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HYPERALLERGIC

I Hate to Admit it, But I Loved the Armory Show

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Yes, it sometimes felt like a circus — but circuses are fun, and art fairs, typically, are not.



Anat Ebgi Gallery's presentation, with works by Fabian Treiber, Charlotte Edey, Jordan Nassar, and Jenny Morgan.

"Today, you need to have a story behind the art," mused Isaac Stein, a New York-based collector, as we stared together at Jenny Morgan's black-and-white painting of a spectral reclining woman at the booth of Anat Ebgi Gallery. He's not wrong. Zig-zag your way across the 200-booth floor plan of New York's Armory Show, back at the Javits Convention Center in Hell's Kitchen through this Sunday, and you'll likely overhear snippets of dealers romancing potential buyers with their artists' sometimes credible, sometimes improbable backstories. You can recite a three-page CV from memory or name-drop that a certain curator passed by the booth, but if you want to sell, you better have something interesting to say.

The 2023 Armory Show had one clear message: The art world can no longer afford to take itself so seriously. And that's a relief. For the first time in ages, I found myself feeling — dare I say it! — inspired at an art fair.

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