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Love and (Art) Lust at Frieze

By Laura van Straaten

This year's **Frieze New York** made me feel like a man who has preferred blondes for decades only to encounter, in one afternoon, a handful of brunettes he'd like to take home. I've always been a paintings person, but this weekend I found myself deeply attracted to works with strong sculptural components – many of them very recent.

Here's what I was crushing on.

My heart first quickened at the sight **Jim Lambie's** new *Metal Box (Oslo) (2014)*, shown by **Toby Webster's** London-based gallery **The Modern Institute**. Lambie's fun house of a piece is a shiny, sculpted pile of a half-dozen sheets of aluminum and polished steel, gilded at the corners with colorful household paint.

Then there was **Valeska Soares'** natural linen canvas with antique book jackets affixed to it. The piece, from her series "*Bindings*" (2014), posits an exquisitely satisfying composition.

In a booth shared by Seoul's **Kukje Gallery** and New York's **Tina Kim Gallery**, I came upon **Kyungah Ham's** 2014 piece that makes use of machine embroidery on cotton and collected Internet world news. Called *Abstract Weave – Morris Louis Untitled, 1960 01*, it's an explicit tribute to the color field painter. Each strip of color is emblazoned with news-ticker in various languages. The sculptural element is in the tumble of threads that hang down à la artist **Ghada Amer** (who has several works in nearby booths as well). The work held a lot of mystery; I found myself wanting to know more.

Over at New Yorker **Marianne Boesky's** booth, a trio of three new and arresting works by **Donald Moffett** had drawn a crowd of ardent admirers. His complexly titled works on linen have thick, wooden panels of support, all of which he has bored through to create large, Swiss-cheese holes. Around these lacunae, Moffett has found a way to ply grey and white oil paint to appear as tactile as squirts of silicone (and apparently, I wasn't the first of the day's visitors to want to cop a feel). Under Moffett's deft touch, these sensual works suggest the movement of a sea anemone.

Alison Elizabeth Taylor's 2014 piece *Conselyea St.* at **James Cohan Gallery** is another wood-based work. In a flip on my theme here, that piece is actually a marquetry sculpture of gnarly wood veneer and shellac that appears to be a painting in rich browns and grays.

At both Boesky's booth and at Chicago's **Shane Campbell Gallery**, I found **Anthony Pearson's** subdued, monochromatic paintings with deeply patterned textures. Pearson's pieces looked like my "type," being smallish all-black and all-white canvases that recall the confident restraint of certain 20th-century masters of abstraction. In fact, they were etched plaster: sculptures.

It's hard to believe that Canadian **Sasha Pierce's** paintings from her recent series "Tessellations" are not woven. Their sculptural sensibility stems from the multidimensionality of their geometrically tilting shapes and planes. As noted by **Jessica Bradley Gallery's** description, her works evoke the visual qualities of floor tiling, quilting, and digital 3-D rendering.

At **Massimo De Carlo Gallery**, artist **Paola Pivi's** has crowded her small canvases with cascades of white, black, or pink pearls – all real ones, I was told. The "pearl paintings," as she calls them, extrude nearly a foot from the wall and tempt the hand.

By day's end, as rainstorms outside raged, I found myself seduced by some simply sensational sculptures: **Cornelia Parker's** crushed, silver-plated horns hanging from metal wire at London's **Frith Street Gallery**; **Lin Tianmiao's** silk thread and stainless steel still-life at **Galerie Lelong**; Turk **Vahap Avşar's** hammer-sphere at Istanbul-based gallery **Rampa**; and finally **Hoda Tawakol's** soft fabric sculptures, most especially her crazy-compelling, hot pink falconry hood at the Beirut-based **Galerie Sfeir-Semler**.

Had I but enough time – I'd have taken each and every one home. Oh right, and money.