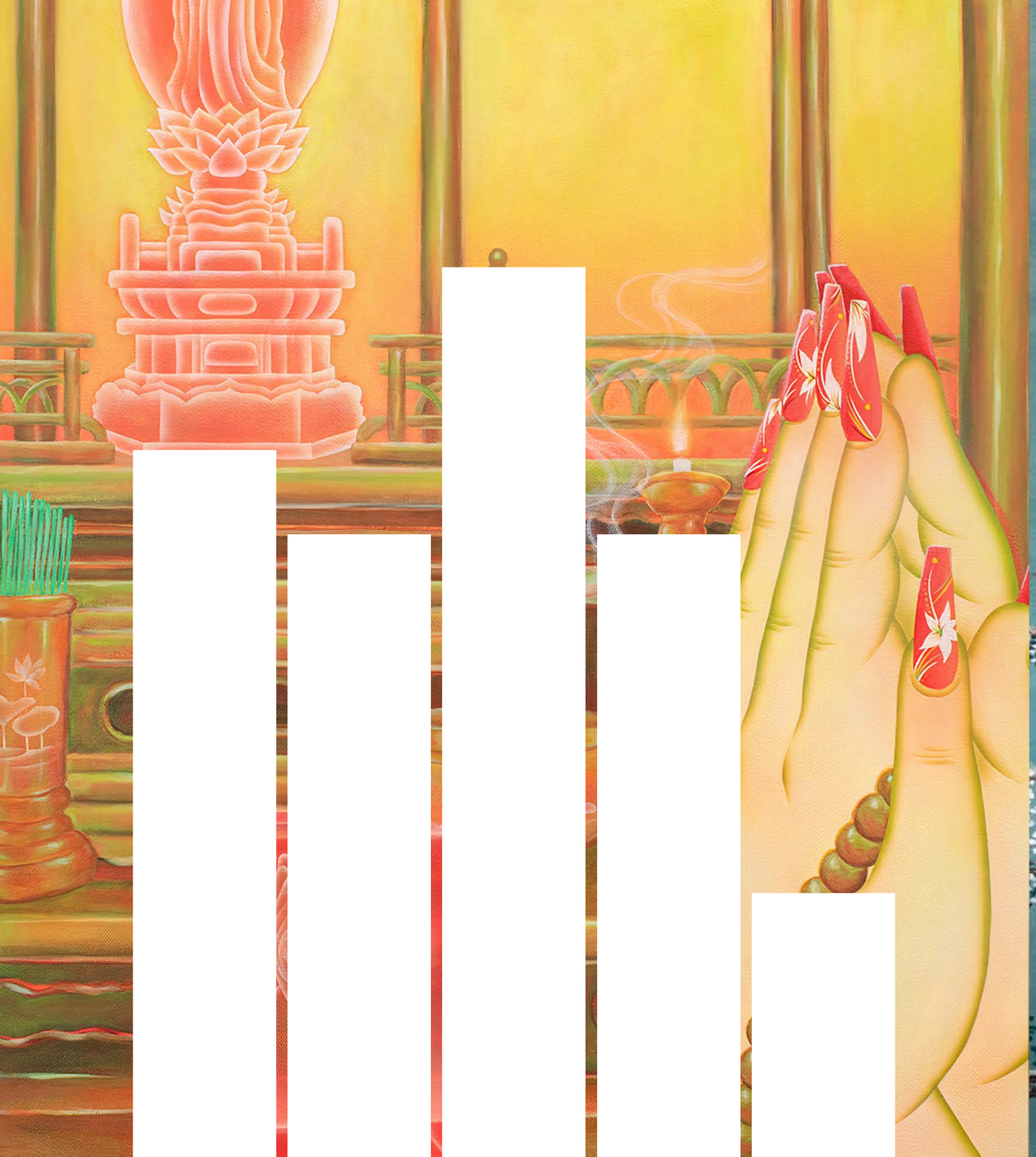


The Women Artists Market Report 2024

ARTSY

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Words and analysis by Casey Lesser

Introduction

To some, an annual discussion of the underrepresentation of women artists in the art market might feel rote or tired. Indeed, for the past several years, the narrative has been largely the same: Despite incremental progress, the art world's historical affinity for white male artists continues to persist.

