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Los Angeles Friezes Over

Ben Tarnoff
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Pro-socialist cultural critic and enthusiast

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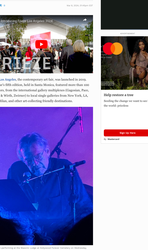

Frieze Los Angeles Small Art Fairgoers. Photo by Jeffrey Sarmiento/Frieze Los Angeles.

Frieze Los Angeles. Photo by Jeffrey Sarmiento/Frieze Los Angeles.

Frieze Itself was a fine day event. From February on March 3, it ruled. Just the size of the art scene that passed over Los Angeles. For Frieze, the fair, the city, the art world, the entertainment world, the celebrity Hierarchy and Mosaic. Artists spanned from modern Tony Oliveira to contemporary work based on A Lanier's Gnosis at Frieze, gave live performances with his Texas country band at the Museum Hall of Hollywood Forever Cemetery. Lita Albuquerque held a guided meditation at Michael Rotondi's gallery and Kate Bush gave a performance at LA Louver.

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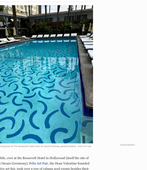

Frieze Los Angeles Small Art Fairgoers. Photo by Jeffrey Sarmiento/Frieze Los Angeles.

Meanwhile, over at the Roosevelt Hotel in Hollywood (Itself the site of the first Oscars Ceremony), Felix Art Fair, the Dean Valentine funded alternative art fair, held over a set of colors, pop comic books their Ceramic Sculpture Gallery, Gallery 1, and at two floors of the hotel where each room featured a different gallery.

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So what was it like? At times hectic, overwhelming, and disorienting (Le Maurice?) I walked down this corridor already?, But also friendly, inspiring, and transformative. Frieze is a place for connection and discovery. Like any professional convention, it creates an opportunity for people who may have an email or some relationship to connect, or to have those meetings that only happen yearly at such events.
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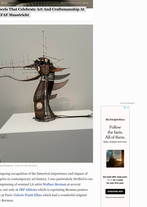
Frieze Los Angeles Small Art Fairgoers. Photo by Jeffrey Sarmiento/Frieze Los Angeles.

In what did I see and what did I like? Los Angeles based artist Andrew Bowers' compelling work at Tinkerine, wonderful prints by Lora Hutchison Lorem Ipsum I'm helping with a project at San Francisco's Alemany Maps. There were several sponsored booths by such companies as Tinkerine, Lora Hutchison, Andrew Bowers, Ceramic Sculpture Gallery and LA Louver had a selection of Hayward Gallery digital art. Hannah Hoffman, as LA gallery was new to me (but highly recommended) Jamie Wyeth's work was fantastic. Jeffrey Sarmiento's photographs of Frieze Los Angeles, Jeffrey Sarmiento's work, artistic, intelligent and Simon Stroud's work had an intriguing, Larry Bell surround sized mass, Gagosian had multiple works by Lauren Halsey. Work by Sam McKinniss seemed to be everywhere. Mary Schein (Mary's beautiful Los Business Lunch) you don't see a lot of her work in



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In the ongoing recognition of the historical importance and impact of Los Angeles in contemporary art history, I was particularly thrilled to see the championing of assistant LA artist Mathew Berman at several Frieze Los Angeles booths. Berman's work, a contemporary interpretation but also of Paul Gauguin Frank Elbar which had a wonderful original work by Berman.

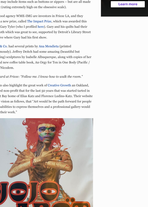
Wave Hors called Aggregate Of Genius. Of Artists and artists and artists who are actors (like Lisa Kudrowski) and of major art collectors who made their fortunes in Hollywood (one that George Lucas I can't think it was?).

Overheard at Frieze: A successful art consultant said that she was her job as "training people with lots of money to be mediators of art works."

Frieze Los Angeles Small Art Fairgoers. Photo by Jeffrey Sarmiento/Frieze Los Angeles.

In the days before Frieze opened, there was an event at EMOCO chairs with a panel discussion led by sculptor Kathleen Anderson about gender and the contemporary art world. Kathleen Anderson's work, which explores the visible Lotus, which seeks to engage women artists, activists and thought leaders around the topic of gender equality. Andersen and the Ballet Centre also had an installation of perfect women's gaming gender disparity in the ground floor corridor at Felix Art Fair.

There was also a gallery show at Frieze gallery ARCOPE Space of an something artist Dillon Cornell, Holden Faber, Vegas Li, Jack Robinson, Jeffrey Sarmiento and Ryan Trecartin with this theme has been extended to March



Frieze Los Angeles Small Art Fairgoers. Photo by Jeffrey Sarmiento/Frieze Los Angeles.

