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“15 New Dealers to Watch at Art Basel in Miami Beach”

by Demie Kim



## Various Small Fires

LOCATION  
Los Angeles

FOUNDED  
2012

ON VIEW AT ART BASEL IN MIAMI BEACH  
Positions Sector, Booth P13 • Film Sector

WORKS BY  
Amy Yao • Lena Daly

Photo of Esther Kim Varet and Sara Hantman, with a painting by Joshua Nathanson, courtesy of Various Small Fires.



Los Angeles gallery Various Small Fires is pushing forward existing art-historical and contemporary discourse through socially engaged programming—from fresh, generationally relevant shows by an over 50 percent female roster to reinstalls of major exhibitions from the '60s. The gallery's 5,000-square-foot space spans three interior galleries, a sound corridor for year-round audio programming, and an expansive outdoor gallery devoted to large-scale sculptures, installations, and performance art. According to LACMA's associate curator of contemporary art Christine Y. Kim, Various Small Fires is among an increasing number of young L.A. galleries who are, amid the influx of mega international galleries, showing a commitment to emerging Los Angeles-based artists. “Various Small Fires’ approach reads as a slow, steady burn (pun noted!), working with local artists who want to be in it for the long-run, and who want to recognize the importance of artistic growth, institutional relationships, and community participation.”

Following the success of L.A. and New York-based Amy Yao's first solo show at the gallery this winter, Various Small Fires will stage two of the artist's “striking yet sardonic social critique works” at Art Basel in Miami Beach. The first, from her “Intercontinental Drift” series (2016) will see an assortment of faux flowers installed in the booth walls and sealed beneath a pane of plexiglass; the second, from “Doppelgängers” (2016), consists of a massive heap of rice, fake rice, and fake pearls, in reference to a 2015 scandal in China after it was discovered that rice producers were mixing plastic rice in with their grains, resulting in widespread illness among the poor. “Both works highlight the dichotomy between honest and fraudulent production, questioning contemporary society's ability to distinguish the two while addressing the limitations of authenticity as well as the allure of artifice,” noted director Sara Hantman, who runs the gallery with owner Esther Kim Varet.