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Clad in Swimsuits, Performers Stroll Art Platform's Aisles

By [Andrew Russeth](#) 10/02 12:42am



The models. (Photo: Andrew Russeth)

By midday today it seemed that Art Platform had successfully assembled all the trappings of a contemporary art fair. We had seen neon works and noted a champagne sponsor, enjoyed a VIP lounge and fielded rumors about which exhibitors were given free or discounted booths. Things were going great. But then we realized that we had yet to see a performance work roaming the aisles, a prerequisite these days. Only moments after that thought, we saw them: two women in white one-piece bathing suits who were holding signs that listed their dress sizes (12 and 4). They were walking straight toward *Gallerist*. We snapped a picture and then walked up next to Size 4, and she and her partner came to a halt. “What is the story here?” we asked. “It’s Rachel Hovnanian’s work,” she said. “There’s more at booth 800, and in the basement.” Naturally we proceeded over to that booth and found the New York gallery Leila Heller. It was filled with work by Ms. Hovnanian, including a minimal, white version of the [classic claw crane game](#), which we remembered from our youth, which was spent in suburban video arcades and movie theaters. The work was called *Beauty Queen Vending Machine*, according to a wall label and, sure enough, there were small silver women—all shiny, all identical—inside.

It was free to play. Again and again we tried to pluck a queen from the pile of queens, but it was hopeless. They each slipped through our grasp.

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