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At Felix Art Fair, the work is often less expensive than at Frieze, and the artists are often younger. The galleries are more often independent. As there is a legitimate sense of discovery when crossing the fair. Sex Fiend Gallery, an LA exhibition space in the Mt. Washington area, had work by Jack Ryan, Jeffrey Sarmiento, Ryan Trecartin, Vegas Li, Dillon Cornell, actually had a presence at both Frieze and at Felix. At Felix, I saw work by Tala Lavitt, an artist with a Lebanese design, graphic arts sensibility whose work Felix is known for, possibly a solo show, artist Gay Kabish (who had an Embrace it aspect.) but are all made of Lebanese Cedar wood and Lebanese Cedar Oil.

Hollywood agency WME IMG an investment in Frieze LA, and Felix funded a new prize, called The Impact Prize, which was awarded this year to Gaya Tzur's (who I predicted here). Gaya and her quilts had their own booth which was great to see, supported by Detroit's Library Street Collective where Gaya had her first show.

Lehong & Co. had several prints by Ana Mendieta (printed posthumously) and Lehong & Co. Gallery (Lehong & Co. Gallery is dissecting a sculpture by Isabelle Albuquerque, along with copies of her powerful neo-coffee table book, Ice Dogs Do Not Ice Bite Body (Purple / Dark) Nicaragua.

Overheard at Frieze: "Follow me. I know how to walk the room."

I want to also highlight the great work of Caroline Cornell, an Oakland, CA based artist profile that for the last 40 years that was started turned in the Asset Bay home of Ellen Rose and Frances Cadieux Rose. Their website sets the vision as follows, "Art would be the path forward for people to connect with themselves and a professional gallery would unlock that work."

Frieze Los Angeles Small Art Fairgoers. Photo by Jeffrey Sarmiento/Frieze Los Angeles.

And this it succeed, like the circus-loving twins. According to the press release, Caroline Cornell's work is "a dynamic exploration of gender, identity, frontiers, what Frieze and Felix accomplished more than anything was an affirmation of the artworld lifting to Los Angeles, the creative capital of the world, where more people come from foreign artistically than in any other city also on the planet.

Dwell before art? Art and Frieze LA, not you?

Follow me on Twitter or LinkedIn. Check out my website or some of my other work here.

Ben Tarnoff
Contributor
I am an award-winning journalist and book-selling author, most recently of "Lost Art: Adventures in the Underworld." (1st ed. Read More
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Frieze Los Angeles Small Art Fairgoers. Photo by Jeffrey Sarmiento/Frieze Los Angeles.

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Thanks to the internet, the best prescription glasses online are just a few clicks away. It's easy to browse, customize and try on frames without taking a trip to the eyeglass store or an optometrist's office. You'll need a current prescription, of course, but also the GlassesUSA.com app pulls overall let you trace capture prescriptions with a virtual tape measure. Online retailers have expanded their offerings to include sunglasses—including Warby Parker—also accept HSA and FSA funds, meaning an out-of-pocket cost for you.
Our team tested over a dozen frames and lenses to find our prescription glasses online. Illustration: Forbes Staff
Illustration: Forbes Staff
To determine the best prescription glasses online, we ordered frames from Forbes Vetted retailers to test our overall evaluation and share their in-depth feedback. Partner Branded Content Manager Claire Spring, Forbes Vetted Reviewer Lindsey Bryan-Smith and Forbes Staff Reviewer Claire Spring, a nearsighted, dyslexic glasses-wearer, and associate nearsighted author Shae Stevens, who requires a strong prescription. We also got advice from Dr. Sandra Young, O.D., an optometrist and an eyeglass expert, and Dr. Sara Lane, an optometrist and her eye specialist, and daily sign on the best frames for your face shape according to deputy fashion editor Kati Stevens.
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Editor's Picks
Best Online Prescription Glasses GlassesUSA.
Best Affordable Prescription Glasses: EyeBuyDirect
Best Stylish Prescription Glasses: Warby Parker
Best Designer Prescription Glasses: Frames Direct
Best Durable Prescription Glasses: Zenni
Best Prescription Sunglasses: Zenni Optical
Best Blue Light Blocking Glasses: Felix Gray
Best Reading Glasses: Look Optic
Best Prescription Glasses For Kids: GlassesUSA
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Insurance accepted: Yes, and at 35%,FSA | **Virtual try-on:** Yes | **Virtual Rx scanned:** No

GlassesOff is one of the largest online prescription glasses retailers, offering hundreds of styles and lenses for Rx glasses and sunglasses. Its Rx lenses are made in-house in Canada and come with free shipping, free returns, and a 30-day trial period. The number of options, but it's easy to evaluate the frames." Lens breakout control either from Defense of shopping on the GlassesOff website. Prices run the gamut from $50 up to $700, depending on which brand you choose. With its virtual try-on feature, you can see how the frames look on your face before you place your order. Lenses are made in-house by Essilor, a company that's been in the business for over 150 years. Lenses are made through your contact lenses, and those with expired prescriptions can get a renewal via the company's virtual exam tool.

