

FAIRS

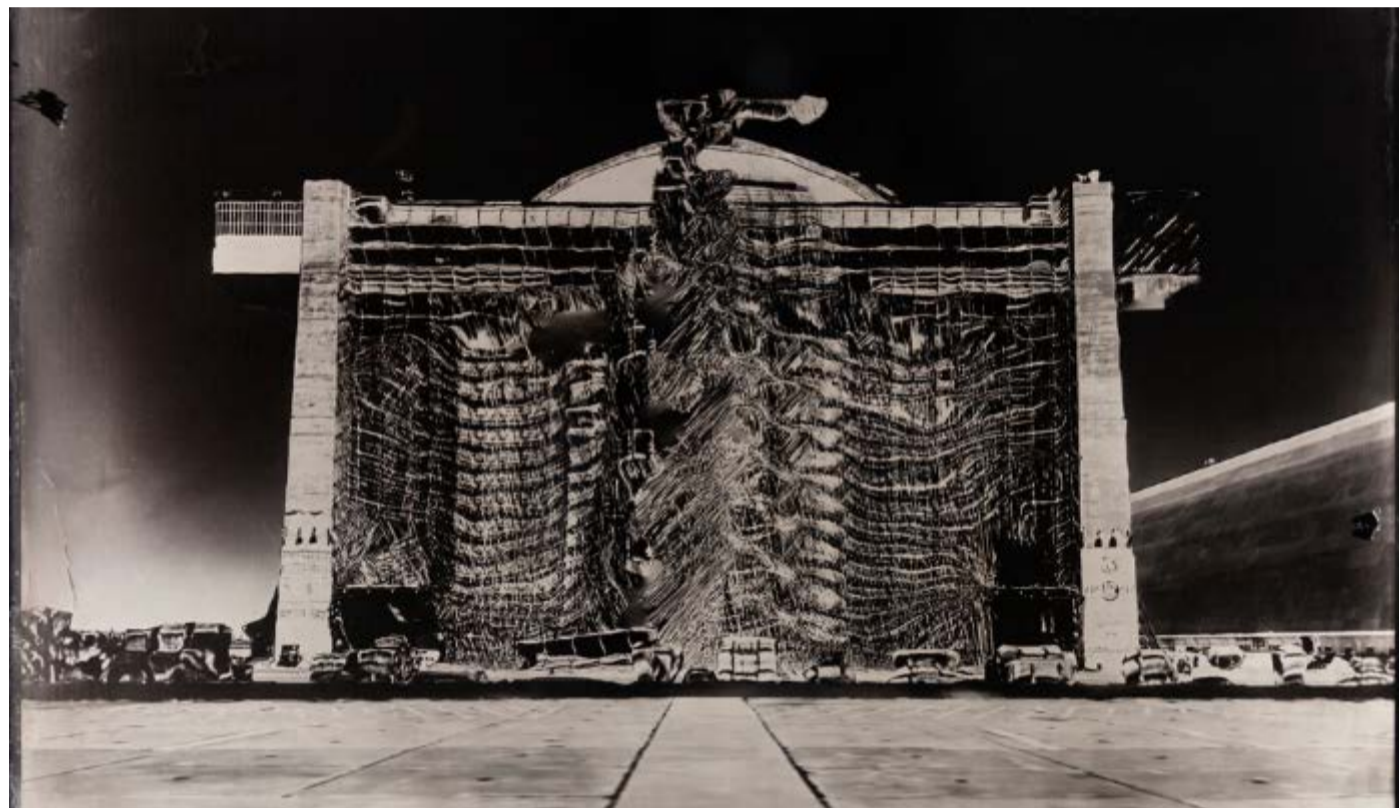
NYC YOUNG TALENT EXHIBITION

The NYC Spring fair is working with the School of Visual Arts Continuing Education to create 'MATERIAL INDEX' a Young Talent exhibition exploring materiality.



Alice Zavelsky

Monday 4 January, 2021



Each Spring, [Affordable Art Fair NYC](#) works with a reputable educational institution to host a Young Talent Exhibition, dedicated to support a select group of emerging artists and curators within the contemporary art community.

This year, we're delighted to be working with the [School of Visual Arts Division of Continuing Education \(SVACE\)](#) on a unique curatorial exhibition titled **MATERIAL INDEX**, which will show works by rising stars who explore the relationship between the artist, materials and identity. Additionally, on the Saturday of the fair, you can join a panel discussion on the myriad educational pathways available to artists, hosted by SVACE and taking place 12 - 1pm in the Inspiration Lounge on Level 2.

