

Forbes

Frieze Week Brings The World Of Art To Los Angeles



... [+]*AFP via Getty Images*

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[The biggest week of art in Los Angeles](#) kicks off February 15, 2023, with a dizzying assortment of fairs, museum shows and gallery openings. Frieze Week—informally named for the international gold standard Frieze art fair series which debuted here in 2019—offers [more art than could possibly be seen](#) by one person in a month, let alone a week.

Where to begin? Start here.

Frieze Los Angeles

[Frieze Los Angeles](#) moves to the Santa Monica Airport for its fourth edition. Taking place February 16 through 19, the fair will host more than 120 of the world's leading galleries focused primarily on contemporary art.

Galerie Lelong & Co. will be debuting pastels by [Ficre Ghebreyesus \(1962–2012\)](#) who was born in Eritrea during its War of Independence, leaving as a teenaged refugee ultimately settling in New Haven, CT. His vibrant works meld figuration and abstraction, suggesting the nonlinear forms of dreams, memories, and storytelling. While Ghebreyesus's art was rarely exhibited during his lifetime—[virtually kept secret](#) despite earning his MFA degree from Yale in 2002—recent posthumous presentations of his work include the 59th Venice Biennale.

“I think the timing didn't yet feel right to him,” Lindsay Danckwerth, Director, Special Projects at Galerie Lelong & Co., told Forbes.com of Ghebreyesus' reluctance to show his work publicly. “He received encouragement from family and friends to exhibit, but he was also the head chef at a busy restaurant and had a young family. And, of course, he couldn't have known that his life would be cut short in middle age.”

The restaurant, [Caffe Adulis](#), was opened with his two brothers as an homage to Eritrean cuisine.

“There are so many things that Ficre was passionate about: cooking, painting, photography, music, yoga, gardening, politics. He had so much curiosity and capacity to appreciate and absorb new things and all of these skills and experiences and bodies of knowledge intersected and informed each other,” Danckwerth said. “Multiple reference points appear in a single work of art just as one dish would draw from multiple cuisines. For example, in the upcoming show we see him reference Eritrea and New York City in the same painting as if he's working through both meanings of home—his first home, and his new home.”

Galerie Lelong & Co.'s Frieze presentation displays many of the artist's early works for the first time and several include imagery from Eritrea: the mountains, the people, the architecture. There are wartime scenes directly referencing the Independence War with Ethiopia and other more abstract

images alluding to the war and the anxiety, loss and the displacement that follows.



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Another not to be missed booth at Frieze belongs to [Nicola Vassell Gallery](#) where a series of rare and new works by photographer Ming Smith will be on view. The pictures represent over fifty years of Smith's practice, each embodying her keen observation of the feminine spirit and some of the most celebrated artists of the 20th century like Grace Jones, Tina Turner and Alicia Keys.

Smith concurrently has an exhibition [of her work on view at the Museum of Modern Art](#) in New York.

Felix Art Fair

Modeled after the intimate hotel fair format popularized in the 1990s, [Felix Art Fair](#)'s fifth edition features 60 exhibitors from around the world. Taking place February 15 through 19 at the swanky Hollywood Roosevelt Hotel, Felix LA offers the city's collector-base intimate access and an informal setting allowing for more extended conversations among collectors, dealers and artists alike.

For 2023, the fair has extended dates giving visitors an extra day to browse. Once again, Felix LA will take over the Hollywood Roosevelt's guest rooms on the 10th and 11th floors and the cabanas surrounding the David Hockney pool—Hockney designed the pool and painted its mural.

LA Art Show

More than 120 global galleries, museums and non-profit arts organizations exhibiting painting, sculpture, works on paper, installation, photography, design, video and performance comprise [the LA Art Show February 15 through 19](#) inside the LA Convention Center West Hall. Even the most

sturdy of collectors will be challenged to cover its more than 180,000-square-foot of exhibition space for cutting edge contemporary art.