All lenses are made to order in-house and then put through a series of inspections to check for quality, clarity and proper alignment. You also have the option for upgrades like progressive lenses, anti-reflective coatings and transition lenses for up to little extra. Lenses are made in-house and then put through a series of inspections. Additional prescription extras," adds Holmes. Standard, associate insights architect Ross Stevens describes the selection and checkout flow as "slick and intuitive," and all three of our testers found the process straightforward. Lenses are made in-house by Essilor, a company that's been in the business for over 150 years. Lenses are made through your contact lenses, which was pretty impressive given that the vendor included "Bangalore weekend," text managing either Liberty Fertile. If you're unhappy with your new glasses for any reason, GlassesOff has a 30-day, no-questions-asked return policy—but you can only take advantage of this for your first pair.

Best for:

- Variety of styles and brands, including designer
- Prescription and non-prescription sunglasses, blue light glasses, sunglasses, safety glasses and sports glasses

Keep in mind:

- The variety may be overwhelming for some
- Only your first pair is eligible for the return policy

Best Affordable Prescription Glasses

EyeBuyDirect: Affordable Name Brands And House Designs

Amity Glasses

$70

Buy From EyeBuyDirect →

Turnaround time: 7 to 14 business days | **Return policy:** 30 days for a one-time replacement or refund | **Insurance accepted:** No, but HSA/FSA accepted | **Virtual try-on:** Yes, at no extra cost | **Virtual Rx scanned:** No

EyeBuyDirect's wallet-friendly prices make their vision affordable and sustainable. To keep prices down on EyeBuyDirect's own styles, everything from concept to design to manufacturing is done in-house. You can choose from some brand-name frames from Dolce and Gay Blue, and the site makes it easy to locate options with specific features. "We have a wide selection of frames, and we have a very robust filtering system that's filter on those preferences or input helpful," says Holmes. Frames start at $6 and standard lenses at $7 or you can opt for upgrades like advanced lenses and premium lenses, which go for $99 and $189, respectively. Standard lenses are made in-house by Essilor the blue light filtering as well as two choices for light tinder frames," says Holmes.

Prices are fairly cheap on this, you can click "Or, or" to upload a photo and text shape it looks like, or over face. The photo stays uploaded as you navigate the site, so you can quickly see what either options look like. Our testers note that their eyeglasses arrived promptly and safely in a compact cardboard box. "I like that the packaging was small and compact, and it was easy to open without tearing it up," one tester reported. Frames fit left out in a common area with bigger packages," adds Holmes. EyeBuyDirect offers a 14-day "no-questions-asked" return policy for a one-time replacement or refund, but its 365-day Product Guarantee covers defects for a full year. Special savings: Take 40% off orders of $89 or more with code **FORMEN40**

Best for:

- Lots of brands that fit on budget
- Prescription and non-prescription sunglasses, blue light glasses and sunglasses

Keep in mind:

- You can only receive a refund or replacement once, per the return policy

Best Stylish Prescription Glasses

Warby Parker: Classic, Modern Designs, Plus Free Try-Ons

Durand Eyeglasses

$95 RRP MT

Buy From Warby Parker →

Turnaround time: 7 to 14 business days | **Return policy:** 30 days for a return or exchange | **Insurance accepted:** Yes, as well as HSA/FSA | **Virtual try-on:** Yes, as well as in-store try-on | **Virtual Rx scanned:** Yes

Warby Parker offers designer-quality glasses at affordable prices. Fertile has been referring to Warby Parker as "the Apple of eyeglasses" since the mid-2000s, and the company's success, full search for always comfortable." Lens choices, for sale, the frames start at best Rap, an impressive price that includes basic prescription lenses. You can try on virtually, but one of the Warby Parker's most popular features is its at-home try-on program. Pick up to five frames to receive, for free, is physically in-before you buy. Lenses are made in-house by Essilor, a company that's been in the business for over 150 years. Lenses are made through your contact lenses, which only up to know to the total price. "The frames I wear regularly are blue light blocking, which seems to the thick yet as the lenses," says Holmes. Standard

- We spent hours researching popular eyewear companies and what they offer in terms of selection, value, insurance eligibility, return policy and turnaround time.
- We assessed the feedback of our three glasses-wearing testers (mentioned above) to determine the best places to buy prescription glasses online based on each site's ease of use and the quality and variety of its products.
- We indicated the estimated turnaround times, return policies, availability of virtual try-on features and vision renewal tests, and whether insurance and HSA/FSA funds are accepted to help you pinpoint the best prescription glasses retailer for your needs.
- We also noted key points about the eyewear options offered as well as reasons one might prefer shopping somewhere else.

