

## Where Are All the Womxn at Frieze LA?

Just days after #OscarsSoWhite and #OscarsSoMale took place in La-La Land, Frieze Los Angeles has rolled into town for its second edition, and the fair also finds itself packed full of male makers. Rhea Dillon hunts out the select womxn and non-binary artists on show.

With booths at leading fairs rumoured to cost well into five figures, taking creative risks in these spaces is becoming less and less appealing. But without such risks happening, how are emerging artists going to break through and stop being classed as “emerging”, and are we ever going to see much variation in the “established” set of names? There certainly is nothing like a fair to bring out state of the art world questions from within. There is an explicit display of masculinity at this year’s fair, and moving through its temporary white walls it became apparent quite how dominant male artists are in comparison to womxn and/or non-binary artists—who are often kept to “women dedicated” booths. Below, I celebrate the womxn trailblazing the way in this year’s show.

### Aria Dean at Chateau Shatto

At first glance, the bell jar in Aria Dean’s Dead Zone (4) might make you think of Beauty and the Beast’s timekeeper of love. But, like the famous Disney image of petals falling, which reveals a dark place for the Beast, Dean has created an artwork that reveals itself the longer you linger—and it simultaneously takes from you the closer you come towards it. In this work, cotton seeped in polyurethane looks like an organism that is both growing and dying, representing the state of the slave trade and contemporary existence for Black bodies living and dying in the name of America’s economy. The base of the dome is fitted with a signal jammer, self-referencing the 2016 essay “Poor Meme, Rich Meme”, in which Dean spoke about the use of the Black body in digital meme culture and digital blackface. A cell phone dead zone is created when the signal jammer is active, effectively wiping out the ability to mass consume Black existence in the vicinity of the work. Ironically, this element is not actually allowed to be active while the piece is on display at the fair... a worthy perusal nonetheless.



Aria Dean, *Dead Zone (4)*, 2019. Courtesy the artist and Château Shatto, Los Angeles.  
Photographs by Joshua Schaede