

FRIEZE

Redwood, Waste Plastic and Rose Quartz: Sculpture at Frieze Los Angeles

The 2024 edition of Frieze Los Angeles is an arena for sculptural experimentation, with Jesse Schlesinger, Yeni Mao, vanessa german and Mustafa Ali Clayton all debuting new work

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Frieze Los Angeles 2024 sees a surge in artists working in sculpture, stretching and honing the medium's potential with innovative and reclaimed materials to shape dynamic forms, both abstract and figurative, and charging it with a forward-looking political and ecological purpose. The fair offers artists an exciting platform on which to debut new work, either in group presentations, such as Lauren Hasley in Gagosian's curated show *Social Abstraction*, or solo booths, such as Jesse Schlesinger presented by Anthony Meier.

Here are eight artists driving sculpture in innovative directions:



Zilia Sánchez, *Concepto I*, 2019, bronze, paint 61 × 13 × 17 cm each © Zilia Sánchez;

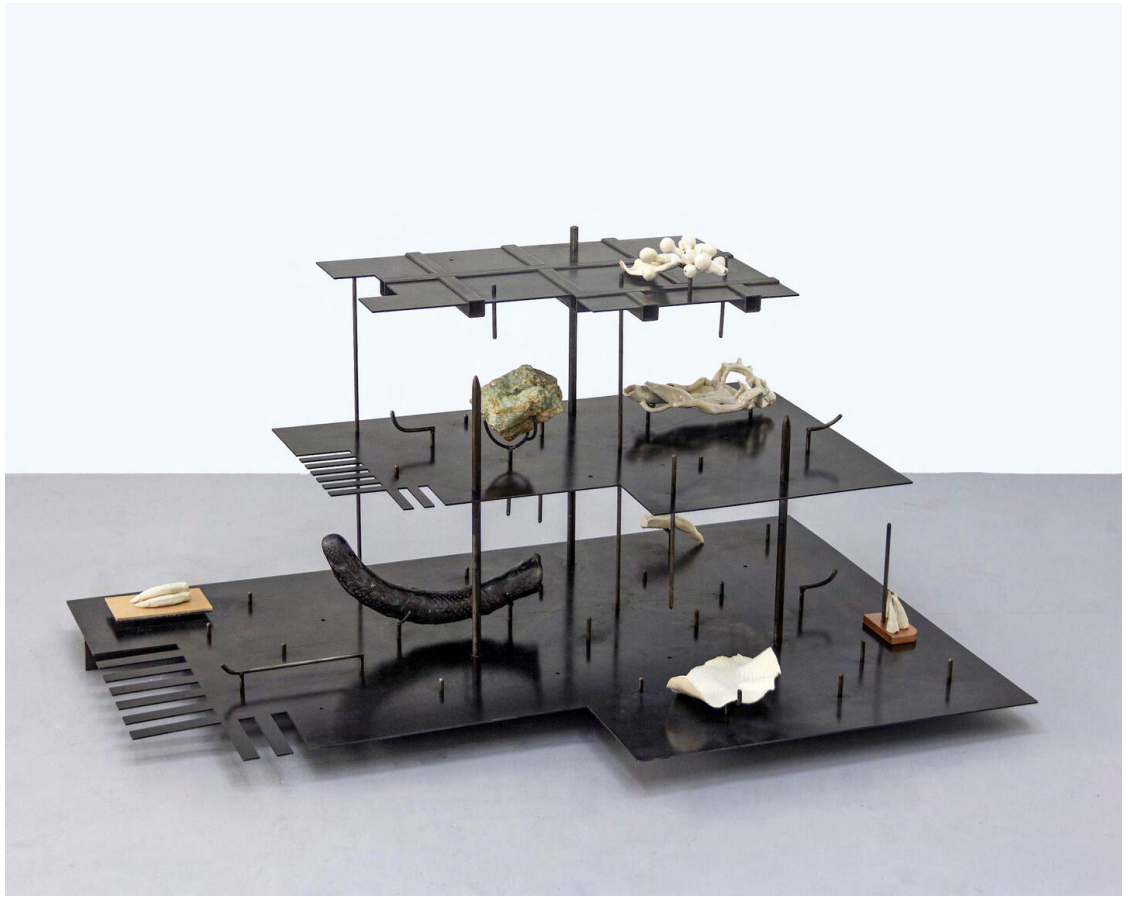
courtesy Galerie Lelong & Co., New York

Zilia Sánchez at Galerie Lelong & Co is best known for her shaped canvases, which she innovated in Havana at the turn of the revolution in the 1950s: tensile skins that undulate over wooden armatures and protruding objects. Now 97, Sánchez is creating free-standing sculptures, which she shows at Frieze Los Angeles in the context of her earlier geometric paintings. These sculptures have existed in the form of maquettes for the past two decades, now emerging in bronze and marble.



Cosima von Bonin, *WHAT IF THEY BARK 08*, 2022, glass reinforced plastic (GRP), purse, fabric, chains, steel stand, 75 × 55 × 50 cm. Courtesy Petzel, New York

For its debut at Frieze Los Angeles, Petzel presents **Cosima von Bonin**'s series "WHAT IF THEY BARK?", which adorned the façade of the Giardini Central Pavilion at the 2022 Venice Biennale. Von Bonin combines references to art history, cartoons, and fashion with an irreverent sense of humor and pithy social and ecological commentary. Her anthropomorphic fish sculptures evoke both pop and classical mythology, mirroring the statues that stand atop Greek temples, but carrying handbags, gingham-patterned missiles and guitars.



