

# The Best Booths at Independent New York 2022, from Personal Abstraction to a Response to the Guston Controversy




BY MAXIMILIANO DURÓN  May 5, 2022 5:15pm

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vanessa german, *Epigenetic 1; 2022*.  
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With more than 60 galleries participating, the Independent art fair in New York opened to VIPs on Thursday morning. The fair, known for its sleek presentations by midsize and emerging galleries, was well attended during its first few hours, and dealers reported early sales. This year, Independent, which runs through Sunday, May 8, has returned to its home at Spring Studios in Tribeca, one of the four anchor fairs for the newly launched New York Art Week, which has also partnered with museums, galleries, and auction houses throughout the city to align their programming.

Below, a look at the best art on view at the fair.

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## Devin Troy Strother at Broadway



Photo : Maximiliano Durón/ARTnews

The Los Angeles–based artist Devin Troy Strother is showing a suite of new paintings and sculpture that respond to the 2020 **controversy** surrounding the postponement of a Philip Guston retrospective. (Initially delayed until 2024, a largely unchanged version of the show has just opened at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.) Coming a few months after the Black Lives Matter protests that swept the world in the wake of George Floyd’s murder, the decision centered around works by Guston that included images of figures donning the hoods of the Ku Klux Klan. Some claimed that the decision was ill-advised, given that museums were essentially underestimating their viewers. Strother’s work in part takes up this reading.

In *Quiet Riot* (all works 2022), Strother depicts a mass burning of KKK members and Confederate flags, while in *The Visit (My New Favorite Painting)*, we see two Black figures looking at a painting of a lynched Klan member held by another Black person, perhaps Strother himself. Recurring through these works is a lit cigarette, which features prominently in several of Guston’s works, most notably his iconic 1969 work *The Studio*, in which a hooded artist paints a self-portrait. In Strother’s self-portrait *I Love Living in the City*, we also see him in the studio taking a drag as he stares at a canvas of a cityscape. In front of him is a messy table of paints, globs of which protrude from the canvas.

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