

# 25 Art Exhibitions to View in NYC This Weekend



An installation view of the Frick Collection's "Zurbarán's Jacob and His Twelve Sons: Paintings From Auckland Castle," which closes on April 22. Michael Bodycomb

*Our guide to new art shows and some that will be closing soon.*

**‘TARSILA DO AMARAL: INVENTING MODERN ART IN BRAZIL’** at the Museum of Modern Art (through June 3). The subtitle is no overstatement: In the early 1920s, first in Paris and then back home in São Paulo, Brazil, this painter really did lay the groundwork for the coming of modernism in Latin America’s most populous nation. Tired of the European pretenders in Brazil’s art academies, Tarsila (who was always called by her first name) began to intermingle Western, African and indigenous motifs into flowing, biomorphic paintings, and to theorize a new national culture fueled by the principle of antropofagia, or “cannibalism.” Along with spare, assured drawings of Rio and the Brazilian countryside, [this belated but very welcome show](#) assembles Tarsila’s three

most important paintings, including the classic “Abaporu” (1928): a semi-human nude with a spindly nose and a comically swollen foot. (Jason Farago)

212-708-9400, [moma.org](http://moma.org)

**‘BEFORE THE FALL: GERMAN AND AUSTRIAN ART OF THE 1930S’** at Neue Galerie (through May 28). [An exhibition in the form of a chokehold](#), the third of the Neue Galerie’s recent shows on art and German politics pushes into the years of dictatorship, with paintings, drawings and photographs by artists deemed “degenerate” by the Nazis — as well as by those who joined the party or who thought they could shut out the catastrophe. (You will know the dissidents, like Max Beckmann and Oskar Kokoschka; the fascists and sellouts are less known.) Gazing at ornery still lifes of dolls and dead flowers, or dreamy landscapes in imitation of an earlier German Romanticism, you may ask to what degree artists are responsible for the times in which they work. But then you see “Self-Portrait in the Camp,” by the Jewish German painter Felix Nussbaum — made between his escape from a French internment camp and his deportation to Auschwitz — and you know that there can be no pardon. (Farago)

212-628-6200, [neuegalerie.org](http://neuegalerie.org)

**‘THOMAS COLE’S JOURNEY: ATLANTIC CROSSING’** at the Metropolitan Museum of Art (through May 13). The [Met’s exhibition](#) of the nation’s first major landscape artist and progenitor of what would be called the Hudson River School is gorgeous, politically right for right now and a lesson in the mutability of art history. Politically, Cole’s art is conservative, but it’s also work that challenges and complicates that term. And this show is precisely about complication. Just as Cole is most realistically and revealingly seen and judged against the background of his time, so is the exhibition, coming as it does in this confounding MAGA moment. (Holland Cotter)

212-535-7710, [metmuseum.org](http://metmuseum.org)

**‘DIAMOND MOUNTAINS: TRAVEL AND NOSTALGIA IN**



**KOREAN ART**’ at the Metropolitan Museum of Art (through May 20). Mount Kumgang, or the “Diamond Mountain,” lies about 90 miles from Pyeongchang’s Olympic Stadium, but it’s a world away: The august, multi-peaked range lies in North Korea and has been impossible to visit for most of the past seven decades. Featuring stunning loans from the National Museum of Korea and other institutions in Seoul, South Korea, this [melancholy beauty of a show](#) assembles three centuries’ worth of paintings of the Diamond Mountain range, and explores how landscapes intermingle nostalgia, nationalism, legend and regret. The unmissable prizes here are the painstaking paintings of Jeong Seon, the 18th-century artist who is perhaps the greatest of all Korean painters. And later impressions of the mountains, including a blotchy vision from the Paris-based modernist Lee Ungno, give a deeper historical weight to very live geopolitics. (Farago)

[212-535-7710](tel:212-535-7710), [metmuseum.org](http://metmuseum.org)

**‘THE FACE OF DYNASTY: ROYAL CRESTS FROM WESTERN CAMEROON**’ at the Metropolitan Museum of Art (through Sept. 3). In the African wing, [a show of just four commanding wooden crowns](#) constitutes a blockbuster in its own right. These massive wooden crests — in the form of stylized human faces with vast vertical brows — served as markers of royal power among the Bamileke peoples of the Cameroonian grasslands, and the Met’s recent acquisition of an 18th-century specimen is joined here by three later examples, each featuring sharply protruding cheeks, broadly smiling mouths and brows incised with involute geometric patterns. Ritual objects like these were decisive for the development of Western modernist painting, and a Cameroonian crest was even shown at MoMA in the 1930s, as a “sculpture” divorced from ethnography. But these crests had legal and diplomatic significance as well as aesthetic appeal, and their anonymous African creators had a political understanding of art not so far from our own. (Farago)

