

CALLICOON
FINE ARTS

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Good afternoon!

If you're heading to Frieze New York this weekend, I highly recommend a visit to the booth of Callicoon Fine Arts, a Lower East Side gallery that's showing work made by Thomas Kovachevich from 1968 to 1981. The Manhattan-based Kovachevich has spent his art career making Post-Minimal sculptures and staging performances, in both cases using humble materials to bewitching ends. At the same time, he's maintained a second career, as a medical doctor.

Callicoon has on view delicate sculptures that Kovachevich made with the stuff that surrounded him as a young doctor—gauze, microscope slides, suture material, and the like—as well as paintings that he made by pouring paint onto a surface and then allowing paper to dance atop it, pushed along by variations in humidity and temperature. (He got a patent for a variant of the process in 1975.)

In 2007 Carole Ann Klonarides asked Kovachevich, in an interview, about the relationship between his art and his career in medicine. “I think the way I’ve been practicing medicine comes closer to the way medicine was historically practiced,” he told her, “whereby, if you’re a doctor in a small town, you’re the doctor to all your friends and acquaintances in the same way that I care for many of my friends and associates.” Recalling a collector of his work who was also a patient, he added, “I think it’s completely appropriate and real—we know each other, I know him, he knows me, and I believe that promotes good medicine. And so it was both very upsetting and very wonderful at the same time to just have the intimacy. I think that’s one of my attractions to both medicine and art. At least the kind of art I want to do, the intimacy of it.”

—Andrew Russeth, *Co-Executive Editor*

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