

# VOGUE

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## Art Week Begins: What the Cool Kids Are Up To Downtown

By John Ortved



David Shrigley, Untitled, 2016

Photo: Courtesy of David Shrigley and Anton Kern Gallery

New York Art Week in Manhattan has kicked into high gear. Like New York Fashion Week, the name is less of a temporal designation than an announcement that, for a certain subset of the community, several of the next seven-odd days will involve a flurry of culture, names being checked at gussied-up convention centers, and parties that they are both invited and notably not invited to. More specifically, it's the time when art fairs—including the Art Dealers of America Association's Art Show (fancy galleries at the Park Avenue Armory, shopped by the 0.0001%), The Armory show (everyone, on Piers 92 and 94), Spring/Break Art Show (upstarts in the old post office at 4 Times Square) and The Independent New York (more established upstarts, down in Tribeca at the uber-modern Spring Studios).

The last of these, *The Independent*—which runs from March 2–5—has gained enough buzz to merit some special attention. “I think it’s great and I go every year,” said Peter Magill, one of the fancy gallery owners at the AADA. He sees *The Independent*—created by gallerists Elizabeth Dee and Darren Flook in 2010—as a successor to what he and his colleagues did. He described the AADA’s establishment, a quarter century ago, as a response to the auction houses’ attempted exploitation of their art market dominance. “We said ‘fuck that,’ and the AADA was created so that smaller dealers could have the the same opportunity.”

Back to *The Independent*. “It’s the cool kids,” said Jerry Saltz, the art critic for *New York* magazine, “So you have to be cool about it.” By “cool kids” he means heavy hitters like Gavin Brown’s *Enterprise* (home to Alex Katz and Urs Fischer), Lower East Side firecrackers like *JTT*, and foreign fighters punching way above their weight class, like Peres Projects in Berlin and Maureen Paley in London. It’s heavily curated, a word that gets thrown around a great deal, but has held up at *The Independent*, where the tens of thousands of dollars paid for a booth ensures a certain level of quality.

“For the dealer it’s about connecting with people, and not sending a .jpg over email. This is about my artists,” said Jasmin Tsou of *JTT*, who is collaborating with another gallery on a four-artist presentation that will include Jonathan Berger’s elaborately designed, small-scale sculptural objects—like his metallic plant made of tin, a manifestation of a century tree, which supposedly only blooms once every 100 years. These are contrasted with Ellen Lesperance’s large-scale works on paper, testaments to women who went literally against *The Man* in confrontational acts of civil disobedience.



Jonathan Berger, *Untitled (Century Tree)*, 2017

Photo: Courtesy of Jonathan Berger and *JTT*, New York