

ANAT EBGİ

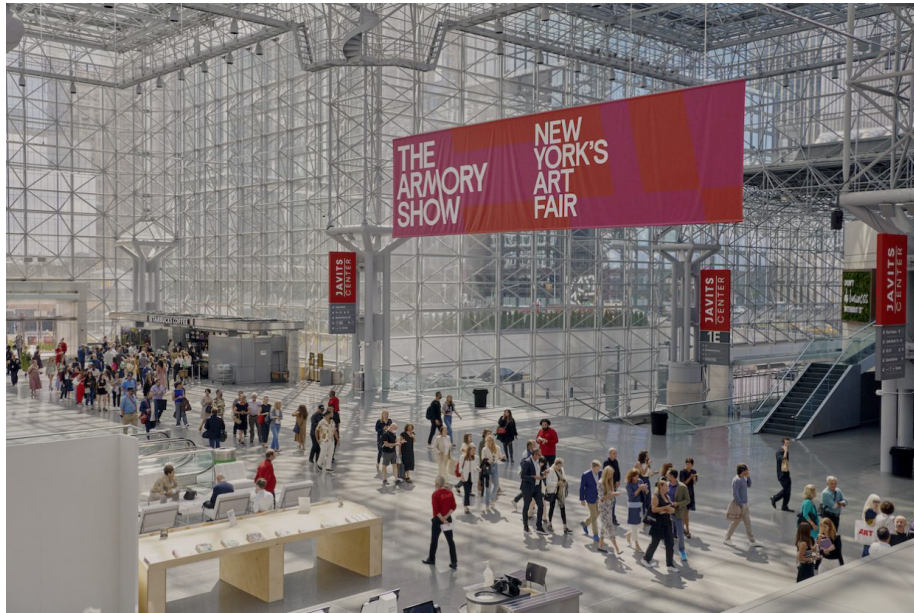
SURFACE

At the Armory Show, Artsy CEO Mike Steib Calls Out the Artists to Watch

Written by: Ryan Waddoups

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The noted collector shares the up-and-coming talents and unsung veterans to keep your eyes on as anticipation builds for the annual New York fair's most ambitious outing yet.



Photography by Vincent Tullo, courtesy of The Armory Show.

Though enthusiasm for contemporary art has never felt more palpable, navigating a fair can be a daunting experience. “The art world feels intimidating to a lot of people,” Mike Steib, the CEO of Artsy, said in an interview. “You walk into a gallery or an art fair, and you just aren’t quite sure where to start.” Steib took the top job at the virtual art platform after building XO Group, the parent company of wedding planning mainstay The Knot, into a billion-dollar business. A passionate collector of work by emerging talents, he identified similar potential in the tight-knit art market, whose machinations—and major fairs—can feel like playing a blindfolded game of inside baseball to newcomers.

Suffice it to say, Steib loves art. “I want everyone to be able to buy art with the same level of confidence that they buy other things,” he says of his role at Artsy. “And I want to help expand the art market so more galleries flourish and more artists can make a living.” He’s particularly excited about The Armory Show, whose 29th edition is making a splashy return to the Javits Center this week. Representing more than 225 global galleries and showcasing a staggering 800 artists, New York’s preeminent contemporary art fair is back with the same renewed enthusiasm and experimental edge as this past year’s edition thanks to an expanded curatorial platform imagined by executive director Nicole Berry and lead curators Eva Respini, Candice Hopkins, and Adrienne Edwards.

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Ahead of the show, Steib shares the artists to watch at this year's edition exclusively with Surface.



Image courtesy of Anat Ebgi, Los Angeles

Alec Egan

I've been collecting Alec's work and watching his incredible development for a few years now. The bright colors, the maximalist patterns, and the intense sunsets turn these traditionally domestic views into something striking.