

GAGOSIAN



THE ART NEWSPAPER

Three exhibitions to see in London this weekend

From exquisite Elizabethan portrait miniatures at the National Portrait Gallery to Franz West's playful sculptures at Tate Modern

José da Silva and Kabir Jhala



Isaac Oliver's Unknown girls aged 5 and 4 (1590) are on show at the National Portrait Gallery © Victoria & Albert Museum, London

The Franz West exhibition at Tate Modern (until 2 June; tickets £11, concessions available) begins before you even step inside the gallery. West's large sausage-like, candy-coloured Outdoor Sculptures—irreverent responses to pompous public sculpture—have been placed outside the museum's entrance, accessible to all. There is always a risk in sacrificing the Austrian artist's subversive sense of humour, so intrinsic to his work, to underline quite how important he was to 20th-century sculpture. The strength of this show—the UK's first major West survey since his death in 2012—lies in emphasising that West's greatest legacy is his rejection of playful interactions preventing serious contemplation of art. Accordingly, viewers are encouraged to play with recreations of West's Passtücke—papier maché and found-object amalgamations. His love of collaboration and breaking institutional convention is acknowledged by having the British artist Sarah Lucas involved in curating the show, placing his so-called Legitimate Sculptures on appropriately stark breeze blocks and MDF plinths. A pink splatter from a paint-filled egg thrown by Lucas deftly mirrors a nebulous hanging pink blob in the last room—it's silly but also considered, and almost certainly what Franz West would have wanted.