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THE ART NEWSPAPER

Artist profiles: the names you should know at Armory

James H. Miller, Victoria Stapley-Brown, Gabriella Angeleti, Sarah P. Hanson, Helen Stoilas, Ivy Olesen

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(c) Photo: Becket Logan. Courtesy of the artist and Ryan Lee Gallery, New York

Emma Amos (b. 1938), showing with Ryan Lee Gallery, New York. Born in Atlanta and now working in New York, Emma Amos was the only woman included in the 1960s black activist collective Spiral. Amos has consistently pushed her practice across five decades—she introduced phototransfer and collage in the 1990s—while remaining committed to questions of the body. Ryan Lee is presenting *Work Suit* (1994), for example, in which Amos depicts herself wearing Lucian Freud’s “skin” to inject both social and formal instability into his white-male brand of realism.

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ARTNEWS

WITH AN EYE TOWARD TECHNOLOGY AND BODILY CHANGE, THE ARMORY SHOW'S FOCUS SECTION SEES A DARK FUTURE

BY ALEX GREENBERGER POSTED 03/07/18

Here are a few things you will find this year in the Focus section of the Armory Show: devices that allow women to urinate while standing, paintings that resemble blood spatters, Jesmonite slabs that sprout arms, a photograph of a woman running from a fast-approaching tank, and manipulated pictures of bodies pulled from the internet. Consider them weird incursions for weird times. Gabriel Ritter, the curator and head of contemporary art at the Minneapolis Institute of Art, who organized the Focus section this year, said he knows his section won't be the cheeriest one in the fair: "It's not necessarily a pretty picture."

This year's Focus section will focus on "the body mediated by technology," as stated in an Armory announcement. Some 28 galleries from around the world are bringing work by 34 artists to the section, with analog and digital generations represented in equal measure. Bruce Nauman's lithographs will be on view alongside photographic work by Constant Dullaart; **Emma Amos's portraits from the 1980s and '90s** will be exhibited not too far from videos by Tabita Rezaire, who hasn't yet turned 30. "It's diverse, not just generationally but geographically," Ritter said.

In the beginning, however, the section leaned younger. Ritter was asked by Armory Show deputy director Nicole Berry to take over Focus, which is given to a curator who designates a theme and invites galleries to participate. He thought he might expand upon an exhibition he mounted for the Dallas Museum of Art in 2015, "Mirror Stage: Visualizing the Self After the Internet." "I was looking at identity as an elastic entity and how artists were rethinking it via digital technology and the web," he said. He wanted to update it for the present, and that meant looking to a generation of artists who had grown up with the internet readily available.

But as he started inviting galleries to participate, they began to suggest other artists who might interest him, too. He first approached Hong Kong's Empty Gallery with the intention of showing work by Takeshi Murata, whose videos, photographs, and animations suggest a world where users are permanently morphed by the technology they own. The gallery was interested in bringing pieces by Murata to the fair, but they also suggested Tishan Hsu. "I'd maybe seen an image in a book, but he was not someone at the forefront of my mind," said Ritter, who was intrigued by ways that, like Murata, Hsu explores "how the physical body could internalize the virtual realm."

These cross-generational presentations—Hsu began working in the '80s, Murata started in the mid-2000s—typify this year's Focus section, which surveys matters of identity and diversity as well. "Issues related to representation of the body [and] representations of people of color are still very fraught territory," Ritter said.

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But they are part of an evolving history that is worth observing, the curator added. A world of growing artificial intelligence and technologies that can alter organs and limbs is “not just science-fiction,” he said. “It’ll have huge ramifications for pressing conversations that are going on right now.”

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