[212-535-7710](tel:212-535-7710), [metmuseum.org](http://metmuseum.org)

**‘THE JIM HENSON EXHIBITION**’ at the Museum of the Moving Image. The rainbow connection has been established in Astoria, Queens,

where this museum has opened [a new permanent wing](#) devoted to the career of America's great puppeteer, who was born in Mississippi in 1936 and died, too young, in 1990. Henson began presenting the short TV program "Sam and Friends" before he was out of his teens; one of its characters, the soft-faced Kermit, was fashioned from his mother's old coat and would not mature into a frog for more than a decade. The influence of early variety television, with its succession of skits and songs, runs through "Sesame Street" and "The Muppet Show," though Henson also spent the late 1960s crafting peace-and-love documentaries and prototyping a psychedelic nightclub. Young visitors will delight in seeing Big Bird, Elmo, Miss Piggy and the Swedish Chef; adults can dig deep into sketches and story boards and rediscover some old friends. (Farago)

718-784-0077, [movingimage.us](http://movingimage.us)

**'PETER HUJAR: SPEED OF LIFE'** at the Morgan Library and Museum (through May 20). It's hard to say which is more surprising: that Peter Hujar's photographs of underground life in New York in the 1970s and '80s have found their way to the Morgan Library and Museum, or that the classically minded institution has become unbuttoned enough to exhibit them in [this heartbreaker of a show](#). Hujar (1934-87) lived most of his professional life in the East Village and, through studio portraits and cityscapes, captured a downtown that has since been all but erased by time, gentrification and AIDS. Although he was little known by the mainstream art world in his lifetime, this show, startlingly tender, reveals him to be one of the major American photographers of the late 20th century. (Cotter)

212-685-0008, [themorgan.org](http://themorgan.org)

**'THE INCOMPLETE ARAKI'** at the Museum of Sex (through Aug. 31). It remains a bit of a tourist trap, but the for-profit Museum of Sex is making its most serious bid yet for artistic credibility with a [two-floor exhibition](#) of Japan's most prominent and controversial photographer. Nobuyoshi Araki has spent decades shooting Tokyo streetscapes, blossoming flowers and, notably, women trussed up in the baroque rope bondage technique known as kinbaku-bi, or "the beauty of tight binding." Given the venue, it's natural that this show concentrates on the erotic side

of his art, but less lustful visitors can discover an ambitious cross section of Mr. Araki's omnivorous photography, including his lastingly moving "Sentimental Journey," picturing his beloved wife, Yoko, from honeymoon to funeral. (Farago)

212-689-6337, [museumofsex.com](http://museumofsex.com)

**'ZOE LEONARD: SURVEY'** at the Whitney Museum of American Art (through June 10). Some shows cast a spell. Zoe Leonard's [reverberant retrospective](#) does. Physically ultra-austere, all white walls with a fiercely edited selection of objects — photographs of clouds taken from airplane windows; a mural collaged from vintage postcards; a scattering of empty fruit skins, each stitched closed with needle and thread — it's an extended essay about travel, time passing, political passion and the ineffable daily beauty of the world. (Cotter)

212-570-3600, [whitney.org](http://whitney.org)

**'LIKE LIFE: SCULPTURE, COLOR AND THE BODY (1300 TO NOW)'** at the Met Breuer (through July 22). Taking a second run at the splashy theme-show extravaganza, the Met Breuer has greater success. [This one](#) is certainly more coherent since it centers entirely on the body and its role in art, science, religion and entertainment. It gathers together some 120 sculptures, dolls, artist's dummies, effigies, crucifixes and automatons. Many are rarely lent and may not return any time soon. (Roberta Smith)

212-731-1675, [metmuseum.org](http://metmuseum.org)

**'THE LONG RUN'** at the Museum of Modern Art (through Nov. 4). The museum upends its cherished Modern narrative of ceaseless progress by mostly young (white) men. Instead we see [works by artists 45 and older](#) who have just kept on keeping on, regardless of attention or reward, sometimes saving the best for last. Art here is an older person's game, a pursuit of a deepening personal vision over innovation. Winding through 17 galleries, the installation is alternatively visually or thematically acute and altogether inspiring. (Smith)

212-708-9400, [moma.org](http://moma.org)

**‘SALLY MANN: A THOUSAND CROSSINGS’** at the National Gallery of Art (through May 28). All of [this photographer’s strengths are on view](#) in this deftly chosen and admirably displayed exhibition in Washington covering most of her 40-plus-year career. The 108 images here (47 of which have never been exhibited before) provide a provocative tour through Ms. Mann’s accomplishments and serve as a record of exploration — into the past, into this country’s and photography’s history, stamped with a powerful vision. (Vicki Goldberg)

