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## [Bruce Helander](#)

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## Top Ten Artists to Watch

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Will Ryman's "The Roses" (2011) on Park Avenue. Photo by Iwan Baan. Courtesy of Paul Kasmin Gallery

It's certainly not always easy, and often confusing, to sift through the multitude of fresh, genuine talent somewhere out there that is breaking through new ground like spring crotons pushing their colorful heads up along urban sidewalks to add an unexpected and enjoyable experience to our daily lives. This winter, young sculptor, Will Ryman, challenged the harsh colorless Manhattan winter by "planting" 38 larger-than-life painted aluminum roses in the middle of the frozen boulevard on Park Avenue, which was one of the best and most talked about public installations of the winter season and definitely impossible not to notice. His work is a perfect example of how art can stimulate our visual senses while increasing our appreciation of the intellectual forces behind genuine creativity and sheer invention. But most of the great new, underexposed innovative talent is usually not out on the street, but hidden from sight in the back room of a gallery, or gathering some dust in a distant artist's studio that may never literally see the light of day. Unfortunately, it would take years to unearth and evaluate much of the promising works that are somehow finding their way into galleries and faraway art fairs around the world. This regular column investigates and recommends artists to watch that you may never have heard of before, but you will indeed be hearing a lot more about.

Hadieh Shafie, 10195 Pages, 30 x 30 x 3 inches, acrylic, ink on paper with printed & hand written Farsi text "eshghe", translation "love". Courtesy of Pentimenti Gallery, Philadelphia.



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6. HADIEH SHAFIE is a process-oriented artist who was born in Iran, where the bright-dyed colors of fabrics and paper of her native land have a strong influence on the artist's work. Her recent exhibit at PULSE/New York was an eye-catching web of mesmerizing circular shapes, wedged into one larger circle made from tightly rolled flat strips of vibrant combinations of pulsating forms. The eye popping variations start to develop as the artist methodically paints each piece of flat paper, and then cuts the large squares into smaller strips no more than about an inch. Each strip is then added to a core of other circular shapes that form an expanding rainbow. Hidden within each form is a single handwritten word in Farsi (Persian language), which is then bound tighter than a mummy's wrappings to protect its secret message for all time. In Shafie's "paintings," there are remote references to the famous targets of Jasper Johns and Kenneth Noland, as well as the Op art illusions of contemporary artists like Bridget Riley. A main ingredient of these paper scrolls, which may have a correlation to ancient manuscripts discovered in the Mid-East, is the significance of a time-consuming experimental process that involves animated repetition and time. There is a homegrown charm to these methodical, tightly knit and fit compositions that is an important part of the artistic method that is both performance and concealed document. If you can imagine drops of rain on a psychedelic pond hitting the water's surface all at once, it could serve as a backdrop to Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band. Shafie is one of ten finalists for the prestigious Jameel Prize from the Victorian and Albert Museum (London).

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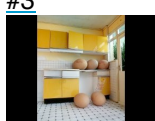
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