

# Bahamas-Born Visual Artist Anina Major Wins 2024 Pommery Prize At The Armory Show

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Pauline and Nathalie Vranken with Anina Major and Her Winning Piece, The Landing, at The Armory ... [\[+\]](#) PHOTOGRAPHY BY KUNNING HUANG

A rotating neon sign informs us that “all us come across water” and extends upwards from a multi-level wooden dock featuring woven ceramic sculptures crafted with indigenous straw-plaiting methods and plants. Bahamas-born, U.S.-based visual artist Anina Major learned the plaiting technique from her grandmother, Saphora Alvina Timothy Newbold (A.K.A. Mar), who was a straw-market vendor.

Living outside of, or “contrary to” her homeland, Major is compelled to explore the relationship between self and place as a site of negotiation. As a girl, Major helped Mar cater to tourists at her stall. Using natural materials to create thatch roofs, rope and plait dates back to the arrival of free and enslaved Africans to the Bahamas. In the early 1820s, following the Adams–Onís Treaty ceding Florida from Spain to the United States, hundreds of African slaves and Black Seminoles escaped Florida and the majority settled on Andros Island in the Bahamas.

Major's installation, *The Landing*, was featured in the exhibition Collective Memory, curated by Eugenie Tsai, the longtime senior curator of contemporary art at the Brooklyn Museum, for the Platform section of the 30th anniversary edition [The Armory Show](#) in New York, which closed yesterday after welcoming more than 50,000 fairgoers.

Major was awarded the \$25,000 2024 Pommery Prize at The Armory Show, presented by Nathalie Vranken, co-owner and deputy CEO of Vranken-Pommery Monopole, and Pauline Vranken, CEO of Vranken Pommery America.

"It is truly an honor to receive this award! It is a testament to the power of creativity and its ability to manifest from the most unexpected places. Thank you, not only for the acknowledgment of my work but for this recognition of my artistic lineage," Major said.

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Awarding the sixth annual Pommery Prize recognizing contemporary artists coincides with the 150th anniversary of Madame Pommery's introduction of Brut Champagne to the world. Maison Pommery continues to craft cuvées that prioritize painstaking selection and expertise, marrying tradition with modernity.

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"As a Bahamian gallery, showing a Bahamian artist at a site as prestigious as The Armory, TERN is extremely proud of Anina Major's accomplishment. Anina has been one of our core artists from the beginning of the gallery—our opening show featured her work—and we are pleased and proud to continue to support her and this monumental and important work at the fair this year. Given the pedigree of the other artists in the Platform section, many of whom both we and Anina have admired and been inspired by, we are deeply honored to receive the Pommery Prize for the Platform section," said Amanda Coulson, founding director of [TERN Gallery](#).

Paris-Based Cameroonian artist [Barthélémy Toguo](#) was awarded last year's prestigious Pommery Prize, and [Reynier Leyva Novo](#) won the [prize in 2022](#).



APANAGE BRUT 1874 King's Privilege made its debut at The Armory Show · POMMERY

The Armory Show preview last Thursday kicked off with the introduction of the newly-released luscious, velvety Apanage 1874 King's Privilege at the [Pommery Lounge](#). The pale yellow-gold color and the tiny bubbles are as much an aesthetic pleasure as a tasting triumph. The exquisite confidential cuvée, marrying the excellence of terroirs with world-leading restaurants, is crafted from 45% Pinot Noir, 40% Chardonnay, 15% Pinot Meunier, and 15% of reserve wine from 2012, 2015, and 2018 harvests.