

# The Best Booths at the 2023 Armory Show – ARTnews.com

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The scene at the 2023 Armory Show. *Alex Greenberger for ARTnews*

There is no shortage of art to see in New York this week, but the big event most will attend is the Armory Show, the sprawling art fair that has once again touched down at the Javits Center. In 2021, when the fair first relocated there, a pandemic-driven anxiety accompanied the proceedings. Now, the mood is lighter, and the art is, too.

Many of the 225-plus galleries exhibiting here have trotted out paintings and sculptures with the hope of currying favor with collectors, advisers, and other dealers. The fair is, after all, a market event whose art is meant for selling first, appreciation second. But the offerings this

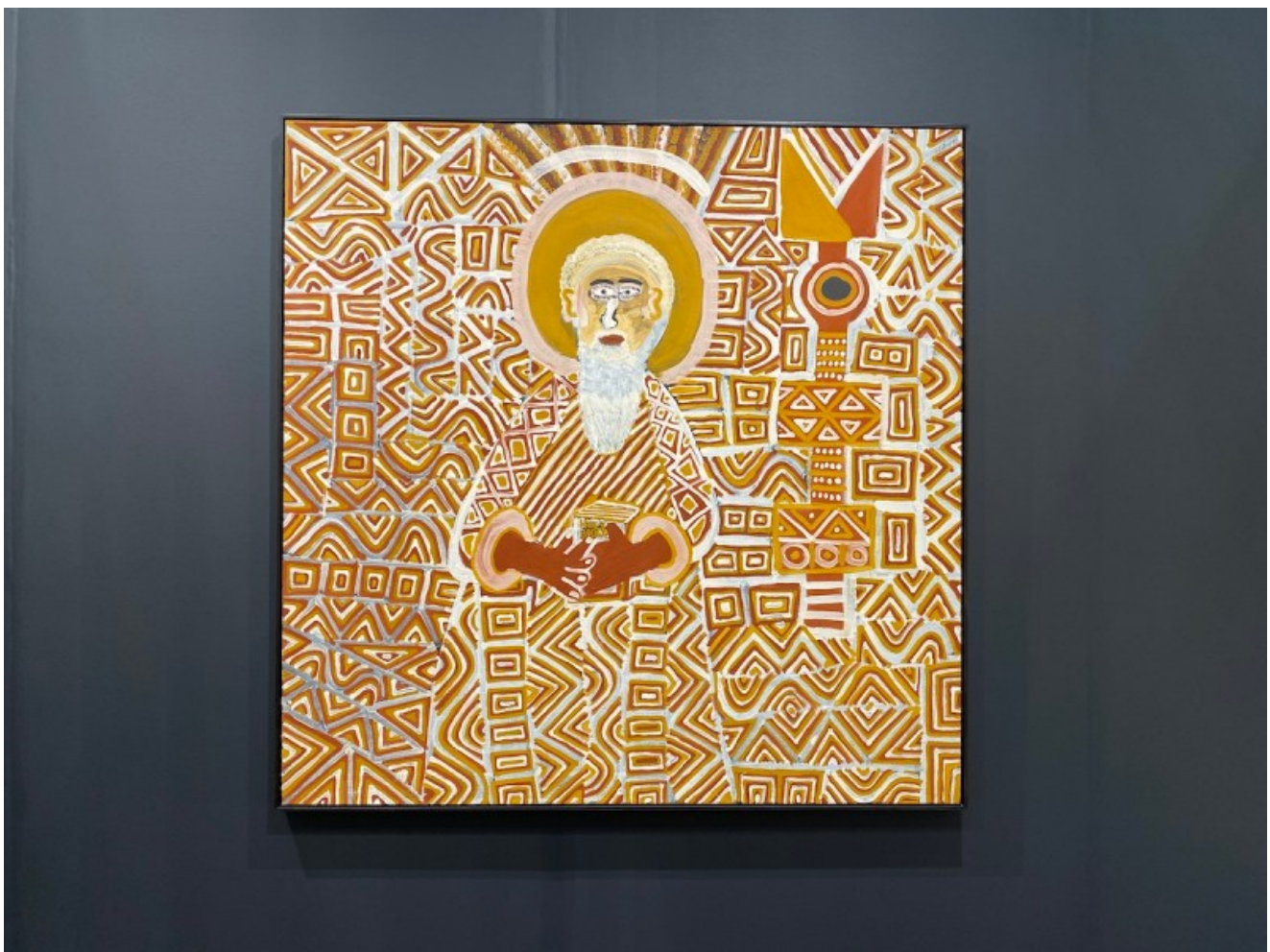
year thankfully skew slightly more ambitious than usual, with under-recognized artists deserving more attention and difficult conceptual artwork in need of thoughtful viewing.

Curator Candice Hopkins’s “Focus” section, for single- and two-person presentations, is this fair’s high point. Many galleries in it are spotlighting Indigenous and First Nation artists; some of them also appear in [Hopkins’s exhibition “Indian Theater”](#) at Bard College upstate. Meanwhile, the “Presents” section, for younger galleries, is also strong.

How best to approach this fair’s multitude of booths? Below are 10 of the finest ones.

## **Yhonnie Scarce and Johnathon World Peace Bush at This Is No Fantasy**

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Work by Johnathon World Peace Bush at the 2023 Armory Show.

Photo : Alex Greenberger for ARTnews

Amazingly, the Fitzroy-based This Is No Fantasy is the few Australian enterprises ever to have taken part in the Armory Show, and the gallery certainly did not put its booth to waste. Johnathon World Peace Bush’s paintings are the stars here. They represent timeworn Catholic imagery—penitent saints, Bible-carrying men with halos—but rather than adhering

to traditional Western modes, Bush represents through beige and white stripes meant to mimic *jilamara*, a body painting technique utilized by the artist's Tiwi community. This is his first New York presentation, and hopefully it will not be his last.

Bush's works are being shown alongside Yhonnie Scarce, whose 2023 piece *Point Pearce, South Australia* alludes to the displacement of the Narungga people by British settlers during the 19th century. Beneath a screenprinted image of a structure bearing a sign referring to the Narungga, Scarce has included an old box filled with icicle-like glass elements—a reference to the bush foods that once nourished Aboriginals before the flora were permanently altered by nuclear testing in the region.

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