But having this conversation, and drawing attention to the facts, remains a crucial part of bringing about change, and not just for female-identifying artists. Though an artist's gender and identity broadly should not overshadow or define their work (unless they wish it so), we cannot ignore the enduring pattern of gender inequality when it comes to the artists gaining the most commercial success. With this in mind, we present The Women Artists Market Report 2024, in time with International Women's Day.

One year ago, we debuted our first report of this kind, The Women Artists Market Report 2023, which focused primarily on auction data. We found that women artists' works accounted for just 9% of the auction market in 2022. However, we were heartened to discover a correlation between greater parity and younger age groups: Among ultra-contemporary artists (artists born in or after 1975), we found that women artists' works accounted for 44% of auction sales; and when we narrowed further, to artists born in or after 1985, women artists soared ahead, capturing 63% of the market. In 2023, this pattern remained consistent. In Artsy's annual Art Market Recap, we found that among the 50 most expensive works by ultra-contemporary artists sold at auction in 2023, women artists accounted for 42% of the works. For works by artists born in or after 1985, women artists represented 63% of the top sales under the hammer.

For this 2024 report, we're shifting focus, looking instead to Artsy data. In the sections below, we offer a pulse on the current demand for women artists' works, and we also shine a light on individual artists who are gaining significant market momentum. By delving into commercial inquiry data and year-over-year growth, we seek to underscore the new names who are shifting the balance, inspiring a more inclusive and equitable art ecosystem.



1.

Younger women artists are shifting the balance

Inquiries on Artsy by artist gender, 2023



Looking at all commercial actions on Artsy in 2023, we found that 25% of inquiries on for-sale artworks were for works by female-identifying artists. As the chart (left) shows, works by male artists, in contrast, accounted for 71%. (The remaining 4% is split between nonbinary artists, collectives, and those without gender specifications.)

Though these numbers are hardly inspiring, they're inevitably skewed by the artists with the highest volume of available works on Artsy, many of whom are white men (such as Andy Warhol). So, we narrowed the data to focus only on ultra-contemporary artists and found that female-identifying artists' works accounted for a greater proportion—35% of all inquiries. And when we narrowed down much further to Gen Z artists (born in or after 1997), we found a promising picture of parity: Female artists' works account for 51% of inquiries.

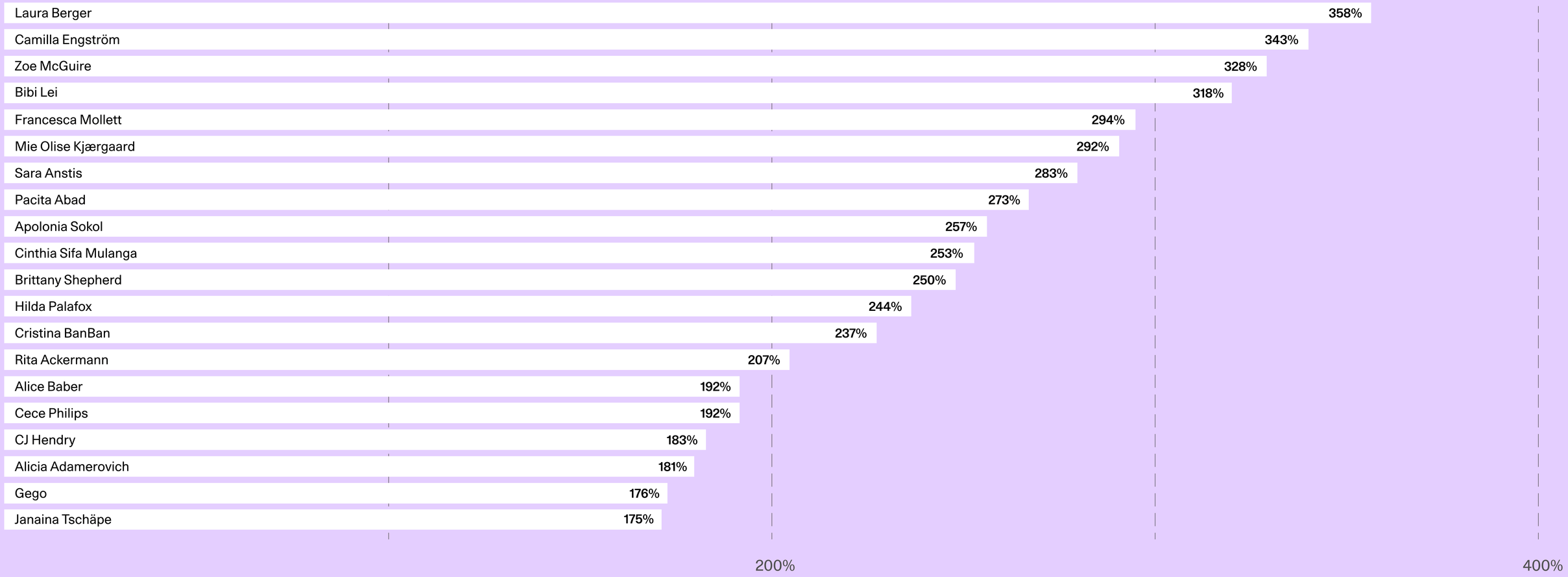
Though the sample size inevitably narrows as we zoom into these younger generations of artists, it is notable to see a parallel of what we found last year in the auction market: The younger the artists, the greater the balance of commercial interest across genders. Now, on to the artists.

