

ADVERTISEMENT

For allergies, skin irritation, and colds, there's a **BENADRYL®** for you.*

BUY NOW

Benadryl
ALLERGY
Diphenhydramine HCl 25 mg / Antihistamine

*Temporarily relieves runny nose and sneezing due to upper respiratory allergies or the common cold. Do not use more than one diphenhydramine product at the same time.

Use products only as directed. © Kenecore Brands LLC 2024



ARTS • ART FAIRS

In Philadelphia, a New Art Fair Removes Scale From the Equation

With booth fees capped at \$2,500, Elsewhere is less concerned with the broader art market than with what happens when galleries are free to take genuine risks.

By [Chenoa Baker](#) • 06/08/26 1:28pm



Square



Reduce the clutter on your counter.

Buy now





Blah Blah Gallery at Elsewhere 2026. Courtesy the gallery and Elsewhere

Megan Galardi, director of Blah Blah Gallery and founder of newcomer fair Elsewhere, has now spent three years at the helm of a gallery in Philadelphia, a city that's often pitted against New York. Reading Josh Kline's recent buzz-inducing article arguing that New York City's economics essentially function as the art world's curatorial frame—a piece that, in her view, treats Philly as a neglected step-cousin—led to a turning point in her thinking about the relationship between the two cities. “We can play off our proximity to New York but we are not trying to be New York,” Galardi told Observer. With her urban planning background informing her own relationship to the city, she's become far more interested in how Philadelphia serves as a crucible for possibility and experimentation.



Sign Up For Our Daily Newsletter



[→ See all of our newsletters](#)

And what better way to showcase that than by experimenting herself with new art fair models in the city. To do that, Galardi looked to curator-led fairs like Arrival Art Fair in the Berkshires, led by Yng-Ru Chen; Neighbors in Chicago, started by Mirka Serrato and Jonny Tanna; and Friends Fair in Austin, launched by six gallerists and staged at the Loren hotel. After reflecting on these and other small fairs, Galardi deliberately limited the size and scope of Elsewhere, with the most expensive booth fees capped at \$2,500 (which includes lodging). Galleries could experiment, the fair would serve as an ideation space and visitors would encounter works that felt accessible.