Yeni Mao, *freemartin*, 2024. Blackened steel, porcelain, ceramic with graphite finish, calcite, leather, 61 × 122 × 79 cm. Courtesy Make Room

Yeni Mao's "Freemartins" rise from mounds of soil as steel structures interspersed with leather, porcelain and volcanic rock. These sculptures are the latest works in Mao's exploration of the network of tunnels underneath the town of Mexicali, where, during the Mexican revolution, the Chinese-Mexican community was forced to live by the United States' discriminatory treatment of Asian immigrants. Mao uses steel plates to recreate the floor plan of each tunnel and inserts organic elements between the layers, reflecting on the liminality, both physical and psychological, of diasporic experiences.



Mustafa Ali Clayton, *Sofia*, 2022. Earthenware clay, beads, glaze, 38 × 25 × 29 cm. Courtesy Dominique Gallery

Mustafa Ali Clayton's latest ceramic portraits are encased in his signature ebony glaze, and will be presented by Dominique Gallery at the fair alongside a new terracotta series. Clayton fuses traditional techniques and natural materials—such as earth-sourced fibers and pigments—with his sharply contemporary subjects. The works embody the iconography of Black subjecthood, while questioning its legacy. Eschewing traditional sculptural plinths, Clayton positions his striking heads on structures fashioned from reclaimed wood.



vanessa german, *GRIEF AND LOVE AND GRIEF AND LOVE AT THE SAME TIME*, 2024. Plaster, wood, plaster gauze, pigment, wood glue, styrofoam, lapis, sodalite, kyanite, strawberry quartz, rose quartz, gold glass beads, blue glass beaded rhinestone trim. 79 × 31 × 31 cm. © 2024 Vanessa German. Courtesy the artist and Kasmin, New York; photo by Charlie Rubin

The form of the head also emerges blinking in rose quartz and adorned with crystals in **vanessa german**'s latest sculptural works, presented by Kasmin. Frieze Los Angeles will be the first time that german's unusual use of quartz as her primary material has been seen. german taps into the material's popular association with love and healing: the presentation will comprise a dozen sculpted heads and one larger assemblage figure, each accompanied by an audio component recorded by the artist. german terms these "prayers"—a response to the ravaging loneliness and isolation of today's world.



Ryan Schneider, *Stone Eaters*, 2022. Bronze, 193 × 38 × 36 cm. © Ryan Schneider; courtesy the artist and Almine Rech; photo by Aaron Farley

Working in Joshua Tree, California, **Ryan Schneider** is inspired by his remote desert surroundings and tree spirit mythology. Schneider works with a chainsaw to make angular cuts in wood, creating patterns that sit somewhere between the ancient and the futuristic. *Stone Eaters* (2022), which features in his presentation at Almine Rech, is a tower of interlocking faces and hands carved into wood, then cast in bronze. Schneider's stark gesturality aligns his works with German expressionism, while their totemic stance references pre-Christian traditions including Shinto, Polynesian Tiki and Native American.



Jesse Schlesinger, *Untitled (to assess in the morning by looking at the sky)*, 2023. Redwood (salvaged) and enamel paint on redwood, 1 × 1 × 1.1 m. Courtesy the artist and Anthony Meier, Mill Valley, CA; photo by Chris Grunder

Salvaged redwood and cypress are the departure points for **Jesse Schlesinger**'s new work at Anthony Meier. Responding to the opportunities offered by the materials themselves, Schlesinger evolves their forms through bronze, enamel paint, ceramic, powder-coated and chrome-plated steel, playing with a juxtaposition of natural hues and vibrant colors. Schlesinger's new sculptures emerge in conjunction with his paintings, which he makes as he trues his whetstone, spreading a ceramic wash over a gritty sandpaper surface.



Mika Rottenberg, *Lampshare*, 2023. Milled recycled household plastic, 33 × 61 × 31 cm. Courtesy the artist and Hauser & Wirth; photo by Thomas Barratt © Mika Rottenberg

Mika Rottenberg's "Lampshares" repurpose waste plastic, much of which she retrieves from the dumpster outside her New York studio. Rottenberg transforms this toxic rubbish into playful structures of varying sizes, which express functionality, wit and lyricism. In their combination of unexpected shapes and textures, Rottenberg's sculptures, on show at Hauser & Wirth, align with the way she approaches the montage of her films: as a synthesis of absurd and disparate parts.

Further Information

Frieze Los Angeles is at Santa Monica Airport, February 29–March 3, 2024.

Tickets

Early-bird tickets are now sold out and full-price tickets are selling fast. Buy yours now before they're gone.

To keep up to date on all the latest news from Frieze, **sign up** to the newsletter at **frieze.com**, and follow **@friezeofficial** on Instagram, **Twitter** and Frieze Official on **Facebook**.

Main Image: Jesse Schlesinger, *Untitled (c.o.)*, 2024, Monterey cypress, enamel paint, 38 × 33 × 25 cm; *Untitled (c.o.)*, 2024, Monterey cypress, enamel paint, 33 × 36 × 34 cm; *Untitled (c.o.)*, 2024, Redwood (salvaged), enamel paint, 66 × 66 × 24 cm. Courtesy the artist and Anthony Meier, Mill Valley, CA; photo by Chris Grunder