2.

In-demand women artists



Female-identifying artists
Growth in inquirers, 2022–2023



In-demand women artists

The women artists with the most volume of commercial interest on Artsy in 2023 are well known—including Tracey Emin, Etel Adnan, and Helen Frankenthaler. The inclusion of these artists, acclaimed and beloved in museums, galleries, and at auction, is no surprise. However, in the chart (on the previous page), we feature a less predictable pool of female-identifying artists with the most year-over-year growth in inquirers on Artsy from 2022 to 2023.

Unsurprisingly, given the market's penchant for newness, the 20 artists featured above are primarily emerging names—the average birth year is 1982. Seven are based in New York, followed by four in London. There is a relatively broad distribution in terms of nationality, with four American artists, two British artists, and two artists of Swedish descent, while the rest all hail from different countries. The majority (13) of artists are white, with four artists of Asian descent, two Black artists, and one Latinx artist.

Eleven of these artists, including Laura Berger, who leads the list, work primarily in figurative painting. The Chicago-based artist creates ethereal scenes, often monochromatic, filled with translucent figures caught in moments of embrace. Meanwhile, five of the featured artists are known for their abstract works, and three—Alicia Adamerovich, Camilla Engström, and Zoe McGuire—are also working on otherworldly paintings, including fantastical landscapes and transcendental visions of nature.