In our latest blog, we chat to curator, Keren Moscovitch, and the featured artists, Lisa Di Donato, Yam Chew Oh and Arantxa Rodrigues, to find out more about this exciting feature of the fair:

AFFORDABLE ART FAIR NYC SPRING YOUNG TALENT EXHIBITION

Keren Moscovitch, Curator

[Keren Moscovitch](#) is a New York City-based multidisciplinary artist, scholar and educator. She serves on the faculty of the School of Visual Arts, and is the Associate Director of the Division of Continuing Education.

Can you tell us about the inspiration behind the Spring 2020 Young Talent Exhibition, MATERIAL INDEX and what connects the three artists' practices?

I have been particularly inspired by how these artists use material in their art practice - material in the physical sense such as yarn, rubbish and tin, but also in the sense that we talk about in the studio - a cache of memories, languages and concepts that we draw from to make our work. The substances they use tell stories, and uncover psychical material such as historical narrative, national identity, and personal and collective imagination.

These artists all use their bodies in revealing ways that blur the boundaries between self and environment, human and artwork. They are making more than images. They are manipulating and re-imagining their world.



At our panel on Saturday, we'll be discussing the education(s) of an artist, because each of these individuals has found a unique pathway to lifelong learning, including the material practice of making art, the research involved, and the community and connections formed around it. I find them truly inspiring.

What advice do you have for aspiring artists?

I'm a huge proponent of the importance of both art and education to all people and societies. That's why I've dedicated my life to learning and teaching with and through art. My advice to artists is to never stop learning, whatever that means for you. Stay engaged, go to museums, talk to people, take classes, read books or magazines or newspapers or political pamphlets and educate yourself. Find ways to learn outside the academy. Learn at parties and gatherings, while you're dancing or singing or worshipping. Take the time, pay attention. My favorite artists, and the ones that I believe are most impactful in society are those who take themselves and their work seriously, and who make the necessary effort to be informed about their own motivations, their work, and the world of which they are a part.

Lisa DiDonato



Lisa DiDonato is an artist and curator. She received her BFA in Painting from the Rhode Island School of Design.

"My work originates from a projected, dematerialized world conspicuously lacking in representations of sentient life forms and existing solely on a screen. Art, for me, offers the capacity to reestablish and manifest a sense of embodiment in the face of this palpable disembodiment. In contrast to purely optical experiences, the materiality of art can provoke more in-depth inquiry and apprehension through the sensations that arise when a physical relationship forms between the viewer and the art-object. A colleague told me that "we touch with our eyes," but this is not passive seeing; it is intimately engaging with the matter before us, reading it, feeling it, expanding it in our bodies and imaginations." **Lisa DiDonato**

Curator's note: "Lisa's tints harken back to the dawn of photographic practice, requiring delicate and even dangerous handling of chemistry, but are incredibly contemporary in that the imagery comes from virtual walks in cyberspace." Keren Moscovitch



Yam Chew Oh

Yam Chew Oh is a multidisciplinary artist, educator, and writer working in New York and Baltimore. He holds an MFA from the School of Visual Arts in New York where he is a faculty member.

"There is no denying the pervasive interest in materiality in contemporary art, if the works in the 2019 Whitney Biennial were anything to go by. I see materiality as potential in art-making: the possibility of materials to be vehicles of expression through their symbolic and metaphorical powers. I love that they are laden with meaning, prone to associations and can elicit emotional responses. These are just a few among many facets of materiality that I consider in my art-making. They influence my process, content, and storytelling, through to installation. In this epoch



of the Anthropocene, where concerns about humans' impact on the environment and today's throw-away societies are front and center of many people's consciousness, I suspect the emphasis on materiality isn't about to decrease anytime soon." **Yam Chew Oh**

Curator's note: "Yam Chew's wanderings are reminiscent of the *dérive* of the Situationists, except that he brings the street home by extracting and rearranging items from the discarded and forgotten stuff of society - our garbage and junk - in homage to his late father, a *karanguni* man (junk man)." Keren



