

# TEMPLON



WILL COTTON

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## Frieze New York rewind: “No, you are not hallucinating”

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Few things compare to peak spring in New York, and even fewer to nine concurrent art fairs in one city. Osman Can Yerebakan looks back on a week packed with elaborate parties, celeb spots and epiphanies

### Wednesday

The Frieze vernissage was at its peak when I ran into my friend writer Jen Piejko who had schlepped from L.A. for the week. Hungry to get stuck into my art fair aisle marathon, I suggested she reconvene later at Frieze’s toast for media at Dobel’s booth on the top of The Shed and embarked on my schmoozing march. Across the aisles, I was like a moth to a flame to Hannah Levy’s solo booth with Casey Kaplan. Five unpredictably-formed tingling sculptures of skinny stainless steel skeletons creepily caressed sluggish blobs of glass. A similar eerie sheen also lured me to Pace’s booth with Lynda Benglis’ new white tombasil or Everdur bronze sculptures of deconstructed tires. It must have been something about the masterful alchemy of ruggedness and sleekness that I was hungry for, because I also paused at Jeff Koons’ polychrome musician Hulk sculptures (each at around £2.3M) at Gagosian. Then, I followed the sweet sounds that emanated from James Cohan’s booth where Tuan Andrew Nguyen had repurposed unexploded military supplies from Vietnam’s Quảng Trị region – which is still the largest aerial bombardment site in history – into Alexander Calder-esque sonic sculptures. I also didn’t skip Ruinart’s own “cheers” moment for painter Sam Falls who stayed at their vineyard in the Champagne region to produce a series of romantically-abstract paintings for their booth.

After Frieze, I ventured out to Brooklyn Heights (a shorter trip than you might think) for Sarah Rustin’s birthday bash at painter Natalie Frank’s scenic apartment. The beloved head of Thaddaeus Ropac’s communications team had gathered a nice huddle of London-meets-New York crowd, like the Delfina Art Foundation’s Sarah Philp and *New York magazine’s* Rachel Corbett. The spring’s scorchingly orange sunset sank into the spiky Manhattan skyline as I realised I had just sat down for the first time that day. But there’s no sleep for the wicked and no excuse to shelve my imitation self-assured Cher walk in *Moonstruck*. I swanned through the same streets as her en route to the subway for the concrete jungle of Manhattan where real estate nightmares are made of.

Back in Manhattan, art membership club The Cultivist celebrated its 10th birthday with a boxing ring which they mounted under the Prince George Ballroom's ornate ceiling. In lieu of floating like a butterfly and stinging like a bee, however, artists like Shaun Leonardo, Hiba Schahbaz, and Caleb Hahne Quintana flexed their artistic muscles to a group who was there to play the role of the boxing game judge which included legendary painter Judith Bernstein. In Tribeca, Will Cotton's lofty studio was in dual celebration mode for his new show of powdery siren paintings at Templon gallery in Chelsea and Art Production Fund's public project at Rockefeller Center which puts his pop culture-famous images of cowboys riding unicorns and decadent cakes inside the Art Deco marvel's glass vitrines. Cotton's Siamese cat both roamed and avoided the crowd which included Anna Weyant. From there, Casey and I rushed for NADA's rooftop party at Public Hotel like a couple of Cindrellas at 11:59 pm. We were greeted by a serpent of a queue, Luckily, Eric Gleason of Kasmin gallery and the Cultural Counsel team joined forces to skyrocket us to the top floor with some communications magic. Up there, we soaked up the scene-stealing nocturnal Manhattan skyline, with two ever-fun party guests, Helen Edwards of Christie's and Artsy's Arun Kakar.