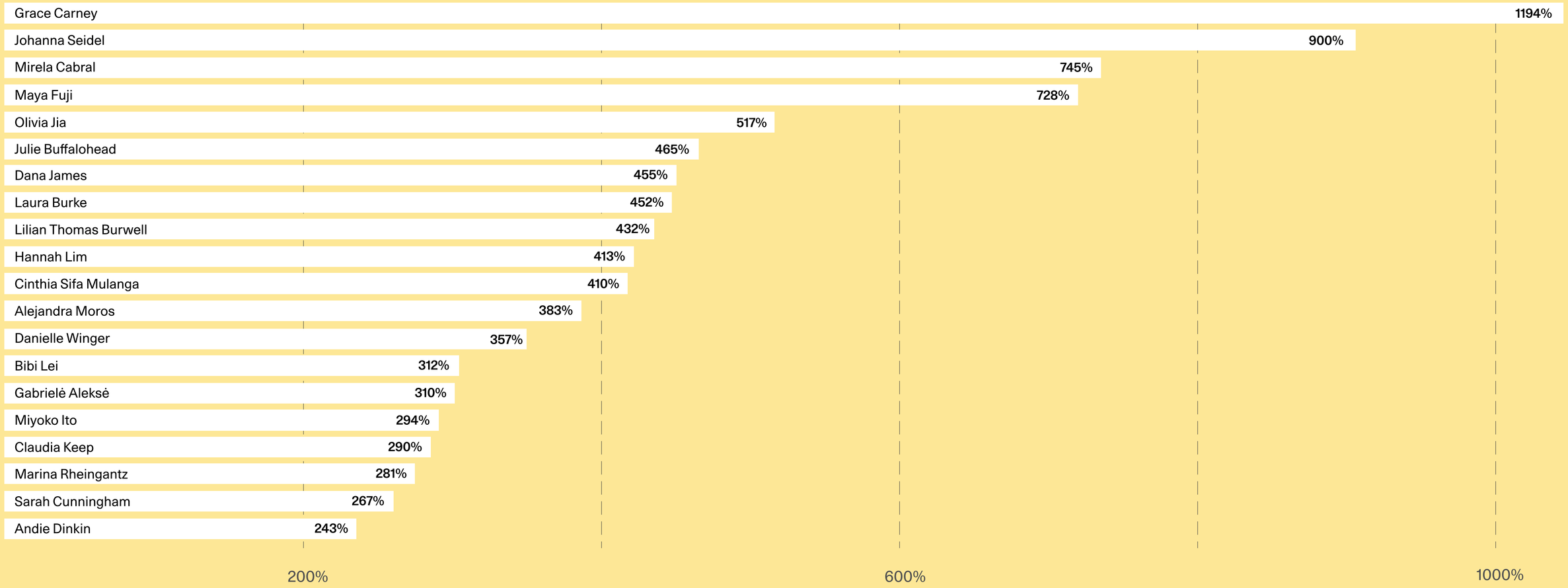
There are several established and late artists represented, too. Filipino artist Pacita Abad is in the midst of a posthumous moment, as her traveling retrospective makes its way through museums internationally (its next stop is at MoMA PS1, opening this April). In 2023, Tina Kim Gallery, which represents the artist, mounted a solo show in New York and presented Abad's work at more than half a dozen art fairs. Meanwhile, the late Abstract Expressionist artist Alice Baber made a splash at The Armory Show in New York last September, when Berry Campbell Gallery presented her timeless, color-soaked canvases, which are still unfamiliar to many audiences. The acclaimed late Venezuelan artist Gego rounds out the list; the artist is known for her abstract sculptures that harness space, and her traveling retrospective closed at the Guggenheim Bilbao in February.

The celebrated painter Rita Ackermann, who is the most established living artist on this list, had a strong 2023, including a solo exhibition at Hauser & Wirth in Los Angeles, and multiple appearances at art fairs with the mega-gallery.

3.

Trending women artists

Female-identifying artists
Growth in followers, 2022–2023



Trending women artists

Every day, Artsy users follow artists to get notified when new works are uploaded on the platform. This barometer for an artist's popularity and commercial appeal, which does not rely on available inventory, is an interesting complement to inquiry data. We see follow counts rise when an artist opens a new show, appears in the press, or simply when their galleries upload their compelling new-to-market work.

This cohort of artists, almost entirely different from the previous group, skews slightly younger and more American, with 10 artists born in the U.S. This includes Native American artist Julie Buffalohead, a member of the Ponca Tribe of Nebraska, who gained representation with Jessica Silverman in February 2023 and held a solo show with the San Francisco gallery the year prior. Buffalohead is known for portraying animals (from foxes to wolves to ermines) in her paintings, drawing on Indigenous storytelling traditions while also deploying sharp social commentary.

At the top of the list here is one of the most promising new stars of contemporary painting, Grace Carney. The Minnesota-born, New York–based artist is becoming increasingly known for her hulking paintings, at once tumultuous and mesmerizing, in which abstraction gently commingles with the human form, thanks to a masterful handling of paint and color. Carney gained representation with P.P.O.W last year and recently closed her first solo show at the Tribeca gallery.

