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Your Guide to Armory Week

Even though the hum around Armory week seems subdued this year, visiting half-a-dozen-plus art fairs can in a few days' time can feel like a week on a Eurail pass. Naive outsiders are treated harshly, the food is unfamiliar and overpriced, and you spend a lot of time snooping around taking pictures. It's useful to have an index that you can depend on to guide you towards the things that are worth seeing and away from the things that aren't. A guidebook if you will. Here's ours.



The selection of Liz Magic Laser as the 2013 commissioned artist for the Armory Show suggests an attempt to balance out all this of this squareness, as much of Ms. Laser's performance art — centered around political rhetoric and institutional critique — is at the very least hard to pin down. That she should have planned her commission with the help of a corporate focus group earlier this fall (watching attendants, including AFC's Paddy Johnson, through a two-way mirror), hints that she may accomplish something interesting deep in the commercial cave. Then again, she may not. Describing what was expected of the commissioned artist, the NY Observer's Michael H. Miller didn't seem to have his hopes up. "Oh, you know," he told the other focus group members. "You stage a performance during the first hour, and then you design the tickets and the tote bags."