ADVERTISEMENT

**PREMIUM PERKS AT
A FRIENDLY PRICE**

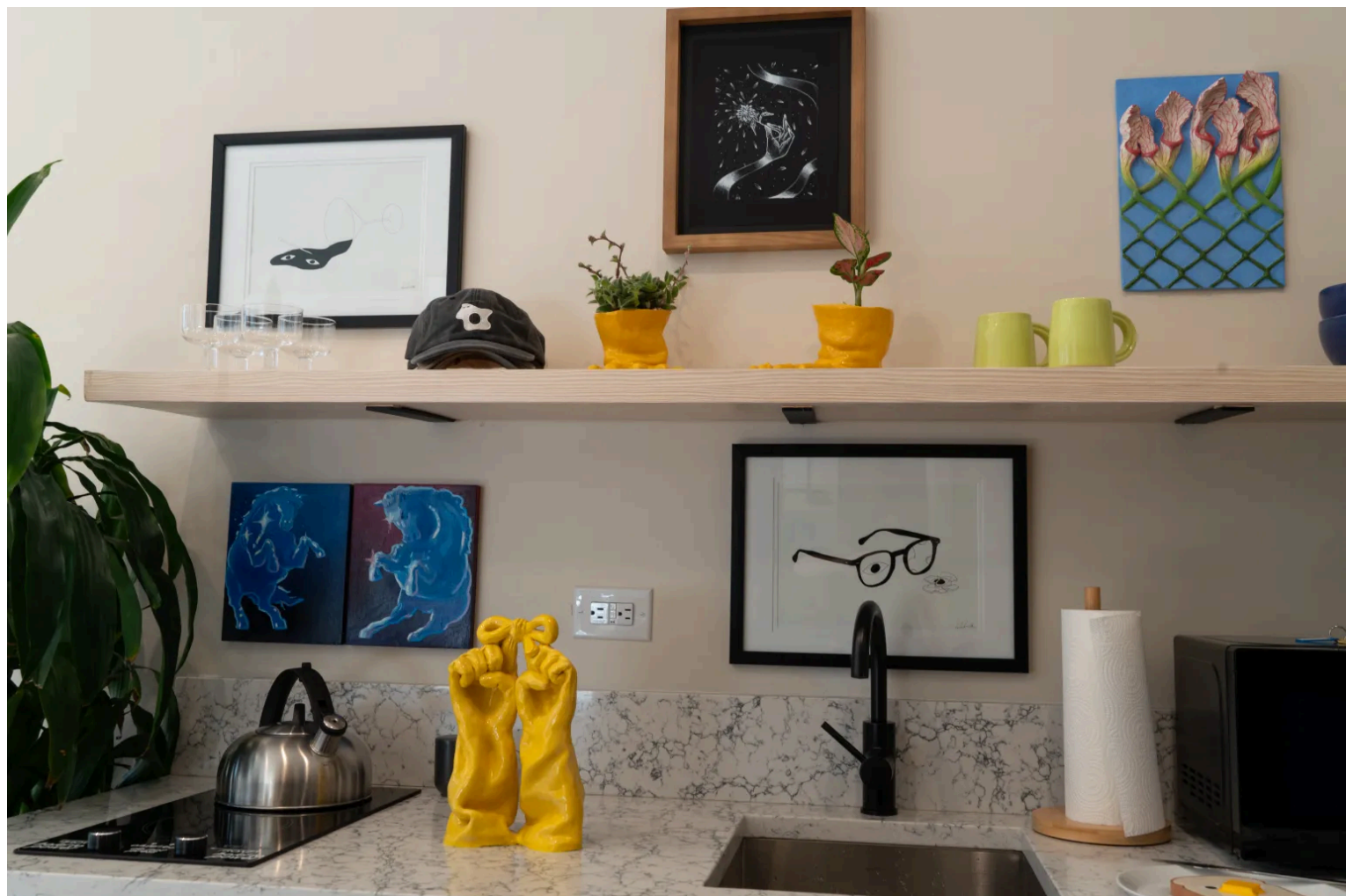
BOOK NOW

CHOICE
HOTELS®

Held this year at YOWIE, a boutique hotel on South Street in Philadelphia, Elsewhere hosted 27 exhibitors. Seven from Philadelphia, three international galleries from London and Canada and many more from across the U.S. brought solo booths, two-artist displays and group shows to the space. “My conversations with YOWIE were primarily about how to work within the existing character of the building and adapt it for an art fair,” Galardi said. “I was interested in creating an experience that felt more intimate and contextual, where the architecture and setting could become part of how visitors encounter the work.”

The first space visitors encountered set the tone for the fair. Blah Blah Gallery and Good Naked Gallery introduced a somewhat Seussical aesthetic, anchored by Libby Rosa’s pin

hotel room?” At YOWIE, she extended the original conceit with oversized pins on works hung on the walls paired with a quilted textile work featuring pinned moths covering the bed. While her rainbow color palette has a whimsical feel, the work delivers a pointed critique of the ways both natural and unnatural things are displayed in settings like museums. Hung from the ceiling in the nearby shower was *Terribly, thank you* by M. Fernanda Nuñez Alzate, an unstretched canvas with pink paint and outlines of cropped hands and snouts, recalling the illustrative style and palette of the Pink Panther. That allusion—compounded by the work’s placement in the shower—made it genuinely difficult to decide whether it was irreverent or simply refreshing.