202-737-4215, [nga.gov](http://nga.gov)

**‘MILLENNIUM: LOWER MANHATTAN IN THE 1990S’** at the Skyscraper Museum (through April). This plucky [Battery Park institution](#) transports us back to the years of Rudy Giuliani, Lauryn Hill and 128-kilobit modems to reveal the enduring urban legacy of a decade bookended by recession and terror. In the wake of the 1987 stock market crash, landlords in the financial district rezoned their old skyscrapers for residential occupancy, and more than 20 towers were declared landmarks, including the ornate Standard Oil building at 26 Broadway and the home of Delmonico’s at [56 Beaver Street](#). Battery Park City flowered; yuppies priced out of TriBeCa came down to Wall Street; a new Guggenheim, designed by a fresh-from-Bilbao Frank Gehry, nearly arose by South Street Seaport. From this distance, the 1990s can seem almost like a golden age, not least given that, more than 16 years after Sept. 11, construction at the underwhelming new World Trade Center is still not finished. (Farago)

[skyscraper.org](http://skyscraper.org)

**‘OUTLIERS AND AMERICAN VANGUARD ART’** at the National Gallery of Art, Washington (through May 13). Tracing the interaction of taught and untaught artists over the past century, [this exhibition](#) tackles an impossibly immense subject and starts stronger than it finishes. But it presents quantities of stunning art in all mediums, revealing the vastness of American creativity and the many attempts by museums to do it justice. It proves more forcefully than ever that the distinction between the works of the self-taught and that of the professionals has outlived its relevance. (Smith)



202-737-4215, [nga.gov](http://nga.gov)

**‘REBEL SPIRITS: ROBERT F. KENNEDY AND MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.’** at the New-York Historical Society (through May 20). Featuring stark black-and-white photographs of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and Robert F. Kennedy, as well as faded ephemera that memorialized them, [this exhibition](#) reveals the various ways in which the lives of these two influential figures were juxtaposed. It also traces the circuitous routes that belatedly pointed Kennedy toward the more incendiary goals King set first regarding civil rights, poverty and the Vietnam War. (Sam Roberts)

212-873-3400, [nyhistory.org](http://nyhistory.org)

**‘ALBERTO SAVINIO’** at the Center for Italian Modern Art (through June 23). The paintings of this Italian polymath have long been overshadowed by the brilliant work of his older brother, Giorgio de Chirico. [This show of more than 20 canvases](#) from the late 1920s to the mid-30s may not change that, but the mix of landscapes with bright patterns and several eerie portraits based on family photographs are surprisingly of the moment. (Smith)

646-370-3596, [italianmodernart.org](http://italianmodernart.org)

**‘SCENES FROM THE COLLECTION’** at the Jewish Museum. After a surgical renovation to its grand pile on Fifth Avenue, the Jewish Museum has reopened its third-floor galleries with [a rethought, refreshed display of its permanent collection](#), which intermingles 4,000 years of Judaica with modern and contemporary art by Jews and gentiles alike — Mark Rothko, Lee Krasner, Nan Goldin, Cindy Sherman and the excellent young Nigerian draftswoman Ruby Onyinyechi Amanze. The works are shown in a nimble, nonchronological suite of galleries, and some of its century-spanning juxtapositions are bracing; others feel reductive, even diletantish. But always, the Jewish Museum conceives of art and religion as interlocking elements of a story of civilization, commendably open to new influences and new interpretations. (Farago)

212-423-3200, [thejewishmuseum.org](http://thejewishmuseum.org)

**‘STEPHEN SHORE’** at the Museum of Modern Art (through May 28). Not staged, not lit, not cropped, not retouched, the color photographs of this American master are feats of dispassionate representation. This [must-see retrospective](#) — curated with real wit by Quentin Bajac, MoMA’s photo chief — opens with Mr. Shore’s teenage snaps at Andy Warhol’s Factory. Then it turns to the road-trip imagery of “American Surfaces” and the steely precision of “Uncommon Places” — landmarks in photographic history that scandalized an establishment convinced the camera could find beauty solely in black-and-white. Mr. Shore is revealed not only as a peripatetic explorer but also a restless experimenter with new photographic technologies, from stereoscopic slide shows to print-on-demand books. The only flaw is his recent embrace of Instagram, allowing museumgoers to lazily flick through images on MoMA’s smudged iPads. New technologies are great, but not at the expense of concentration.

