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Critic's Notebook / The Art Show at the Armory: Blue-Chip Brands Show Their Best

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by Martha Schwendener

Trust me, even if you've been looking at art for a long, long time (or even longer than that), you will see work at [the Art Show at the Park Avenue Armory](#) you have not seen before, by artists you may never have heard of. This is not because the Art Show, organized by the Art Dealers Association of America to benefit Henry Street Settlement, is dedicated to showing the young and hip. Quite the opposite, ADAA represents blue-chip galleries that show high-quality work.

But it has a terrific roundup of art by lesser-known artists, many dead or left out of art history for all the ordinary reasons (gender, geographical location or the idiosyncrasies of their work at a given moment). And despite the density, the fair is very manageable compared with other mega-fairs in New York.

Other strains running through the 72 exhibitors at ADAA this year, the fair's 32nd edition, are a focus on geometric abstraction and craft and a high percentage of female artists — 19 exhibitions are dedicated to them. With an enormous backlog of women, artists of color and people working in unusual media, fairs like this one are yet another place to play catch-up. Below are some highlights, divided into categories with lots of slippage and overlap.

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Psychological Approaches



“Red Room” (circa 2002-7) by Ficare Ghebreyesus at Galerie Lelong & Co. Mr. Ghebreyesus processed everything he saw as a refugee and a global citizen into a kind of ecstatic surrealism. Credit...Rebecca Smeyne for The New York Times

Finally, [Galerie Lelong & Co.](#) (A8) has a standout presentation of paintings by [Ficare Ghebreyesus](#) (1962-2012), an artist born in Eritrea who was married to the poet [Elizabeth Alexander](#). Mixing sources from jazz to Islamic architecture to Coptic Christian iconography and Eritrean folk art, Mr. Ghebreyesus processed

everything he saw as a refugee and a global citizen into a kind of ecstatic surrealism. This is the first solo exhibition of his work in New York and the first time I'd seen it. [He died of a heart attack a few days after his 50th birthday](#), leaving behind 882 paintings, a handful of which are on view here.

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