let you tear your eyes away; there are few people more adept at mingling seduction and repulsion.

Brad Philips, Joshua Abelow, Raphael Lyon "Situational Comedy" at 247365, through March 22 (131 Huntington Street, Brooklyn)

Don't be afraid of the boroughs: get ye to the Donut District! A three-person show from a pornographically inclined watercolorist (Philips), a painter of occasionally tumescent cartoon men (Abelow), and Lyon, whose previous body of work has incorporated remote-control helicopters and copies of Playboy altered for a cat-friendly audience.



Kazuo Shiraga at Mnuchin Gallery

(<http://www.mnuchingallery.com/exhibitions/kazuo-shiraga>), **through April 11**, and **Dominique Levy** (<http://www.dominique-levy.com/exhibition/body-and-matter>) **(with Satoru Hoshino)**, **through April 4 (45 East 78th Street; 909 Madison Avenue)**

The late Gutai member is best known for painting energetic abstractions with his feet. That might sound like the set-up to a bad joke, but the resulting works achieve a powerful impact that goes beyond their novel creation. 2015 is shaping up to be Shiraga's year: in addition to these two shows, Fergus McCaffrey will host an exhibition opening in late April, and the Dallas Museum of Art currently has a two-person focus on his work (with Sadamasa Motonaga) through July 19.

Jon Kessler at Salon 94 Freemans, through March 28 (1 Freeman Alley)

(<http://www.salon94.com/exhibitions/detail/jon-kesslers-gifts>)

A collection of impressive handmade oddities, many of which Kessler gave as gifts to friends (they've loaned them back for the duration of the show). Found objects sourced in Chinatown are paired with shells, destroyed credit cards, Moog synthesizers, and casts of the artist's own hand.

Rachel Owens at Zieher Smith & Horton, through March 21 (516 West 20th Street)

(<http://zsandh.com/exhibition/9/smile-always>)

Owens casts clenched fists, bare feet, tusks, and the gallery's own architectural elements using her signature colorful broken glass. These works are joined by wall-hung maps made using stitched-together pieces of leather, which depict various New York boroughs (Queens looms huge; Manhattan drapes and droops like a sad condom). Two other works borrow internal documents from high-end fashion retailers — one a guide for employees of Coach, the other regarding Bergdorf-Goodman's refund policy — burning the appropriated text into canvas. The resulting pieces are both ghostly and hilarious: Soulless corporate-speak repurposed as charred beauty.

Joyce Pensato at Petzel, through March 28 (456 West 18th Street) (<http://www.petzels.com/exhibitions/2015-02-19-joyce-pensato/>)

Pensato has a famously cluttered studio, and she's been known to import her workspace into a gallery setting. There's none of that this time around, but there are stunning photos taken in that studio, featuring images taped to the walls (of Robert DeNiro, or Batman) marred by splatters of enamel paint. These are joined by a number of epic, impressive works — lots of goggling eyes and lurid grins — but it's a series of charcoal and pastel drawings of Pensato's favored cartoon menagerie that really show off her chops.

Jim Lee at Nicelle Beauchene Gallery, through March 15 (347 Broome Street) (<http://nicellebeauchene.com/exhibitions/jim-lee/>)

This artist's large sculptural-paintings often seem like a collage of scraps, lovingly sewn together. Here, they bulge out from the wall or lean against it: minimalist compositions with serious personality. The highlight, though, is a salon-style hanging of smaller paintings, drawings, and material experiments.

Rachel Mason at ROOT Studios (<http://www.artingeneral.org/events/1236>), **March 6-7 (443 West 18th Street)**

Musician and artist Mason unveils "The Lives Of Hamilton Fish," a rock opera presented by Art in General. It's a mixture of filmed footage and live performance that tells the tale of "a serial killer and a statesman" who happen to share the same name.

Alice Neel at David Zwirner, through April 18 (537 West 20th Street) (<http://www.davidzwirner.com/exhibition/drawings-and-watercolors-1927-1982/>)

A sprawling survey of drawings and watercolors made between 1927 and 1978. Everything's pretty terrific, including a suite of over-the-top works portraying moments from "The Brothers Karamazov." But the real treat is watching Neel try on different styles with small-scale pieces made in the late '20s and early '30s — they're alternately romantic, sentimental, erotic, and surreal.

ALSO WORTH SEEING: Claudia Comte's pitch-perfect installation at [Gladstone Gallery](http://www.gladstonegallery.com/exhibition/9730/#&panel1-1)

(<http://www.gladstonegallery.com/exhibition/9730/#&panel1-1>), through March 21; Lauren Luloff's collage-style paintings, which transparently flaunt their stretcher bars and incorporate bleach-on-fabric figurative elements, at [Marlborough Chelsea](http://marlboroughchelsea.com/chelsea/exhibitions/lauren-luloff-water-vessels)

(<http://marlboroughchelsea.com/chelsea/exhibitions/lauren-luloff-water-vessels>) through March 28; Aaron Johnson's irreverent and grotesque paintings — many made using socks as a medium — at [Stux Gallery](http://www.stuxgallery.com/node/15/27057) (<http://www.stuxgallery.com/node/15/27057>),