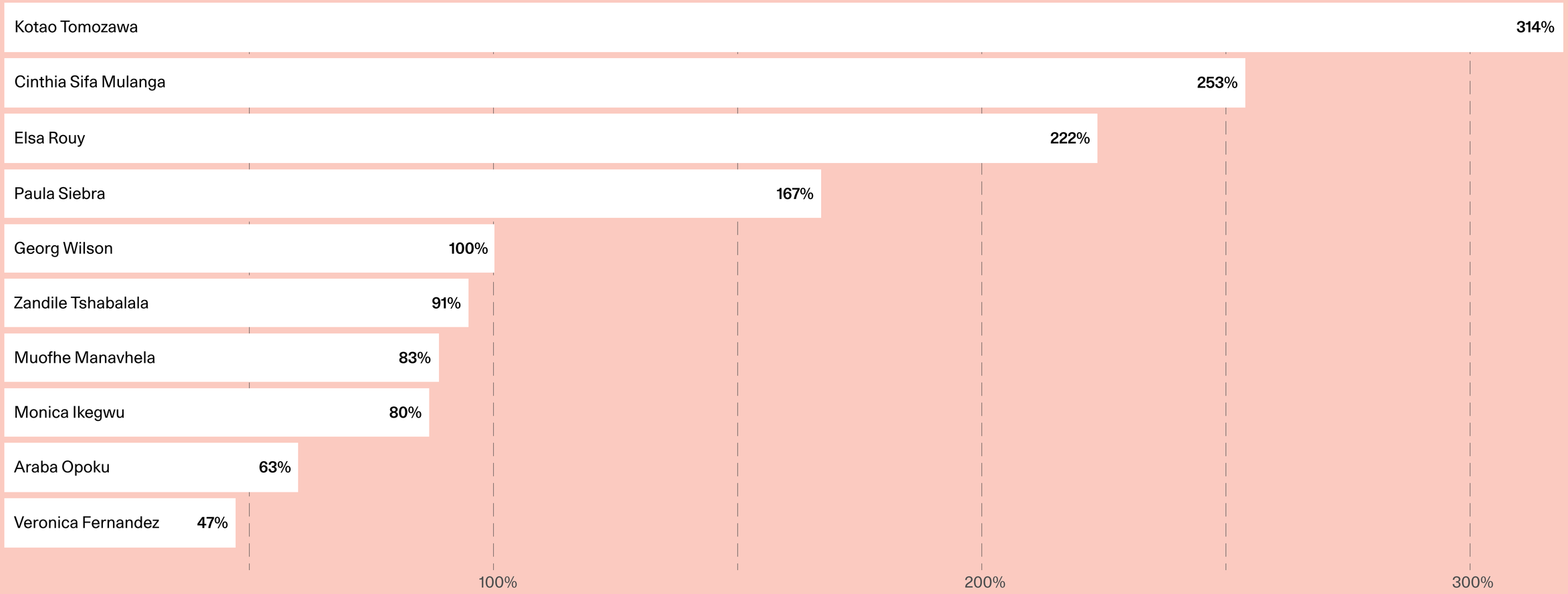
Several of the artists in this list are increasingly esteemed for works that blend abstraction and the natural world: Mirela Cabral, who held a solo show with Kupfer last year, creates lush, dazzling paintings resembling thickets of trees, plants, and botanicals; nonagenarian Lilian Thomas Burwell is known for swirling, mesmerizing canvases and sculptures, shown by Berry Campbell Gallery, that resemble the inside of a flower or cascades of leaves; Dana James, who shows with Hollis Taggart, uses a variety of materials and soft swathes of color to create mixed-media works that channel winks of moonlight; Marina Rheingantz, represented by White Cube, builds on traditions of landscape painting to realize fresh depictions of earth, rife with emotion and the passing of time; and Sarah Cunningham, who shows with Lisson Gallery and was featured in The Artsy Vanguard 2023–2024, mines inspiration for her vibrant, dancing abstractions from forests.

4.

Gen Z women artists



Female-identifying Gen Z artists
Growth in inquirers, 2022–2023



Gen Z women artists

Inspired by the parity we're seeing among Gen Z artists gaining art market traction mentioned earlier, we've taken a closer look at the youngest adult generation—here, with an average birth year of 1998—currently garnering art world attention.