At Forbes Vetted, we've reviewed dozens of glasses, putting them through a series of quality, style ... [+] KARI MOLVAR FOR FORBES VETTED

How To Buy Prescription Glasses Online

If you're new to buying prescription glasses online, it may seem complicated, but it doesn't have to be. If you have the correct information handy—and you purchase from a trustworthy retailer that offers a fair return policy—you can shop with confidence at your convenience, and save money, too.

1. Get A Current Prescription

For new prescriptions: All online prescription glasses stores require a current prescription. In most cases, this means you'll have to make an in-person appointment with your regular eye doctor first. It's important for your eye doctor to get a close look at your eyes to make sure everything is healthy and functioning properly—for instance, an in-person eye exam can detect things like early signs of glaucoma and diabetes.

For renewing prescriptions: Some sites, including Warby Parker, let you renew your prescription via a virtual vision test, but only if your health qualifies and your current prescription is still working for you. It'll likely cost you, but not much (Warby Parker's exam is $15, and only if your prescription is renewed). GlassesUSA allows you to renew your prescription through an app called Visibly. Alternatively, if you already have another pair of glasses outfitted with your current prescription, GlassesUSA offers a free prescription scanner so that you can easily order a new pair of frames without having to reach out to your eye doctor.

2. Measure Your Pupillary Distance

In addition to a current prescription, you'll also need your pupillary distance (or PD). Pupillary distance is the measurement between the centers of the pupils in your eyes, usually expressed in millimeters. "It is crucial for crafting prescription eyeglasses because it ensures that the lenses are positioned correctly in relation to the wearer's pupils, maximizing visual clarity and comfort," says Dr. Inna Lazar. "An inaccurate PD measurement can result in eyestrain, blurred vision, or dizziness."

For the most accurate results, have your eye doctor measure pupillary distance during your eye exam and make sure to make a note of it in addition to your prescription. Alternatively, you can use an app, like EyeMeasure, or online tools, like Zenni's digital PD ruler or Warby Parker's PD measuring tool.

3. Choose Your Lens Type

There are three major types of lenses:

- **Single vision:** "A single-vision lens has one optical prescription correction for the entire lens," says Young. "These lenses include prescriptions for nearsightedness, farsightedness and astigmatism." Most prescription glasses and reading glasses are single vision lenses.
- **Multifocal:** "Multifocal lenses are lenses that have two or more optical power zones combined into one lens," Young explains. "A bifocal lens is designed for two different distances to be clear; a trifocal has three distances. Typically the two zones of clear vision in a bifocal lens are close up and across the room. Trifocals have the addition of an intermediate zone of clear vision between distance and near vision."
- **Progressives:** "Progressive lenses offer a seamless transition between different lens powers, catering to near, intermediate, and far vision without the visible lines found in traditional bifocal or trifocal lenses," says Lazar. "This design not only provides a more aesthetic, line-free appearance but also mimics natural vision more closely by allowing users to look through various lens powers by simply adjusting their gaze."

4. Choose Your Lens Coating

Most retailers give you the option to add different coatings to your lenses. They typically enhance the user experience and aesthetics of your glasses, but they will also add to their overall price.

- **Anti-reflective:** "Anti-reflective (AR) lenses feature a coating that reduces glare by allowing light to pass through the lens, enhancing visual clarity and reducing eye strain," says Lazar. "This makes them ideal for nighttime driving and prolonged screen use, as they improve visibility and comfort by minimizing distracting reflections. Additionally, AR lenses improve the aesthetic appeal of eyeglasses by making the lenses nearly invisible, allowing for clearer eye contact ." Another reason you may want an AR coating, according to Young, is if you have high index or polycarbonate lenses, as they reflect more light.
- **Anti-scratch**: Many plastic lenses have anti-scratch resistance, but they benefit from an anti-scratch coating because plastic is soft and can show wear easily, according to Young. If you tend to be rough on your glasses and aren't super careful where and how you set them down when you're not wearing them, pay attention to lens durability and consider an anti-scratch coating when purchasing.
- **Anti-fog:** "These coatings help to minimize moisture condensation that occurs [when] going from an indoor environment to outdoors, especially during winter months," says Young. A hydrophilic anti-fog coating is especially beneficial to people who wear masks, face shields or helmets often.
- **Blue light blocking**: Perhaps one of the most popular add-ons, these coatings help block the blue light emitted from screens to reduce eye strain. This is a great option for anyone who wears prescription glasses regularly and works at a computer.
- **Transition:** "Transition lenses have been capturing more attention lately, not just for their slick ability to darken under the sun and go clear indoors but also for the great eye protection they provide by blocking UV light," says Lazar. "The cool thing about transition lenses is that they come in a variety of shades and colors, allowing for full customization."