(Farago)

212-708-9400, [moma.org](http://moma.org)

**‘2018 TRIENNIAL: SONGS FOR SABOTAGE’** at the New Museum (through May 27). This Bowery museum’s fourth triennial exhibition, [“Songs for Sabotage,”](#) is the smallest, tightest edition of the show so far. Immaculately installed, it’s also the best looking. There’s a lot of good work, which is global in scope and not by a list of prevetted up-and-comers. (Zhenya Machneva, Dalton Paula and Daniela Ortiz are artists to look for.) Less admirably, it’s a safe and unchallenging show. Despite a politically demanding time, it acts as if ambiguity and discretion were automatically virtues. In an era when the market rules, it puts its money on the kind of art — easily tradable, displayable, palette-tickling objects — that art fairs suck up. (Cotter)

212-219-1222, [newmuseum.org](http://newmuseum.org)

**‘DAH N VO: TAKE MY BREATH AWAY’** at the Guggenheim Museum (through May 9). This is the [first museum survey](#) of the Vietnam-born Danish artist, who draws his art from his life and the history he has lived through, recycling family mementos, found letters and artifacts, as well as random materials, into a very spare, poetic and astute study of power,



colonialism, and the lives of refugees and of objects. The Guggenheim's rotunda looks nearly empty at times, and there are lots of labels to read, but it is ultimately worth it. (Smith)

212-423-3500, [guggenheim.org](http://guggenheim.org)

**'GRANT WOOD: AMERICAN GOTHIC AND OTHER FABLES'** at the Whitney Museum of American Art (through June 10). [This well-done survey](#) begins with the American Regionalist's little-known efforts as an Arts and Crafts designer and touches just about every base. It includes his mural studies, book illustrations and most of his best-known paintings — including “American Gothic” and “The Midnight Ride of Paul Revere.” Best of all are Wood's smooth undulant landscapes with their plowmen and spongy trees and infectious serenity. (Smith)

212-570-3600, [whitney.org](http://whitney.org)

## Last Chance

**'BIRDS OF A FEATHER: JOSEPH CORNELL'S HOMAGE TO JUAN GRIS'** at the Metropolitan Museum of Art (through April 15). This [small, hyper-specialized, stunning exhibition](#) brings together a grand total of only 13 works — a dozen shadow boxes by Joseph Cornell, the Queens-based assemblage artist, and the Cubist masterwork that he cited as their direct inspiration, Gris's “Man at the Café” (1914). It might seem like a surprising obsession for Cornell, who was not a painter nor a Frenchman. He and Gris never met. But Cornell was deeply moved by Gris, the overlooked, tag-along third wheel in the Cubist movement that also included Picasso and Braque, and the show succeeds in tracking the fluttery ways of artistic inspiration. (Deborah Solomon)

212-535-7710, [metmuseum.org](http://metmuseum.org)

**'MARKUS BRUNETTI: FACADES — GRAND TOUR'** at Yossi Milo Gallery (through April 21). [Micro and macro collide](#) to visceral, even wondrous effect in these large, astoundingly detailed photographs of European cathedrals and churches, most dating from the 11th to the 14th centuries. Stitched together from hundreds of small digital images, the photographs ignore the laws of perspectival recession. The structures are

implacably frontal, powerful expressions of fervent religious belief that also convey how they once sat, and sometimes still do, above their town and cities like large, protective beasts. (Smith)

212-414-0370, [yossimilo.com](http://yossimilo.com)

**‘THE VIETNAM WAR: 1945-1975’** at the New-York Historical Society (through April 22). In contrast to the PBS series “The Vietnam War,” [this exhibition](#) delivers historical data, a lot of it, quick and dirty, through labels, film and audio clips and objects, some of which fall under a broad definition of art. Along with paintings by contemporary Vietnamese artists, there’s graffiti-style drawings on combat helmets and Zippo lighters, and period design in album covers and protest posters. Words and images work together in murals labeled “Home Front” and “War Front” that put you in the middle of the war’s primary issues and events. (Cotter)

212-873-3400, [nyhistory.org](http://nyhistory.org)

**‘ZURBARÁN’S JACOB AND HIS TWELVE SONS: PAINTINGS FROM AUCKLAND CASTLE’** at the Frick Collection (through April 22). More devout than Velázquez, more shadowy than Murillo, Francisco de Zurbarán was little known outside Spain until the mid-19th century, when Manet and his friends found the seeds of modernism in his frisky, open brushwork and streamlined form. The Frick is now showing a [baker’s dozen of the Spaniard’s biblical portraits](#), of an aged, hunched Jacob and the sons who would become the founders of the Twelve Tribes of Israel, with most of the paintings on loan from a castle that until recently belonged to the Church of England. The gents pose in a startling variety of crisp, supple fabrics, whose glamour or grittiness echoes Jacob’s foretelling of their destinies in Genesis. Two are especially compelling: Judah, child No. 4, decked out in a fur-trimmed coat and vamping alongside a kindly lion, and Joseph, who forgoes the Technicolor dreamcoat for a blue sash and a belt stitched with gold. (Farago)

212-288-0700, [frick.org](http://frick.org)