



ARTHER UP

Bettina Korek brings her reputation for unraveling the complexities of the art scene to bear on Frieze's Los Angeles debut.

By Abigail Stone // Photography by Cameron Gardner

As the founder of ForYourArt and its weekly newsletter, Bettina Korek's played Pied Piper to Angelenos for a dozen years, serenading them through galleries, museums and out-of-the-way spaces to highlight the city's talent. Now, as executive director of Frieze Los Angeles (frieze.com), she'll have her moment on the world stage as the fair's arrival transforms the City of Angels into the City of Artists. "What makes L.A. so special, and always has, is that kind of narrative that there's still space to experiment," she says.

Though Korek—who grew up here before heading to Princeton—credits her mother for fostering her interest in art, it took an internship at an investment bank to galvanize her into switching majors from economics to art history. A year devouring Paris' museums and galleries confirmed she'd made the right decision. After college, she returned to Los Angeles and a job at LACMA right as the city's art scene was taking off. Work at LAXART and West of Rome Public Art cemented her interest in bringing art to a larger audience.

"I think Freize could be a lightening rod to catalyze people's access and understanding of the breadth and depth of what's going on in L.A. on a weekly basis," says Korek, assuaging people who might be intimidated by the venerated art fair's reputation, that "it's a friendly fair." The show, which debuts in February on the Paramount lot, will be a more intimate experience than its siblings, anchored by international and local galleries tucked into a structure designed by Kulapat Yantrasast of wHY Architecture (who's behind the renovations of the Marciano Art Foundation, Christie's Los Angeles and ICA LA) and a backlot that will highlight artists—including Sarah Cain, Barbara Kruger, and Lisa Anne Auerbach—with an L.A. connection. "The power of art is its potential to break through into daily life," says Korek. We have her to thank for helping wield the hammer.