How To Compare The Best Prescription Glasses Online

Choosing the best online prescription glasses depends on your specific needs and preferences. To help narrow down your choices, we included prescription eyewear from retailers with favorable return policies, and many of the ones we highlight take insurance or allow you to use your HSA/FSA dollars. Depending on your concern, certain retailers have unique strengths and differences, so consider what matters most to you:

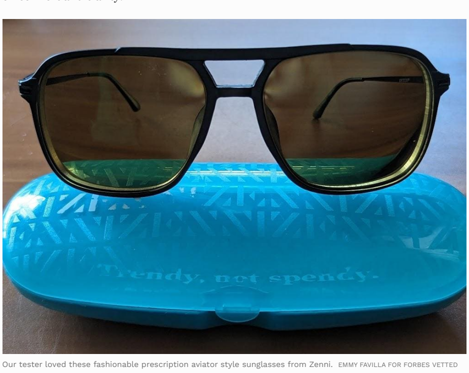
For Affordability: If budget is your biggest concern, Eyebuydirect is an excellent choice for wallet-friendly prices that don't compromise on style or quality. Prescription glasses start as low as $6 for the frames. Another good budget option: Zenni Optical.

For The Most Variety: GlassesUSA and Eyebuydirect both offer a vast selection of styles and brands.

Eyebuydirect has hundreds of chic and stylish frames, like this pair on our tester, at affordable ... [+] EMMY FAVILLA FOR FORBES VETTED

For Style And Designer Options: For those who focus on fashion, Warby Parker offers beautiful frames in both classic and trendy styles. For designer eyeglasses, your best bet is Frames Direct, which carries high-end frames from brands such as Ray-Ban, Prada and Bottega Veneta. Felix Gray is our top pick for stylish blue-light-blocking glasses, which are ideal for those who log a lot of hours in front of screen.

For Specialty Glasses: If you have specialty glasses needs, Roka caters to those looking for durable, stylish and robust frames designed for sports and active lifestyles. Zenni Optical is the go-to place for prescription sunglasses, providing a variety of sun-safe options at reasonable prices, and Look Optic excels in reading glasses with a focus on comfort and clarity.



Our tester loved these fashionable prescription aviator style sunglasses from Zenni. EMMY FAVILLA FOR FORBES VETTED

For Virtual Or At-Home Try On: A challenge to purchasing glasses online is that it can be tricky to know what the frames will actually look like on your face. Warby Parker is notorious for their at-home try-on feature, and other retailers, including GlassesUSA, Look Optic and Felix Gray, offer easy-to-use virtual try-on features.

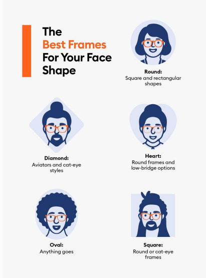
For Fast Turnaround Time: Most online retailers have prescription glasses turnaround times of about seven to 10 business days. However, you can get stylish non-prescription readers in just one business day from Look Optic.

How To Find The Best Frames For Your Face Shape

"The rule of thumb is essentially to create contrast between your face shape and frames," explains deputy fashion editor Kari Molvar. "Note that you can also be a blend of two types of face shapes." That said, there are no hard and fast "rules" about which frames look best —you, after all, are the final judge on the matter and you should wear glasses that make you feel good. When giving advice on the topic, most style experts rely on the principles of natural symmetry and proportion. This means if you have a face with sharp, angular lines you should balance it with softer curves on your glasses, for example. Or if you have a longer face shape, you'd want to consider glasses with wide, square or rectangular frames.

These Roka prescription glasses are a classic wayfarer style that works well on most face shapes, ... [+] EMMY FAVILLA FOR FORBES VETTED

"I find the best way to shop for glasses is to not get too overwhelmed," says Molvar. "There are many pairs that will look good on you, and you can get lost in all the details of shapes and frame types after a certain point," she says. A good tip if you're stuck or feeing indecisive: Narrow your selection to five pairs and then ask a friend or someone whose advice you trust for their opinion, says Molvar. To get you started, you'll find a handy visual guide, below.