Moscovitch

Arantxa Ximena Rodriguez



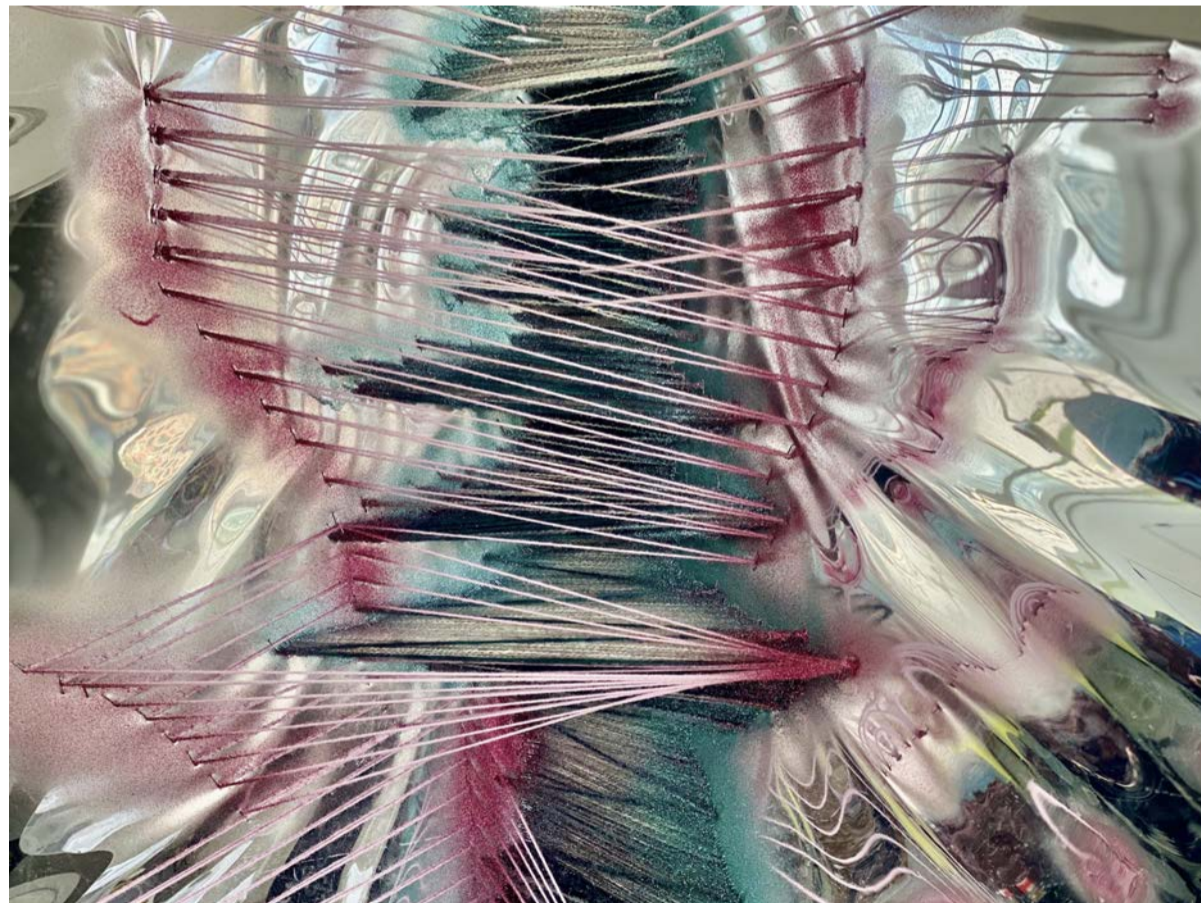
Arantxa Ximena Rodriguez is a Mexican artist currently living in NYC. She holds an MFA in Fine Arts from the School of Visual Arts NYC (SVA).

"On materiality in art-making practice, one of the toughest challenges I experience as an artist, is the game between experimentation and execution. Sometimes I wish I had enough time to experiment with materials in my pieces and then do the actual work to accomplish the finished piece. So, I accept that my pieces are like a flip of a coin, the only way to experiment with materials and execute something worth it, is by doing it, each piece gives me a cue for the next one, so I can say the materials in

my pieces are pretty much raw, they do not have another option, they exist, take life and form within the actual making, experimentation in real time."

"Something I love when I look at art is finding myself with the curiosity of "how did the artist do it and with what?" Art pieces that wake up these questions in me, I tend to find successful. These days, the barrier between arts and crafts is changing, it's blurring. I don't think materiality is a factor when we consider whether something contemporary art or not." **Arantxa Ximena Rodriguez**

Curator's note: "Arantxa's corner installations are extremely intricate and require hours, days, weeks of painstaking labor, yet they are fragile and malleable in their surroundings." Keren Moscovitch



Thanks to Keren, Lisa, Yam Chew and Arantxa for such an exciting introduction into their work. We can't wait to see the exhibition at the fair! Follow the link below to [purchase your ticket](#) to the fair, and don't forget to join the curator and artists for their panel discussion "The Education(s) of an Artist" on Saturday, March 27 from 12 - 1pm in the Inspiration Lounge on Level 2.

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