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Twelve reasons not to miss this weekend's Art Fair 14C in Jersey City

By: **TRIS MCCALL** | November 9, 2022

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In 2019 and 2020, the [Art Fair 14C](https://artfair14c.com/) (<https://artfair14c.com/>) was held at the Hyatt on the Jersey City waterfront. By 2021, it had grown large enough to justify a move to the mammoth Glass Gallery at MANA Contemporary. In 2022, it has continued to expand. This weekend, the state's biggest art event opens in one of Hudson County's biggest structures: the Jersey City Armory at 678 Montgomery St.

The Fair, organized by founder and director Robinson Holloway and deputy directors Gretchen von Koenig and ace abstract painter Donna Kessinger, will bring hundreds of artists from around the country to the New Deal-era building on the border between McGinley Square and Journal Square.

If that sounds intimidating, in practice, it isn't. Art Fair 14C has a well-earned reputation for friendliness. Because it gathers so many players under one roof, attending a Fair is probably the quickest way to learn the contours of the New Jersey art landscape. Many of the state's most creative organizations and collectives will have booths at 14C, including MANA Contemporary (they'll be at C26), Jersey City arts incubators ART150 (C19) and Elevator (S10), the sprawling and multifaceted East Orange studio complex Manufacturers Village (C29), the offbeat Collingswood gallery MK Apothecary (A28) and the visual art departments at New Jersey City University (A11) and St. Peter's University (B8).

And although Art Fair 14C boasts exhibitors from Greece, Brazil, Australia and other distant locations, this is now and likely will always be a New Jersey event. Most of the participating artists come to us from



Monique Sarfity's "Fading," created with computer keys.

somewhere between the Delaware and the Hudson, and show their work in galleries and museums in the Garden State. Here are 12 reasons to splurge for a \$20 day pass (10 bucks if you're a student) or \$30 "date night" tickets for couples on Saturday night, or even \$100 for festival access all weekend, including the VIP reception on Thursday night.

There may (or may not) be artists in the Garden State as good as **Valerie Huhn** (booth S3) of Flemington. But nobody is quite as unsettling. Huhn affixes colored fingerprints on little circles of acetate, makes tacks out of them, and drives hundreds of these pins into ordinary objects such as shoes, books and lamps. The results speak in an eerie voice about surveillance and policing, identity and loss of individuality, madness, monomania and grief. Oh, and they look incredibly badass, too.

Andrea McKenna (A1) of Fort Lee is drawn to the bardo: the veil between life and death. Her spectral images of female faces are painted in rust red and institutional blue on burlap, attached to pieces of driftwood and hung like narrow tapestries. At last year's Art Fair, McKenna decorated her exhibition space like a medium's den. No word on whether she conducted a seance there, but you can expect her to channel another delicious chill in 2022.



Valerie Huhn's "How the Normal Eye Can Be Deceived."

Hudson County artist **Megan Klim** (A2) uses encaustic, wood, plaster cloth, wire, colored pencils, actual rust and other humble materials to create pieces suggestive of strange alien machinery. Some of her works are grid-like and as inscrutable as computer chips. Others seem like cages for strange beasts, or ventilation systems on spaceships made of cotton and wax. Klim is a master of texture, but that doesn't mean that she's here to make you comfortable. On the contrary.

Golden halos ring the heads of the African-American women in the mixed-media assemblages by Jersey City's **Danielle Scott** (A19). She brings us faces ennobled by struggle, and families in scenes simultaneously reminiscent of Renaissance paintings and Southern U.S. folk art. Cotton, nooses, crosses, rusted washboards: the shadow of slavery and segregation falls heavily across her work. It's our own checkered history that Scott is showing us, distilling beauty from our national shame.



Danielle Scott's "Black Girl, I Know How Much It Hurts."

If you caught [the Morris Museum overview of New Jersey street art](https://www.njarts.net/morris-museum-exhibition-spotlights-contradictions-of-modern-street-art-scene/) (<https://www.njarts.net/morris-museum-exhibition-spotlights-contradictions-of-modern-street-art-scene/>), you know all about **Mustart** (A8). He's the fearsome aerosol virtuoso who has been lighting up Garden State city walls and underpasses for years. His style is unmistakably his own, and

he can do things with a spray-paint canister that few others can manage. Mustart juxtaposes melting color and swirling lines with images of remarkable precision and detail. His pieces on canvas are every bit as astonishing.