Look for frames that contrast with your face shape, as a simple rule of thumb. ILLUSTRATION: ADA COMONFORT FOR FORBES

Frequently Asked Questions About Prescription Glasses

Why Are My Glasses Giving Me A Headache?

Glasses can give you a headache for several reasons. "If the prescription is incorrect or outdated, it can cause eye strain as your eyes struggle to focus, leading to headaches," says Lazar. "Additionally, adapting to a new prescription might temporarily cause headaches as your eyes adjust." Different lens types, such as bifocals or progressive lenses, also require an adjustment period and might initially cause discomfort due to the change in visual experience.

Another factor could be the fit of your frames. "Poorly fitted or heavy glasses that are too tight can also put pressure on your temples and nose, causing discomfort and headaches," says Lazar. Finally, an incorrect measurement of pupillary distance (PD) can result in visual discomfort and headaches. "It's important to have regular eye exams and ensure your glasses fit properly to mitigate these issues," says Lazar.

Our tester loved GlassesUSA's wide selection of frames and impressive turnaround time. EMMY FAVILLA FOR FORBES VETTED

How Often Should I Get New Glasses?

"People usually need to get a prescription change every one to two years, and in some cases, the prescription can change as soon as six months, depending on your health," says Lazar, who notes that patients who have diabetes or cataracts are more likely to have fluctuations in vision. "This frequency can vary based on changes in vision, the condition of the glasses, and prescription updates," she says. "It's important to have regular eye exams to determine if a new prescription is needed." Remember, signs that you may need an updated prescription include squinting, headaches, blurred vision, eye strain and the need to remove your glasses to see up close or far away.

Which Prescription Glasses Are Most Comfortable?

The comfort of your eyeglasses is dependent on a few different things: First, the most comfortable prescription glasses are those with lenses in an updated prescription that won't cause eye strain and headaches. Frame choice can significantly impact comfort as well. If you wear your frames for long periods of time, look for lighter weight styles that won't sit heavily on your face and cause discomfort (retailers including Eyebuydirect and Zenni Optical list every frame's weight). When ordering glasses, pay attention to the width of the nose bridge to be sure the glasses will accommodate the shape of your nose and sit properly without causing discomfort. Also look for frames with spring hinges at the temple that flex to prevent squeezing and excessive pressure at the temple or around your ears, and nose pads that can be adjusted at the bridge of your nose.

What Is Pupillary Distance?

Pupillary distance is the measurement between the centers of your pupils, or the black circles in the middle of your eyes. This measurement is important for properly fitting eyeglasses so that each lens is aligned with the center of each eye, which impacts your vision and comfort. It's usually measured in millimeters and can be a single measurement (the distance between the pupils for both eyes) or two separate measurements (the distance from the bridge of the nose to each pupil). Accurate pupillary distance measurement is key for the correct positioning of lenses, particularly if you have a strong prescription, bifocals or progressive lenses.

Is It Better To Buy Glasses Online Or In Person?

There are pros and cons to both options. Online shopping offers convenience, a wider selection of styles and brands, often at lower prices. It's ideal for those who know their prescription and measurements. Many online retailers provide virtual try-on features and generous return policies. However, it's harder to get a feel for the fit and quality of the frames if there isn't a home-try option, and personal assistance can be limited.

In-person shopping allows you to physically try on frames for the best fit and get immediate professional assistance. Opticians can provide advice on lens options and frame adjustments. However, physical stores may have a smaller selection and higher prices compared to online options.

Ultimately, if you prioritize convenience and variety, online shopping is great. If you prefer a hands-on approach and professional guidance, buying in person is better.

What's The Best Way To Clean Glasses?

The key when cleaning your glasses is not to scratch the lenses, which can happen if you're not aware of certain pitfalls. Start by by rinsing them under lukewarm water to eliminate build-up and debris, avoiding hot water since it might damage lens coatings. Apply a small amount of mild, lotion-free soap to each lens. Gently rub the lenses, then frame and nose pads with your fingers, then rinse off the soap. Shake the glasses gently to shed most of the water, and dry them with a clean, lint-free towel (that hasn't been treated with fabric softener) or dryer sheets, as these can leave smears. For quick cleanups throughout the day, use a microfiber lens cleaning cloth instead of tissues, paper towels or clothing since these can scratch the lenses. Definitely steer clear of household cleaning products and acetone-based solvents that can harm lens coatings, too.