Notably, all of the artists on this list focus at least in part on figurative painting. More interesting, however, is the strong representation of artists hailing from the African continent here, in contrast to the subsets above. These include the Congolese artist Cinthia Sifa Mulanga, who was featured in The Artsy Vanguard 2023–2024 and is known for her collaged paintings featuring women and objects occupying striking architectural spaces; South African artists Zandile Tshabalala and Muofhe Manavhela, who each have respective, distinctive approaches to figurative painting; and Ghanaian artist Araba Opoku, whose striking acrylic paintings spanning nature, abstraction, and the figure have caught the eyes of tastemaking galleries kó and Gallery 1957.

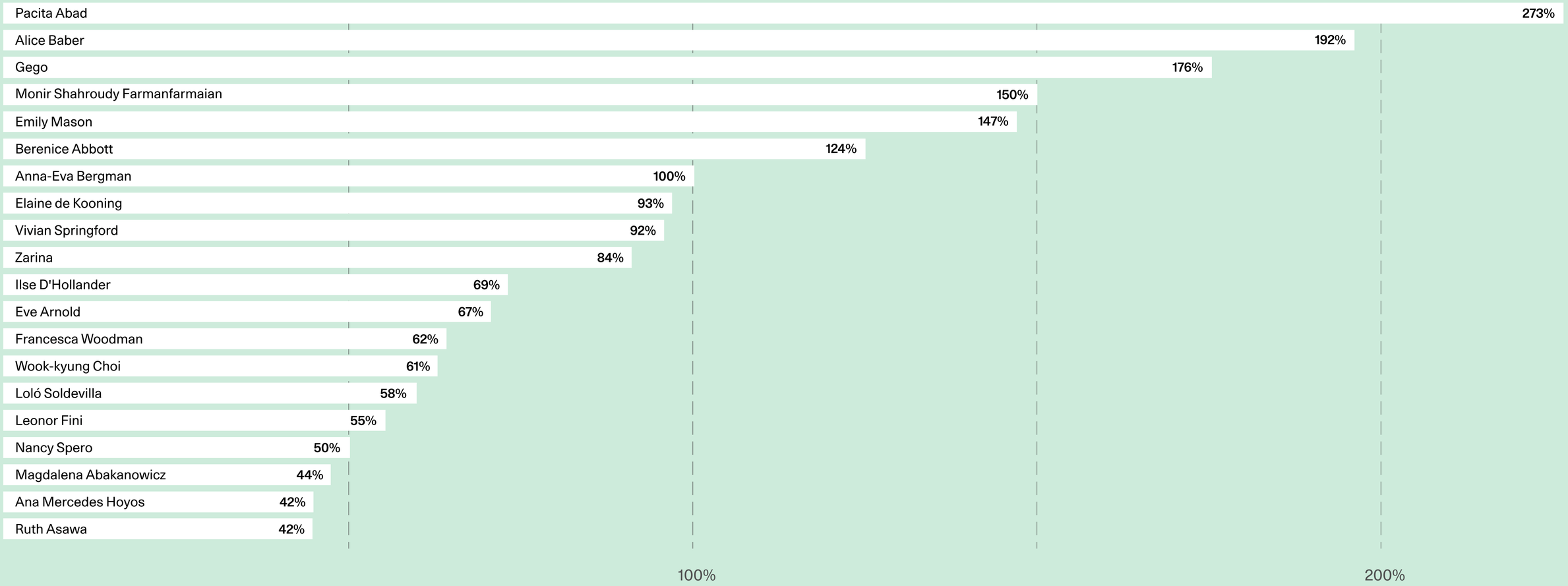
High on the list, too, are Kotao Tomozawa and Elsa Rouy, who, though distinct, share a dark, unnerving approach to portraying the body. Tomozawa, who has a solid Instagram following of more than 44,000, is known for hyperreal depictions of faces covered in slime; while Rouy wields her paintbrush to manipulate bodies, with her latest works seeming to slice nudes apart and put them back together.

There's a second Artsy Vanguard alum here, too: Paula Siebra, the rising Brazilian artist represented by Mendes Wood DM whose small-scale still lifes and landscapes imbued with poetic tenderness are increasingly attracting collectors, curators, and critics.

