

# Outsider Art Fair 2021 Part II: The Seven Curations

Alexandria Deters

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It made more sense to write the review of the Outsider Art Fair (OAF) in two parts this year. I have introduced some standout artists and their works accessed online in Part I of this year's OAF review. The second part summarizes the seven curated exhibitions that I was able to visit in person throughout New York City.

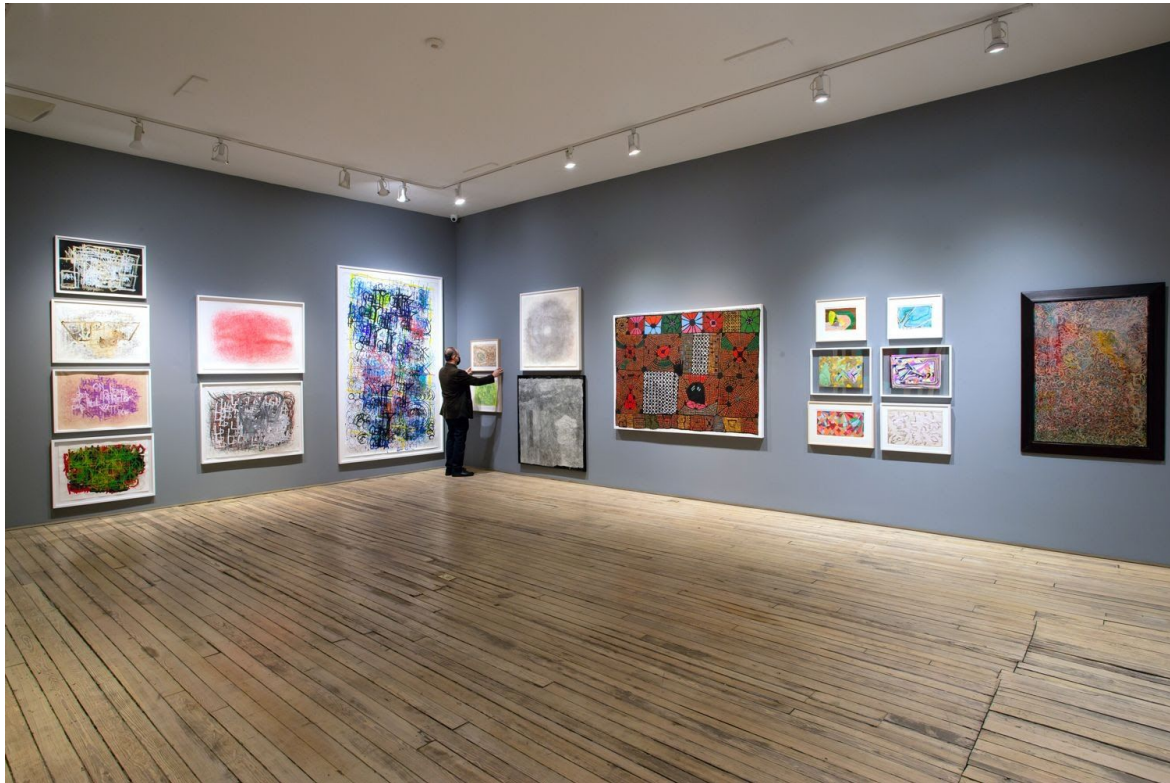


Paul Edlin, *House of Collage*, 1992, Postage stamp fragments on board, 18 x 14 inches

The first curated space I visited was *Figure Out: Abstraction in Self-Taught Art* presented at Andrew Edlin Gallery located on the historic Bowery street in lower Manhattan. I can always count on Andrew Edlin Gallery to put on fantastic exhibitions featuring recognized and newly discovered Outsider artists. Their presentation for *Figure Out* was a good example of the standard of excellence I have come to expect and see from them. The installation of ink drawings by Daniel Gonçalves was

like a wall of televisions stuck on the Phillips Pattern test card. Gonçalves's works are revitalization and reimagining of this classic American trope, a vintage reminder of the ending of television programs for the night. Nearby were framed delicately collaged

works by Andrew Edlin's late uncle, Paul Edlin, interictally cut stamps arranged into geometric forms, his works kept catching my eye. An example of traditional Outsider Art at its finest, the discovery of an artist within your own family tree.



After leaving *Figure Out*, I headed across the street to Salon 94 where a group presentation *Semiotic Terrain: Art from Australia and New Zealand* was showing. The room was filled with works in cool and calm colors, with eye-catching large abstract works on the large wall you first encounter when walking in off the street. The large brown painting with swooping lines ringing out by Mantua Nangala completely pulled me in. Her dreamscapes painted in naturally occurring colors and hues, creating a hypnotizing view, makes the viewer feel like they are falling into her work, into her dream.

*Daniel Johnston: Psychedelic Drawings* curated by Gary Panter, took place at the famous Electric Lady Studios. I had never been to the recording studio founded by Jimi Hendrix, and making the trek on that cold evening was worth it just to have access to this wonderful NYC landmark. The late artist and musician Daniel Johnston's works, drawings on printer size paper, crude, hilarious, full of angst and irony; a visual representation of his music.



Seeing the musician Johnston's artwork on display in the recording studio felt like his work and practice was coming full circle. The entire curated space was so perfect with layered meanings, it could have been a Johnston song.

*The Realm of Minnie Evans* was a beautiful solo presentation of works by Evans. I was most drawn to the elegant antique frames used for the works and the salon style of hanging, one group in arranged in a pyramid-like shape. It was seeing the works in this format that I truly appreciated Evans's bright surrealist/folk drawings.



Thornton Dial, *Tearing Down the Walls*, 1998  
Cloth, carpet, photograph collage, and enamel on wood 61 x 50 in, Courtesy of Andrew Edlin Gallery

*The Realm of Minnie Evans* presented beautifully framed works and they were arranged in a pyramid-like shape, in a salon style. It was seeing the works in this format that I truly appreciated Evans's folk-like drawings.



Tom Duncan, *S.I.P.P. Study #3*, 2018,  
Mixed media, 6½ x 2½ x 7 inches

*Small Worlds* was filled with tiny works that could fit even in the tiniest New York apartment. On a small shelf was an intricate metal sculpture, *S.I.P.P. Study #3*, 2018 by Tom Duncan. I giggled with delight when the two nude figures' penises become erect when the mechanism was wound up. Having fun with art is such pure joy. And this work was not just beautiful but entertaining.

The last space I visited was *To Be Human: The Figure in Self-Taught Art* at Hirschl & Adler. The exhibition is an example of the museum-quality work one always comes to expect from the gallery.

The large violent work by Purvis Young, *Untitled*, automatically strikes the viewer as they walk in, but it was a small work in the glass display case that captured my eye.

Accurately titled *Abducted*, 2017, it was an intricately carved ostrich egg by Gil Batle, with an alien scene that could have come from any case that FBI Agent Special Dana Scully and Fox Mulder may have worked on. Well, even if I can't own this beautiful work, at least I can go home and watch an episode of *The X Files*, and pretend.