Feia at Elsewhere 2026. Courtesy the gallery and Elsewhere

The special exhibition “Found Her! Found Her!” by Dr. Darla Migan, was tucked into a small hallway yet served as the conceptual heart of the fair. The exhibition deploys the language of Black feminist aesthetics, making purposeful use of unexpected spaces—prayer closets, and in this case hallways transformed into arteries of the surrounding living space. At one

Enoch Elizabeth Baxter, recalling how the skin of enslaved people was used in bookbinding, demanding an “unflinching gaze” at how Black people literally were the medium and the conduit to many types of creative expression that have since been co-opted. Beside Baxter’s work was *slow n steady*, a piece by Qualesha Wood commissioned last year by the Studio Museum in Harlem. On the other side of the landing—which Dr. Migan described as a portal to interstitial space—was Tanika I. Williams’s *Cornbread Communion* video, which venerates freedom fighter Harriet Tubman by asking what nourished her, then poses the question of how we feed—both physically and spiritually—the Black women doing radical work. Paired with the video is a takeaway postcard with a cornbread recipe on the back, entitled *Our ‘Aunt Harriet’s’ Favorite Dish*.

On the second and third floors, younger galleries took center stage, including Point Blank out of Chicago, which emerged on the scene a year and a half ago, presenting a solo exhibition of Alessandra Norman. Her work was installed on a bathroom wall adjacent to the mirror: fossils of bobby pins rendered in enamel or acrylic on MDF and plywood and fair-specific work featuring fossilized everyday objects, memes and digital ephemera—apropos in a hotel context. On the other side of the room, *Untitled I* folded like a curtain over a windowsill with tree branches visible at night. Installed in front of a real sill of the same size, it produced a brilliant trompe l’oeil effect and revealed the full range of the gallery’s ambition.

ADVERTISEMENT



\$50 OFF GAS*
WHEN YOU STAY 2X

Book now

*Terms apply.





Latitude at Elsewhere 2026. Courtesy the gallery and Elsewhere

Janey out of Cambridge, Ontario and just nine months old, debuted at Art Toronto, where the sheer volume of exhibitors made it easy to overlook; here, the more intimate setting made it easy to connect with fairgoers. “In general, our programming leads with an atmospheric and material approach to art,” founder and director Lara Cardoso told Observer. “All featured artists—Micaïla Abboud, Yvonne Weiss, Malachi Wilson—are emerging Canadian artists and represented by the gallery. The works shown explore themes of nature and belief through materiality and form. I personally feel this room is the strongest reflection of the gallery’s curatorial style and vision to date.” One work by Weiss stood out: figures hover around what appears to be a casket, light with tiny flames emanating heavenward, angelic beings surrounding it and a rainbow in the sky—perhaps a reference to divine provision and/or queerness that read like a symbolic altarpiece on the back of a Domino’s Wings takeaway box.

Feia out of L.A. was another standout. Once nomadic, it opened a brick-and-mortar space this past year, and its display featured works by Tadashi Adamson and Charles Hickey that drew on the boutique hotel’s idiosyncrasies. Titled “Almost Ordinary,” the exhibition “traces

and fiction, history and speculative futures, and the ordinary and the uncanny.” Adamson plays on the idea of the everyday object with playful oval eyes and familiar script: a bar of soap has eyes like a fever dream; a lipstick curves into a squiggle; musical notes transform into a snail trail; AA battery facsimiles curve in on themselves; and toast with eyes and melting butter becomes something like a nose. His work is trippy in the best sense, making viewers question their assumptions about preciousness and value—is this part of the hotel or is it art? Hickey’s *Candle Count*, by contrast, is simply a fun, funky lamp made with 3D pen.



81 Leonard at Elsewhere 2026. Courtesy the gallery and Elsewhere

5U Space, a nomadic gallery that’s been active for a year and a half, showcased the range of creative expression at Elsewhere with a solo exhibition of Nicholas Stathopoulos. Some of the muslin-veiled fantastical works were intriguing and added to the ambiance of the space, and the more abstract networks of tubing in paintings like *Flesh and Tube* and *Electric and Pipe* sparked introspection and close looking. The Goyaesque paintings with sinister,

makes possible.

Dream Clinic out of Columbus, Ohio, a project space that opened during the pandemic, brought subtle, evocative pieces by Gabriella Moreno that engage with BDSM culture; the artist frames them as interstitial “artworks that serve as love letters, diary entries, and sexts between lovers.” The pieces on show felt like code—a knowing nod to those familiar with that world that would feel non-confrontational to others: leather debossed letters that read like an imprint or branding into a second skin.