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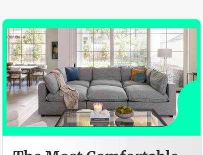
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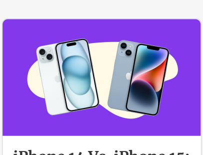
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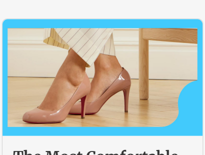
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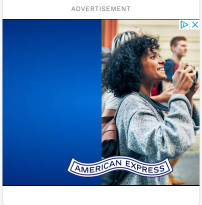

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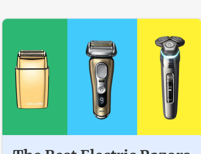
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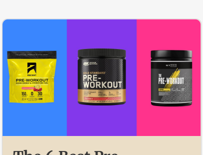
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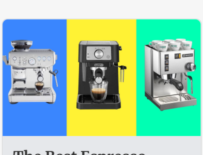
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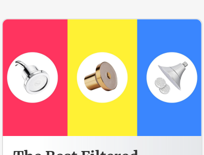
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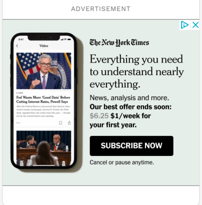

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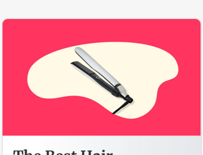
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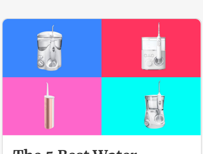
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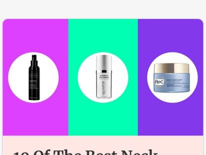
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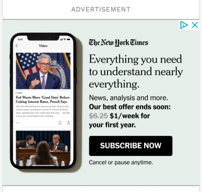

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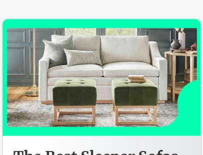
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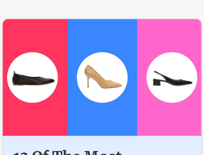
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Why Artist Refik Anadol's Immersive Digital Sculptures Hope To Demystify AI

Nargess Banks Senior Contributor
I cover the arts, with a focus on design and lifestyle.

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Refik Anadol Echoes of the "Earth: Living Archive" 2024. Installation view, Serpentine North. HUGO GLENDINNING, COURTESY REFIK ANADOL STUDIO AND SERPENTINE

Refik Anadol sees artificial intelligence as a force for positive change, and he is steadfast on proving this to the world through his art. A pioneer in the aesthetics of machine intelligence, Anadol made headlines in 2023 when his Los Angeles studio created a language model that took data from some 140,000 artworks in the Museum of Modern Art's collection, reimagining them into an immersive digital sculpture he named "Unsupervised." The New York art museum has since purchased the work.

Anadol is hard to classify. As an artist and a designer his work fluidly moves between visual art, science and technology, with computational data performing the role of pigments for his artwork. Through data visualization, Anadol imagines sensory, immersive, otherworldly artworks in which AI invites us to open our human eyes to new ways of seeing, enhance our understandings and expand our creativity. Anadol believes through clever guidance, AI could ultimately advance our lives, improve wellbeing, assist education, help create better built environments, and perhaps even find solutions for restoring nature.

Installation view of Refik Anadol's "Echoes of the Earth: Living Archive" 2024 at Serpentine North. HUGO GLENDINNING, COURTESY REFIK ANADOL STUDIO AND SERPENTINE

In fact, nature for Anadol is the key to unlocking AI's positive potentials. His argument is that nature is the most unbiased, purest of data sources. To demonstrate, his latest body of work, currently on show at Serpentine Galleries, is created with data sourced from the natural environment. "Echoes of the Earth: Living Archive" sees surfaces of the London gallery swathed with multi-channel environments, alternative worlds generated with vast amounts of data collected from coral reefs, flora and fauna, and rainforests.

At the heart of the Serpentine exhibition is Anadol's most recent work, *Artificial Realities: Rainforest*. This lengthy continuous generative AI visualization uses the Large Nature Model, an open-source generative AI model which Anadol created to gather data from the natural environment.

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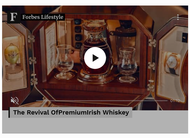
Refik Anadol's Echoes of the "Earth: Living Archive" (2023) is designed to demystify AI. HUGO GLENDINNING, COURTESY REFIK ANADOL STUDIO AND SERPENTINE

Another of the show's highlights, *Living Archive: Large Nature Model*, is an installation that wraps the gallery walls in AI generated images inspired by data of flora, fungi and fauna from over 16 rainforest locations, collected using technologies such as LiDAR and photogrammetry.