Mosaic is an ancient form of art, but nothing about the assemblages of **Monique Sarfity** (B12) of Morristown looks antiquated. Instead, she puzzles together hand-cut shards of glass and other re-purposed materials (computer keys!), and fashions urban street scenes, bridges, animals and striking faces of women with thousand-mile stares. Sarfity is a steady hand with traditional ceramics, too, but even in her mandalas, some of which are fit for a Byzantine emperor, her restless urge to experiment is always manifest.

Don't be surprised if you mistake the textile pieces of **Lisa Lackey** (B27) for paintings. The Maplewood artist assembles strips of fabric with uncanny precision, bringing to life kitchen tables, grocery carts and the busy bottoms of overloaded sinks. Though her scenes are generally domestic, her interiors are subtly complicated: They're filled with dividing lines and haunted by the ghosts of those who might have once lived there. In other words, they're just like home.

Boonton-based **Edward Fausty** (B16) takes — and prints — photographs that are as lush and immersive as a masterpiece in oil and as dramatic as a Turnpike ballad. That's true whether he has turned his camera on the yellowed, crumbling walls of old warehouses or the verdant tangle of the deep Jersey woods. The night sky over Fausty's New Jersey is always full of information: otherworldly colors, shadows of trees, brilliant and all-seeing stars.



Modúpé Odusoté's "Untitled."

Modúpé Odusoté (C20) comes to 14C from Somerset County, but her Nigerian Yoruba heritage motivates every brushstroke she commits to canvas. Women, rendered in bright acrylic color, leap at the viewer from her works; they've got personality, attitude and sensuality. Sometimes they're up in arms, too, marching in solidarity, moving together toward a collective goal. Sometimes they're by themselves, eyes shut, heads tilted, lost in a colorful reverie.

Jersey City loves **Guillermo Bublik** (C21). His magic marker drawings on paper, full of fields of bright color, sinuous, hypnotic lines and implied motion, have popped up in shows all over town. Lately, he's taken to collaboration, including a series with the designer Aaron Dunkel that amplifies the strengths of both artists. He contributed amazingly kinetic canvases of squiggle-lined athletes to a local show about baseball — even though he's not a sports follower. He's overflowing with ideas, and up for anything.

Technically, **BARC the Dog** (S10) isn't an artist. The snarling blue-gray mutt is, instead, an artist's avatar. He's the creation of painter, sculptor and mischief-maker Alexander Lansang, spinner of zonked tales and inventor of imaginary machines. Lansang has created an impossibly detailed world for BARC to inhabit, and his expanded universe is elaborated in comic strips, View-Master slides and unsparingly detailed acrylics on canvas. Fine art isn't supposed to make you laugh out loud, but don't tell Lansang that. He just might sic BARC on you.

Many artists represent Monmouth County as a land of hedonism. Not **Dorie Dahlberg** (C27). The Long Branch photographer captures a moodier, mistier, more engrossing Shore, full of long, unobstructed views of ocean haze and deserted bends on the Boardwalk. She's part of a "Salon des Refusés" of artists who weren't directly selected for the fair, alongside paper wizard **Eileen Ferara** and the imaginative experimental photographer **Susan Evans Grove**. They deserve their own booths in 2023.



Lisa Lackey's "Grocery Aisle."



BARC the Dog's "Triple Leopard."

The Fair's hours are 1-7 p.m. Nov. 11 and noon-6 p.m. Nov. 12-13, with VIP access an hour earlier each day and from 6 to 9 p.m. on Nov. 12, and a "Date Night reception" Nov. 12 from 6 to 9 p.m. No admission charge, Nov. 11 from 1 to 7 p.m., though tickets are still required. There will also be a VIP opening reception, Nov. 10 from 6 to 9 p.m. For information, visit artfair14c.com (<https://artfair14c.com/>).

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