

Kayne Griffin Corcoran Bloomberg

Female Artists Show Strength at New York's Park Avenue Fair

A quarter of 72 galleries dedicate booths to works by women.



Beverly Pepper installation view of Kayne Griffin Corcoran
Photographer: Charles Benton via Kayne Griffin Corcoran, Los Angeles

A Georgia O'Keeffe painting that fetched \$6.2 million at Sotheby's three months ago is back on the market with a price tag 37 percent higher.

The 1928 "Calla Lilies on Red" is on view the annual trade show organized by the Art Dealers Association of America (ADAA), the nation's longest running art fair. The price is \$8.5 million, according to Hirschl & Adler Galleries offering the piece in its themed booth, "A Modern Sisterhood: The Rise of American Women Artists, 1900-1960s."

The push for women, with higher prices and wider exposure for their work, is palpable at the venerable show at the Park Avenue Armory, which runs through Sunday in New York. About a quarter of exhibitors are presenting solo and dual booths dedicated to female artists, long overshadowed and undervalued compared to men.

Their works at the show range from O'Keeffe's historic canvas to evocative portraits of black subway riders by Jordan Casteel, born in 1989.

"It's about shining a brighter light on the areas of scholarship and market that didn't receive their due," said Andrew Schoelkopf, president of ADAA. "It's very important to consider those omissions."

That broader rethinking of the canon is happening everywhere, from the Guggenheim's acclaimed retrospective of the radical early abstract painter Hilma af Klint to London Tate's new #5WomenArtists campaign that will present five large-scale, solo exhibitions of women artists in 2020-21. On Friday, Sotheby's raised \$3.9 million during the first part of its "By Women for Tomorrow's Women" auction for Miss Porter, the all-girls school in Connecticut.

At the ADAA, Susan Rothenberg's works on paper depicting female and equine bodies, with highlighted bones, greeted VIPs such as U.S. Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross and Blackstone Group Vice Chairman Tom Hill on the opening night.

Nearby, the 96-year-old sculptor Beverly Pepper was the subject of Kayne Griffin Corcoran's booth, which displayed her early, small-scale, abstract works in bronze, brass and steel. Two sold for \$40,000 to \$80,000.

Across the floor were four slender, ethereal abstract blue paintings by Irma Blank, a Milan-based artist in her 80s, displayed at Luxembourg & Dayan gallery and priced at 100,000 euros (\$114,680) each.

Photographs by Diane Arbus and paintings by Alice Neel complemented each other in a joint booth of David Zwirner and Fraenkel galleries. Feminist artist Judy Chicago, 79, and younger female artists took over Salon 94 and Jessica Silverman's booths, with painting, sculpture and ceramics.

Washburn Gallery dedicated its booth to Abstract painter Alice Trumbull Mason (1904-1971), who worked along Willem de Kooning and Ad Reinhardt. Her 1940s paintings were paired with preparatory drawings, and the asking price for each duo was \$115,000, according to the gallery -- a fraction of what collectors pay for many of her male contemporaries.

"Alice started too early," the artist Ilya Bolotowsky says in a short biography accompanying her work.

- Katya Kazakina