

Contemporary

Villa Warsaw Joins NADA as the ‘Fair’ Expands Internationally

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From the hallowed halls of a former Yugoslavian Embassy to the lapping shores of environmentalist enclave Governors Island, this fall NADA (New Art Dealers Association) provided tandem opportunities for emerging international dealers through their curated exhibitions at Villa Warsaw and NADA House Governors Island. Unlike NADA Miami and NADA New York, NADA’s Houses are not your standard art fair, which typically prioritizes sales in a venue where the architectural character is negligible. When sales do occur at NADA Houses they are embraced to offset participation fees as exhibitions are curatorially driven and secondarily for sale.

NADA’s Executive Director Heather Hubbs shared via email that “both events provide an opportunity for participating galleries and artists to exhibit work in a unique setting and reach new art audiences” of not just collectors but also architectural enthusiasts and anyone curious to be admitted into otherwise restricted sites. Continuing that “they are very kindred programs...set in historic buildings which are often inaccessible to the public” capturing a unique opportunity to peer into the architectural past and its implied distant occupants.



NADA House on Governors Island, New York. Photographed by Cary Whittier.

While the architectural fabric of NADA House on Governors Island is more uniformly in visual disrepair than its villa compatriot, these physical layers of flaking paint and scarred drywall personify the layers of temporal framing within the conception of each artwork, in addition, the ethereal aggregations embedded in the site-specificity of Nolan Park House 17. The sixth edition of this longer-running show—open September 3rd through October 27th, 2024—presented 21 artists curated by 17 galleries and art spaces both inside and outside allowing the change of the seasons to be a vivid actor shifting the tone of the experience of visiting from savoring the last notes of summer to a melancholic autumn muse.



Installation view. Karo Kuchar's "Space Suit VIII" presented by Kates-Ferri Projects, New York at NADA House. Photographed by Cary Whittier.

Kates-Ferri Projects showcased Karo Kuchar's monumental fiber art sculpture that pulls layers of architectural debris from similarly vacant premises in Vienna. *Space Suit VIII* evokes a vintage cut of a bikini from the repertoire of Pop Art leaving the historically objectified female body notably absent. Utilizing translucent fabrics as a base structure allows light to dematerialize this familiar object, both aggrandizing it to an architectural scale and simultaneously hollowing out this iconic symbol as impermanent through its incomplete textural surface patterning. Summoning its use function as a shoreline staple for summer swimmers makes Governors Island an apt location to amplify the sculpture's many semiotic readings, though it attempts to be an optimistic beacon that an earlier era's strand of patriarchal dominance is now akin to a crumbling historical edifice.