

CULTURE DESK

A LEONARDO DICAPRIO IMPERSONATOR, AND OTHER HIGHLIGHTS FROM FRIEZE NEW YORK

By Andrea K. Scott May 6, 2017

The artist Dora Budor—a young sculptor who tweaks the conventions of Hollywood—hired three look-alikes to impersonate the actor in his guises from various films, including “The Revenant.”

The collector Leonardo DiCaprio was yelling into his phone during the V.I.P. preview of Frieze New York, on Thursday, in an elegant tent on Randall’s Island. It was a far cry from the star’s low-key demeanor at the 2015 fair, when he took time out to eat a slice of pizza. That’s because pizza Leo was real, whereas pissed-off Leo is a work of art, a look-alike hired by the artist Dora Budor—a young sculptor who tweaks the conventions of Hollywood—to impersonate the actor as the manic stockbroker Jordan Belfort in “The Wolf of Wall Street.” Budor has two other DiCaprios working the tent: the scruffy guy from “The Revenant” and the con man from “Catch Me If You Can,” in his guise as a pilot. (What does it say about the art world that I found the sight of a young man in uniform far more out of place than that of a wild-eyed mountaineer with a walking stick?)

Budor’s project isn’t for sale; it was commissioned for the fair, which is open through Sunday, by the imaginative Italian curator Cecilia

Alemani, who oversees public art on the High Line. It's with noncommercial projects like this one, and with high-toned talks and symposia (Claudia Rankine is speaking on Sunday), that Frieze tries to divert attention away from the fact that one-stop shopping is its *raison d'être*. In fact, Budor's "Wall Street" Leo might have played even more strongly in seasons past, before the complexities of Brexit dampened the international-art feeding frenzy—there were fewer well-heeled Europeans than usual browsing the aisles at this year's preview. As for the complexities of American politics, this year's Frieze New York is diverting some of its profits to support the Arts Action Fund, which has been building bipartisan support for the National Endowment for the Arts, which, happily, no longer seems under threat of elimination. It is also supporting New York's youngest artists by offering deep discounts on student tickets, which have already sold out.

There is something absurd about the general public shelling out forty-six dollars for admission to an art fair, when hundreds of galleries in New York are open for free and even the most expensive museums charge about half that. But the thrill at Frieze of seeing so much art in such close quarters—about a thousand works from more than two hundred galleries—is undeniable.

There are surprises, too. The Parisian Galerie Meyer Oceanic Art devotes its entire booth to Papuan "spirit boards" from the late nineteenth century, remarkably intricate carved wooden totems that suggest surfboards for the soul. Right next door, the Daniel Blau gallery, from London, has a fascinating assortment of vintage American photographs, from NASA moon-landing images to a selection of black-and-white prints by Edward Wallowitch, the youngest artist to be included in Edward Steichen's "Family of Man" exhibition at MOMA (he was just seventeen). At Gallery

Luisotti, out of L.A., I discovered the brilliant septuagenarian German photographer Ursula Schulz-Dornburg, whose images of Armenian bus shelters inject a wit and humanism into the conceptual approach to vernacular architecture pioneered by her better-known peers, Bernd and Hilla Becher. The contributions of Lower East Side galleries are especially strong, from Canada gallery's facsimile of the Brooklyn apartment of the artist Marc Hundley, cozily outfitted with works by other artists, to Simone Subal, who won a prize for the best booth by a young gallery, for her solo presentation of the Pop artist Kiki Kogelnik, who died in 1997. (Reclamation of overlooked artists emerges as a general theme of Frieze this year, no doubt spurred by their relatively affordable prices.)

The prize for the best established gallery went to P.P.O.W., which was honored for its long-standing commitment to artists who capture a hardscrabble side of New York City that feels a world away from the art fair. Case in point: Anton van Dalen's re-creation of his 1987 sculpture the size and shape of a car, which is home to a flock of live pigeons.

Andrea K. Scott is the art editor of Goings On About Town and has profiled the artists Cory Arcangel and Sarah Sze for the magazine.

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