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HANDMADE TALES: COLLAGE, TEXTILE AND ASSEMBLAGE PEICES ABOUND AT ART BASEL IN MIAMI BEACH

by Daniel Cassady



Alvaro Barrington, *Legend in the City* (2021), Blum & Poe, Los Angeles, New York and Tokyo. Photo by Eric Thayer

With NFT installations flashing in hi-def from screens at Pace, and Tezos letting fair visitors mint an algorithm-assisted self-portrait, the art world seems prepared to stop flirting with the metaverse and take things to the next level. But that does not mean there is not room for a more deliberate kind of art. The aisles of Art Basel in Miami Beach are packed with rich, textural works. Folded paper, textiles, found objects and epoxy resin hang, drape and explode from the walls of gallery stands, proving that physical objects still hold a warm place in the heart of the art market.

Born in Grenada and raised in Brooklyn, Alvaro Barrington merges his entire personal history into a massive concrete frame in this assemblage piece, priced at \$90,000. Layers of dark yarn run jagged across a burlap sack that recalls his childhood years in the Caribbean. Spray-painted sections of cardboard and a milk crate basketball hoop call to mind the streets of Brooklyn, where he moved to at the age of 10 after his mother passed away, and the hip-hop culture from which he draws inspiration. “The thing about Alvaro is he’s endlessly experimenting,” says the gallerist Tim Blum. “There’s no fear and there’s no limit.”