Los Angeles Gallery and Museum Shows



... [+]Photo by Jeff McLane

With only one day, or one hour, or one artist to see, make it Ernie Barnes (1938–2009) at UTA Artist Space (403 Foothill Road, Beverly Hills). [“Ernie Barnes: Where Music and Soul Live”](#) (February 15 through April 1) marks an important survey exploring the history and music scene in Los Angeles where the artist lived for many years. Works in the exhibition include over 30 well-known and never-before-seen paintings made between the 1970s up until 2008.

Barnes was an artist, actor, author and the first American professional athlete to become a noted painter—he played five seasons in the NFL during the early 1960s. His paintings are known for their elongated figures and celebration of Black joy, [a popular focus of artists today](#), but not so always.

“Ernie Barnes was way ahead of his time. Black joy is nothing new to him. He grew up in a tightknit community during segregation. Images of humor, dance, church choirs, youth playing, music and people enjoying themselves are what he liked to see and feel as well,” Luz Rodriquez, Trustee, Estate of

Ernie Barnes, told Forbes.com. “Besides the necessary ferocity of his painted football scenes, his art is positive and uplifting, rarely melancholy.”

Barnes is best known for his work *The Sugar Shack*, a dancing scene featured on the cover of Marvin Gaye’s album “I Want You” and during the closing credits of the TV sitcom “Good Times.” [The painting recently sold for \\$15.3 million at Christie’s.](#)

“The work of Ernie Barnes has always been popular and both the paintings and reproductions have been widely collected and on view in people’s homes for many years. An entire generation grew up seeing Ernie’s painting on TV and so many of us have known the iconic images on the many record covers of artists such as Marvin Gaye, The Crusaders, and Curtis Mayfield,” Zuzanna Ciolek, Director, UTA Artist Space, told Forbes.com. “I think it just took time for the art market to catch up with popular demand and I’m proud that we at UTA Artist Space have been able to contribute to Ernie finally gaining the recognition he deserves in the art world.”

On the occasion of “Where Music and Soul Live,” UTA Artist Space, Beverly Hills, will be transformed into an immersive club and music venue evoking the 1970s by PLAYLAB to house the energetic works. The exhibition at UTA Artist Space coincides with a co-presentation of Barnes’s work by Ortuzar Projects and Andrew Kreps at Frieze Los Angeles.

L.A.-based Iranian American artist Amir H. Fallah (b. 1979) debuts new paintings and sculptures inspired by [his heritage and anti-war sentiments](#) at [Shulamit Nazarian gallery](#) (616 N. La Brea Avenue, Los Angeles) from February 15 through March 25. The show runs concurrently with a solo exhibition at [the Fowler Museum](#) at the University of California Los Angeles.

Opening February 18 at the William Turner Gallery (2525 Michigan Ave. E-1 Santa Monica) and running through April 1, a show of new [Julian Lennon photography, “Atmospheria,”](#) highlights the drama of nature’s atmospheric forces, revealing his passion for the environment and commitment to its preservation.

The collection is suffused with a sense of wonder and awe at the majesty of natural phenomena. Each image simultaneously evokes feelings of sweeping grandeur and indefinable yearning.

Where to Stay in Los Angeles for Frieze Week



*Hotel Figueroa, Downtown, Los Angeles with Bella Gomez mural.
Tanveer Badal Photography / TANV*

Art, history and feminism combine at Hotel Figueroa. The largest commercial building funded by women for women when it opened in 1926 as a safe haven for solo female travelers prohibited from checking into most hotels without a male chaperone, the hotel was advertised as “an ideal stopping place for ladies unattended.” [Maude Bouldin](#) became the first-ever female managing director of a hotel in the U.S. here upon its opening.

Women-made art features across all spaces on the property, most prominently [a 14-story high custom Fig motif mural](#) on the exterior designed by Bella Gomez.

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