

Frieze London: Coming Into Focus

This year's Focus at Frieze London feels generous, with 37 galleries, plenty of space and one of the only areas in the sprawling tents to see a slice of natural light. A haven from the adjoining maze.

While Focus proudly supports emerging galleries, there is certainly a high bar to be hurdled over to be picked, and the 12-year age limit means many of these names are already instantly recognisable, and indeed, highly successful. Nonetheless, the overall feel of the area itself is less sheened than the majority of the fair, less of the bodacious shiny and glittery surfaces and more of the grit that we might ordinarily associate with up and comers.

London itself is well-represented here, by the some of the usual suspects; Southard Reid, Arcadia Missa, The Sunday Painter, Carlos/Ishikawa and Chewday's. Celia Hempton's display at Southard Reid is particularly effective, her signature creamy (perhaps too distasteful a word?) paintings of genitals set against an entirely painted booth, large brushstrokes in greys and yellows running floor-to-booth-top, and creating an overall feeling of encasement and warmth.

After the inevitably crowd-pleasing Samara Scott work last year, The Sunday Painter have returned with Rob Chavasse's diverted shipment of plasterboard — it'll be back in use industrially after the fair. Although in many ways this is conceptually motivated, the commanding Marsh Lane Diversion is a surprising visual treat also, eight big slabs smeared with tones of greys and blacks which play unintentionally well with the nearby Hempton booth.

Arcadia Missa are showing a mixed display of works by Jesse Darling, Dean Blunt, Hannah Quinlan & Rosie Hastings; Jessie Darling's long-legged red plastic school chairs gathering a lot of attention. In all the booth feels incredibly fun.

Lambeth's Chewday's have teamed up with antiquities specialists Georgiana Aitken and Martin Snowdon to pair the work of London-based Gabriele Beveridge with Neolithic Idols from 10,000 to 2,000 BCE. The five idols sit alongside the slightly futuristic faces of Beveridge's works, heavily made-up eyes obscured by blown glass forms.

Outside London, Lisbon's Galeria Múrias Centeno are showing a strong selection of work from Carla Filipe (also featuring in their brilliant Liste booth this year), with wall-hung paintings, floor work and cushions in strong jet blacks on white. Elephant also enjoyed LA gallery, Various Small Fires's booth, soft and grey-coated with various pillow forms (a definite trend at the fair), animals (obviously we appreciated the small elephant in the right hand corner) and videos in Liz Magic Laser's Primal Speech.

Frieze London runs until 9 October at Regent's Park, London

text by Emily Steer