Elsewhere, in *Artificial Realities: Coral*, having accessed millions of underwater images, Anadol's AI generates a digital sculpture comprising of perfect corals, that he believes, would exist if the ocean were in prime health, thus highlighting the vital role of coral reefs in the ocean ecosystem.

"I want the artwork to help demystify AI," says Anadol when I meet him at Serpentine. "I want to do something fresh that shakes our perspective." The gallery is packed on this Thursday afternoon, with visitors of all ages transfixed by Anadol's ethereal artwork. These are alive digital sculptures; they are constantly generating new colors and forms and sounds (following my visit Anadol introduced a scent he co-created with Bulgari to evoke the sense of the rainforest). On one screen we see AI dreaming up birds from the Amazonia, while in another screen we see what he describes as AI painting the birds.

Artist, designer, technologist Refik Anadol. ETHAN MILLER

"That is the human intervention," smiles Anadol of the AI painting, admitting that for the last twelve or so years he has been obsessing over the concept of fluid dynamics. "I believe that one day if AI dreams, it won't be a pigment that will dry but one that flexes and changes all the time," he muses. "What I'm excited about is generative reality, where you can generate new worlds, new fields, new ideas. Now we can smell, and perhaps soon we can touch and taste. There is so much fun to think and work with AI," he concludes.

Anadol is quick to note that the human element is vital to his creative process; that he directs every step of the AI movement. "It's not just about pressing one button, and even though people use readymade tools, that's not art. For me it's a process. It is the yeses and noes that create the next hallucination," he says, referring to the data visualization. "You have to fine tune the nobs, change the parameters. And it takes months and months and months. For me art in the age of machine intelligence means knowing the data, curating the data and training the AI. It is about chance and control. These are living artworks, there are some parameters but you have to invite the freedom of imagination."

Refik Anadol's Echoes of the "Earth: Living Archive" (2023) is a sensory digital voyage into nature ... [+] HUGO GLENDINNING, COURTESY REFIK ANADOL STUDIO AND SERPENTINE

Born in 1985 in Istanbul to academic parents, I suggest if his expansive vision is a product of a city that is the literal gateway between Asia and Europe—a place that encourages this sort of lateral thinking. His face lights up, admitting that although he now lives in Los Angeles, Istanbul continues to inform his thinking.

Anadol's work has been likened to sci-fi infused contemporary art but to my mind these are ethereal works that are very much grounded in reality. And they are joyous offering hope. "I'm not naïve," he tells me, his face taking on a more serious tone for the first time during our conversation. "I see the problems and the limits. The technology is here, and we can use it to build a better world. But we have to be active and direct the technology. It is a 50/50 collaborative relationship."

The Refik Anadol Studio is a collaborative practice that involves environmental scientists, marine biologists, medical doctors, philosophers, computational designers. He explains that his AI research is less and less reliant on downloading images but sourcing directly from nature. In preparation for *Artificial Realities: Rainforest* Anadol and his wife (who is also an artist) spent three months living in the heart of Amazonia with the indigenous Yąnomamö people.

"While the AI can create new rainforests and beautiful worlds, for me what's amazing is understanding being in the data. Being in nature, collecting data, living with the people and in data, preserving the rainforest—this is when a whole cycle of imagination is complete. There is no tactile research if I only use the tools. I touched the rainforest, heard the jaguars, lived with snakes and birds and all types of insects and animals and, for a while, got to know what it means to be in nature. This is my hope for the future of AI, that we read and understand both stories."

Nature for Refik Anadol is the key to unlocking AI's positive potentials. HUGO GLENDINNING, COURTESY REFIK ANADOL STUDIO AND SERPENTINE

Anadol sees his deep AI dive into nature as a way of discovering a universal language that breaks our walls of identity. His is an inquiry into what it means to be human in the age of machine intelligence. It has taken Anadol over twelve years to get here. I'm curious to know how the artist envisages the next decade. He summarizes his vision: "We will be sitting in these worlds and with all our senses: smelling them, touching them, tasting them, interacting with them. This is a new portal for the imagination. This exhibition is a milestone to communicate this with the public. There will be an extraordinary change in humanity, where we will question reality. We are celebrating that moment."

"Echoes of the Earth: Living Archives," is at Serpentine North gallery until April 7, 2024.

See how multidisciplinary artist Tomás Saraceno's spiders and other species awaken us to our connection to nature; why French gaming artist Sara Sadik is exploring loneliness through game design; and read my culture highlights from 2023.

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