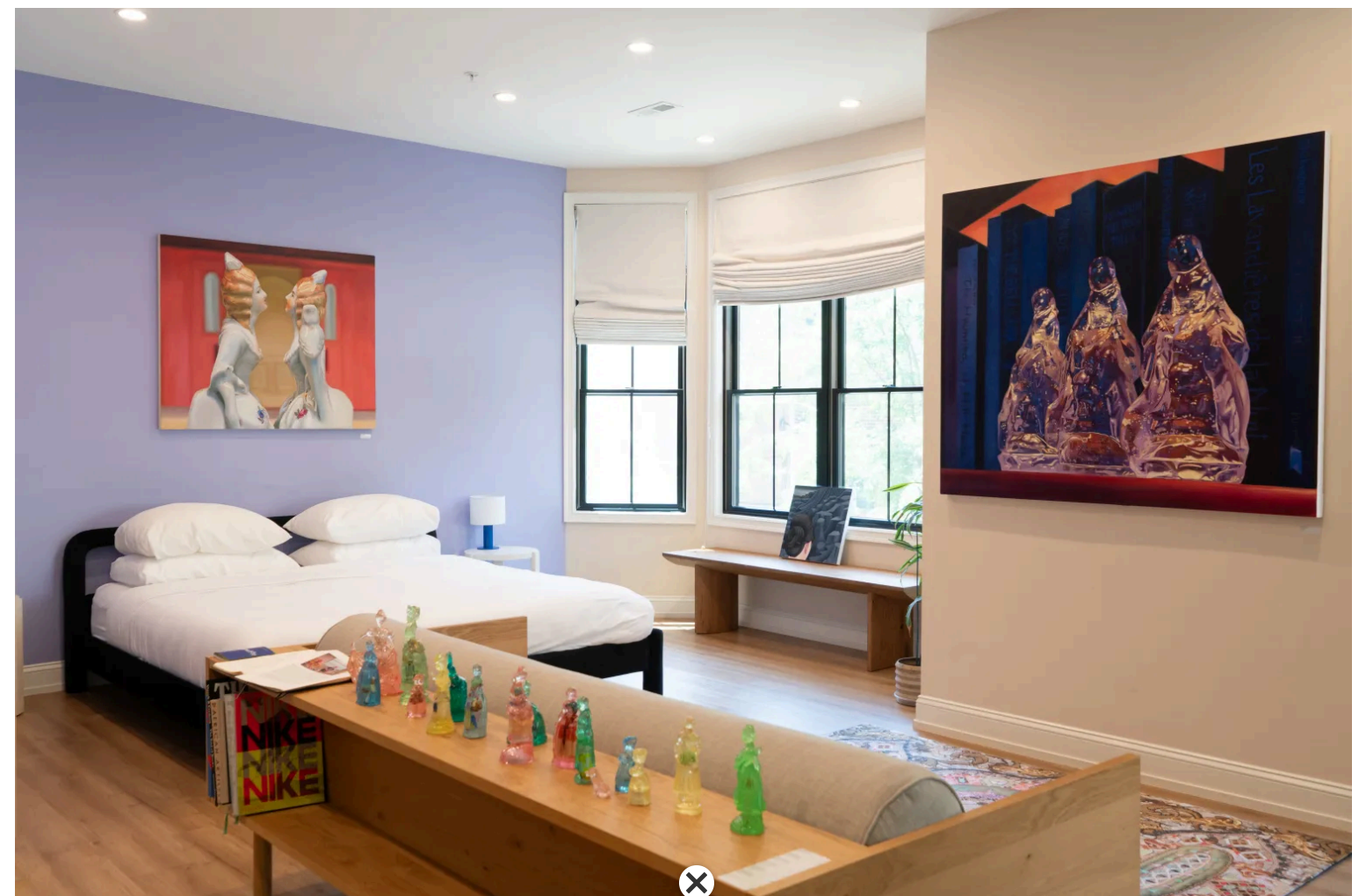
ADVERTISEMENT

LATITUDE from New York City in a collaborative presentation with Laura out of Houston featured *Fwalat Al Aser* (فوالاة العصر) by Afra Al Dhaheri—inflatable takya pillows, typically a type of bolster cushion in South Asia, rearranged on the bed with a quiet sense of reverence. Also on view were webbed duck-foot candle holders by Ernesto Solana, eye-catching for their functionality and humorous form, and several ceramic works by Komie Kim Lee—fish heads emerging from the wall, kimchi jars and rice cooker sets—that felt particularly hospitable and familiar in a room with a kitchenette.

