

Habitat: Fair Thee Well—Visits With Artists in Their Studios Before Independent New York

BY **Katherine McMahon** POSTED 03/02/17 10:30 AM



Six artists gave us a sneak peak into their studios will creating work that will debut at Independent Art Fair this week. Clockwise from top left: Derrick Adams, Anna Betbeze, Nikki Maloof, Zak Kitnick, Katherine Bradford, and Landon Metz.

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Artists are famously ambivalent about showing up at art fairs. John Baldessari once likened the experience to that of a kid walking in on his parents having sex. But showing one's art at them is de rigeur. Fairs—evolved from bazaars stocked with secondary-market material to, now, meccas for the new—are an integral part of the art ecosystem. In recent years, some have sprung up that try to improve on the trade fair model. Independent, founded by Elizabeth Dee and Darren Flook in New York in 2010 and since expanded to Brussels, is one such fair. A “curated” event, it

is clubbier and more intimate than most art fairs—booths tend to blur and blend together, and the art leans toward the cool and critically lauded. This year’s hometown edition, at Spring Studios in lower Manhattan in March, features some 45 international galleries and institutions. In its ideal state, as identified by co-director Alix Dana, “Independent incentivizes the creation of ambitious projects by encouraging artists and galleries to take risks.” For this installment of Habitat, *ARTnews* visited the studios of New York artists—all of them in Brooklyn—making new work for the fair.



Katherine Bradford in her Brooklyn studio.

Katherine Bradford

In the heart of Williamsburg, Katherine Bradford immersed herself in paintings of swimmers in various states of action and repose. “I make as many paintings as I can and rely on Canada”—her gallery since last year—“to edit them,” she said. Some of the paintings have origins in a studio in a big mill building in Maine, but work otherwise happens in a neighborhood space she has inhabited since 1985.