

COOL HUNTING

The Artis Shuk at NADA NYC

NADA debuts its first NYC art fair with a rooftop marketplace

by Perrin Drumm
on 09 May 2012



Popping up in Miami during Art Basel for nearly a decade now, New York-based NADA (New Art Dealers Alliance) brought the show closer to home this year. The non-profit wisely timed their alternative art fair to run alongside the NYC debut of Frieze, London's major art event that drew dealers and collectors from all over the world to Randall's Island for the first time. NADA offered a great antidote to the frenzy of Frieze, taking place in a four-story building in Chelsea that made good use of the rooftop with a Phaidon book booth, coffee shop and a showing from Artis—a nonprofit that supports contemporary Israeli artists.



Instead of presenting work in a booth, Artis hosted The Artis Shuk, a playful rendition of traditional Middle Eastern marketplaces, or shuks (also known as souks). Works from more than 20 artists were available for sale, but unlike in the gallery booths at the rest of the fair, prices were listed on small cards displayed next to each piece. Most were less than \$500 and all the proceeds went to the Artis Grant Program, which awards more than \$125,000 to artists and nonprofits every year.



The undeniable standout at the shuk was an untitled sculpture of a glass of Turkish coffee sliced in half by [Gal Weinstein](#). Turkish coffee, known in Israel as "mud" coffee, is an iconic Middle Eastern image. "Coffee can act as an invitation to a conversation or as reprieve from routine. Shown using the scientific visual language of a cross section, it also speaks to the gap between the efforts to analyze the Middle East and its complex reality," explains Weinstein.



Another highlight, "Rolodex" by [Zipora Fried](#) is a real Rolodex the artist found. Fried went through it page by page and covered up all the names and numbers with archival tape, emphasizing the sense of loss that a discarded history of a person's entire network would represent. Fried's work often features covered faces as well as "drawings so dense they rebuff any illustrative meaning" and sculptures that are altered to deprive them of their functionality.



Working in a somewhat similar vein, [Naomi Safron Hon](#) seems to revel in making objects useless. "Straining, Mixing, Grating" and "Cement Grater", two of her clay-clotted kitchen tools, were on display at the shuk. Hon uses these objects to symbolize how politically-motivated creation and destruction impact our daily lives, but on a more basic level, the delightful way the clay oozes out of the implements is aesthetically quite satisfying.



"D.I.Y: Fold Your Own Skull" is a kit by [Itamar Jobani](#) that you can use to construct a 3D skull from paper or plastic sheets. The pieces come pre-cut and pre-scored—all you need is glue. Jobani didn't just want to make a cute rainy day project, he wanted to engage the buyer in a hands-on, art-making process.