Among the established galleries at Elsewhere were Fleisher/Ollman Gallery (founded 1952), OSMOS (founded 1997), 81 Leonard Gallery (founded by artist Nancy Pantirer in 1996) and Pentimenti (since 1992). 81 Leonard Gallery brought a dazzling display of Pantirer’s abstract

decorating the bed. At Pentimenti, a body of work by [Sarah Pater](#) hid targets within vases of flowers and other still lifes, watching like eyes and raising questions about the inherent surveillance and voyeurism of moving through hotel rooms repurposed from private lodging into a public third space.

Overall, Elsewhere's inaugural iteration was the embodiment of Philadelphia's vivacious spirit and scrappy determination. "Elsewhere Fair is a leader in the emerging models for how the IRL artworld can and must learn to be a cooperative ecosystem of art lovers and friends," Dr. Migan said. "I've enjoyed spending time getting to know the other exhibitors who happily shared screws or politely asked for a hammer during install to collectors supporting artists and galleries in Philadelphia with long-term visions for a robust and sustainable city. Most fair visitors who did a self-guided walkthrough during their lunch hour or after work have been open to longer conversations, show genuine curiosity and have been nerding out about the science of light arts as much as they are celebrating the urgency of liberation."



More in Art Fairs, Biennials and Triennials

- [Global Art Biennials: Renovation, Revelation—or Repetition?](#)
- [Observer's 2026 June Art Fair Calendar](#)
- [Photo London, Like Its Host City, Is Outward-Facing and Ever-Changing](#)
- [The Venice Biennale's Most Powerful Pavilions Tune into Shared Consciousness](#)
- [Five Works That Stole the Show at Frieze New York](#)
- [Independent Opens With Solo Presentations, Early Sales and \(Most Importantly\) Breathing Room](#)

ADVERTISEMENT



Filed Under: Arts, Art Fairs, Megan Galardi, Libby Rosa, M. Fernanda Nuñez Alzate, Darla Migan, Mary Enoch Elizabeth Baxter, Qualesha Wood, Tanika I. Williams, Alessandra Norman, Lara Cardoso, Micaila Abboud, Yvonne Weiss, Malachi Wilson, Tadashi Adamson, Nicholas Stathopoulos, Ernesto Solana, Komie Kim Lee, Nancy Pantirer, Sarah Pater, Yng Ru Chen, Charles Hickey, Afra Al Dhaheri, OSMOS, Mirka Serrato, Jonny Tanna, Josh Kline, Harriet Tubman, Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, America (United States), 81 Leonard Gallery, Blah Blah Gallery, Elsewhere, Feia, Fleisher/Ollman Gallery, Good Naked, Janey, LATITUDE, Pentimenti, Point Blank



ADVERTISEMENT

Recommended Stories



Have a collector car? You'll want to read this.

Specialty insurance costs...

Sponsored | hagerty.com



All-inclusive print plan.

From \$7.99/mo, HP-All In...

Sponsored | HP



Cardiologists: 2 Veggies Will Kill Your Belly & Arm Fat...

Discover the 2 simple...

Sponsored | Health Weekly



Up to 20% off + Free Transfers

Book your Aruba stay with...

Sponsored | Iberostar Joia Aruba



48 Year Old CEO Puts \$2.6B on One Stock

Sponsored | The Motley Fool



New York: New Policy For "Senior Drivers" on Friday

Do not pay your next car insurance bill until you read this

Sponsored | Senior Auto Savings



Honey: The Greatest Enemy of Memory Loss (See How to Use It)

Memory Loss Begins When a Person Eats This Breakfast Foo...

Sponsored | epericvital.com

