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A Question for Dealers: Show Solo Artists at Fairs or Group Exhibitions?

The decision can vary from fair to fair but sometimes solo booths can help visitors focus their attention on a single artist, rather than being overwhelmed by the art of many.

By Annabel Keenan

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The Ortuzar gallery in New York and Marc Selwyn Fine Art in Los Angeles will jointly present a solo booth at Frieze of sculptures, like “African Warrior Queen” (2012), by Akinsanya Kambon. Akinsanya Kambon via Ortuzar, New York and Marc Selwyn Fine Art, Los Angeles; Photo by Paul Salveson

Even more timely, the Ortuzar gallery in New York’s Tribeca and Marc Selwyn Fine Art in Los Angeles will jointly present a solo booth of sculptures by Akinsanya Kambon at Frieze that precedes a solo show at two venues beginning May 28 — SculptureCenter and the Center for Art, Research and Alliances, both in New York. Kambon’s work was recently featured in the “Made in L.A. 2025” show at the Hammer Museum in Los Angeles, “so he has some context in

California, but he's largely unfamiliar in New York," said Kenta Murakami, a director at Ortuzar. "We want to funnel people to those exhibitions," he added, referring to Kambon's upcoming presentations in the city.

With lesser-known and overlooked artists like Kambon and Barbarigo, the solo booth format allows dealers to better provide context for the work. Education, Messineo said, "is particularly important for the next generation of collectors" who increasingly value artists' stories.

Kambon, for example, has a complex practice. Exploring themes of Black resistance and Pan-African spirituality, Kambon draws from his experiences in the Marine Corps and as a member of the Black Panthers. "He deals with violent histories and topics that require context," Murakami said. "Showing just one work can make it difficult to convey the urgency and meaning. We want to use the opportunity to start conversations."