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Human Zoos at VOLTA, Brought to You by Artist Lavar Munroe

Daria Daniel, March 4, 2015



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From March 5–8, [VOLTA NY](#) will feature the work of Bahamian artist Lavar Munroe at [Nomad Gallery](#)'s booth. Through painting and stitched works, the impassioned artist explores the sensitive topic of 19th-century freak shows and human zoos (see [Exhibit B Might Be Offensive To Some But That's No Reason to Close It Down](#)).

The artist focuses on the stigma of human difference. He incorporates ethnologic illustrations and advertisements in his works, pairing, for example, human beings and animal counterparts, as was characteristic of human zoo exhibits during the late 1800s.

In a recent video [interview](#), he critiques the necessity of “[validating oneself] by invalidating others who don’t look like us and speak like us” and defends the commonalities that bind us, while also aiming to redirect and refocus the current cultural discourse. “We are all human beings, we are all the same, we all bleed red, and we all will die,” he concludes.

Munroe is aware of a spectacle culture that he himself falls prey to. He draws parallels between the exhibitionism and voyeurism present in 19th-century freak shows, still prevalent in subtle forms in modern times, and urges the rehabilitation of self against exploitation. He illustrates this reclamation of self by focusing on the physical representation of wounds being stitched and sewn together.

See Munroe's works on display at Nomad Gallery. booth A7, at [VOLTA Art Fair NY on Pier 90, West 50th Street at 12th Avenue, New York](#). See [artnet in action at The VOLTA Salon 2015 with artnet](#) and check out [Your Art Agenda: 12 Exclusive VIP Events Not To Miss During Armory Week](#) and [The Go-To Guide for Armory Week 2015 Art Fairs](#).