

# Artspace

## 5 Artists to Discover at EXPO Chicago 2016

By [Andrew M. Goldstein](#)

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The Midwest's premiere art fair, EXPO Chicago continues to prove a curatorial hotspot with unexpected discoveries proliferating its booths each year, and this edition appears to be a high-water mark—there are more fascinating artists to encounter here than you can shake an Andrei Cadere at. Here are some of the most exciting artists we found in it's aisles.

**NATE YOUNG**

**[Monique Meloche Gallery \(Chicago\)](#)**



As the son of a theologian, Nate Young grew up around the signs and symbols of Christian devotional theory. Then, as a young adult, the artist began to study the semiotic texts of the Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure and found a fascinating parallel between the pictographic notations of this soft science and the spiritual diagrams of his father—with both of them using the tools of logic in the search for profound meaning.

Now a 35-year-old CalArts graduate with a mean set of woodworking skills, Young has taken to crafting sculptures that employ the arrows, circles, lines, and other symbols to create quasi-religious forms (a reliquary, an altarpiece) that celebrate our attempts to make sense of the big questions in life. His work has won some well-placed fans—[Theaster Gates](#) curated him into a group survey, he had a showing under Thomas Lax at the [Studio Museum in Harlem](#), and the Walker has acquired three pieces for its collection; several solo museum shows, meanwhile, are said to be in the works.

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Recently he moved from St. Paul to the Windy City to teach at the University of Illinois, Chicago, and since last year he's been showing with Monique Meloche, which did well by him at the fair: two of his \$15,000 altarpieces sold, one of them to the New York collector Beth Rudin de Woody and the other to a Chicago collector who pounced after hearing the news.