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ONLINE/DAILY
17 JULY

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Self-Taught Visionaries at Frieze Masters 2025

From Mary Beale to Madge Gill, discover eight artists who pioneered new approaches to art-making

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At Frieze Masters 2025, our understanding of historical art is challenged and expanded by self-taught figures, whose works and lifestyles remain radical. From the 17th to 20th century, London to Copacabana, men and women without artistic training turned to painting, drawing and photography in the face of financial, psychological and political turmoil. Coinciding with Grayson Perry's celebration of Madge Gill at London's Wallace Collection, here are just a few self-taught pioneers to discover at the fair.



Madge Gill, *Untitled*, c.1950; Ink on card, 39 x 49 cm. Courtesy:
The Gallery of Everything

Madge Gill presented by The Gallery of Everything

British artist Madge Gill (1882–1961) was similarly propelled to make art by a visionary force. Myrminerest, Gill's spirit guide, populated her pages with faces, swirling patterns and cryptic dialogue. Born in London's East End, Gill was committed to Dr Barnardo's orphanage aged nine, before being sent to Canada under a child-labour scheme. Gill encountered severe mental health difficulties throughout her twenties and thirties and in 1922, confided a packet of drawings to a doctor at a women's health clinic in Hove. This was just a small glimpse into the vast wealth of works Gill stashed in her East Ham home. It was not until Gill was 50 that her work was included in an annual exhibition of amateur artists at Whitechapel Gallery. At Frieze Masters, The Gallery of Everything's solo presentation of Gill in *Spotlight* – curated by Vivienne Roberts and spanning Gill's varied works on card, calico and postcards – coincides with 'Delusions of Grandeur' at the Wallace Collection, which sets Grayson Perry's new works in dialogue with Gill's.