5.

Late women artists

Female-identifying late artists
Growth in inquirers, 2022–2023



Late women artists

Of the various subsets of the market discussed in this report, that of late women artists is arguably the steadiest, as names like Louise Bourgeois, Joan Mitchell, Georgia O'Keeffe, Leonora Carrington, Alma Thomas, and Agnes Martin have become favorites at auction houses, as well as at blue-chip galleries and institutions. In the chart (on the previous page), focused on the inquirer growth on late women artists' works on Artsy, we see several other artists whose works have fetched strong auction results in recent years, including Leonor Fini, Ruth Asawa, and Elaine de Kooning.

Factors contributing to renewed interest in artists such as these include shows at galleries and institutions, as well as inclusion in biennials and mainstream cultural moments. Magdalena Abakanowicz, for example, was celebrated in an acclaimed Tate Modern exhibition last year, and her woven fiber sculptures graced the runway of Alexander McQueen's spring/summer 2024 show at Paris Fashion Week in October. Spotlights like these not only boost the artist's name recognition and market, but also prompt new discussions of their contributions to art history.

In addition to Abad, Baber, and Gego, mentioned previously, we see here several cohorts of key 20th-century artists, including masters of abstraction: Emily Mason, Anna-Eva Bergmen, Vivian Springford, Wook-kyung Choi, and Loló Soldevilla; and photography: Berenice Abbott, Francesca Woodman, and Eve Arnold.

Featured here, too, are artists who passed away in the past decade, just as the market was starting to catch up to them. These include Iranian artist Monir Shahroudy Farmanfarmaian, whose dazzling mirror works are shown by Haines Gallery and The Third Line; and the Indian artist Zarina, known for elegant, politically charged works made from paper, who is shown by Luhring Augustine.

Conclusion

Though there are signs of positive change and artists breaking through traditional market biases across our data, there's plenty of room for improvement. In addition to the lack of equity across gender, the lack of diversity is apparent, too. While we are seeing certain BIPOC and non-Western artists gaining a foothold, the majority of the artists represented here are white and Western. Further investigation is also needed to examine the representation of artists who identify as nonbinary or of other genders in the art market.

In sharing this data, we aim to add an additional layer of insight to a broader understanding of gender dynamics at play in the art market. With greater consideration of existing disparities, we can work towards a more inclusive, diverse, expansive art market that supports more artists.

Methodology

This report draws upon analysis of inquiry and follower data from Artsy's online marketplace, from January 1, 2022 through December 31, 2023. Our examination centers on artist follows and inquiries about artworks, which serve as a proxy for sales and market interest. The inquiry data we examined includes both the volume of inquiries placed on artists' works on Artsy in 2023, as well as the number of individuals inquiring on artists' works.

For our analysis of year-over-year growth, we ensured that artists had at least 10 inquirers or followers in 2022, to avoid hyperbolic statements of growth. The one exception is the section on Gen Z artists' growth in inquirers, where we lowered the threshold in order to account for artists' newness to the market.

The methodology employed seeks to provide an understanding of the art market dynamics of online collecting in the present, pinpointing trends in collector behavior. We acknowledge that the numbers represented here are impacted by the galleries that partner with Artsy, the volume of artists' works on the platform, and the artists that are promoted via Artsy's marketing channels. By analyzing both the aggregate inquiry data and the distinct artists attracting users, we aimed to uncover the female-identifying artists whose works resonated with Artsy users in 2023.

Credits

Pages 1 and 4: Marina Rheingantz, *Pangea*, 2020, Courtesy of the artist and Zeno X Gallery. Pages 6 and 21: Francesca Mollett, *Spokes*, 2023. Courtesy of the artist and GRIMM. Pages 1 and 9: Maya Fuji, *Buddy*, 2023. Courtesy of the artist and Hashimoto Contemporary. Pages 12 and 21: Cinthia Sifa Mulanga, *you might be doing too much*, 2023. Courtesy of the artist, Bode, and Latitudes. Page 15: Ana Mercedes Hoyos, *Sandias*, 1998. Courtesy of the artist and Emblematic Art Gallery.



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