The real voyage of discovery consists not in seeking new landscapes, but in having new eyes,” Marcel Proust famously wrote. These days, we’re seeing everything with new eyes, art included. While many local museums and galleries have reopened, for those who feel more comfortable at a distance, outdoor art is better than ever. Government guidelines are in place; six-foot distancing, masks, reservations, timed visits, and limited use (if at all) of restrooms are the new norm. Schedules may change. Check before you go, but great art is calling.

Ai Weiwei’s “Circle of Animals/Zodiac Heads” Through Nov. 28, LongHouse Reserve, 133 Hands Creek Rd., East Hampton

Iconoclast, dissident and international art star Ai Weiwei’s politically charged sculptures of rooster, dog and 10 other Chinese zodiac animals reflect themes of wealth, power, oppression, individualism and freedom. Also appealing as big, bronze animals, they’ve been exhibited around the world. Now 16 acres of sculptures and plants fill the serene garden created by artist and philanthropist Jack Larsen.

INFO 631-329-3568, longhouse.org

“Blue” through Nov. 1 and “Heroines of Art” Nov. 15-spring, Nassau County Museum, 1 Museum Drive, Roslyn Harbor

It’s blue inside and lush green about to turn autumnal gold outside. Modern and historic paintings, sculptures and more are linked by one common element: the color blue. Then, women take the floor (actually both floors) in a celebration of Impressionist to contemporary female artists including Mary Cassatt, Camille Claudel and Long Island’s own Lee Krasner and Elaine de Kooning. Outdoors, walk among sculptures by Fernando Botero, Ana Mercedes Hoyos, Richard Serra and others.

INFO 516-484-9338, nassau museum.org

The Heckscher Museum of Art’s “Long Island Biennial” gives Nassau and Suffolk artists a chance to shine.

Art exhibits to experience
Ai Weiwei’s “Circle of Animals/Zodiac Heads” on display at LongHouse Reserve.

Zacharias, who died last year at 92, hovered between Abstract Expressionism and Pop. Then he discovered “The Simpsons.” The cartoons didn’t interest him, but the colors inspired his late work. And, if you’ve never visited Jackson Pollock and Lee Krasner’s chapel-like barn studio, get ready to be star-struck.
INFO 631-324-4929, stonybrook.edu/commcms/pkhouse/

“Lucien Smith: Southampton Suite” through January and “Art in the Meadow” through fall 2021, Parrish Art Museum, 279 Montauk Hwy., Water Mill
Smith’s abstracts reference nature without resembling it. His “Rain” series began when he used a fire extinguisher to apply paint, creating diaphanous sprays of tone. The surrounding meadows are newly filled with sculptures by Jim Dine, Joel Perlman and Jaume Plensa.
INFO 631-283-2118, parrishart.org

“All for the Hall” through Dec. 31, Guild Hall, 158 Main St., East Hampton
Robert Longo was set for a solo show of his exquisite drawings, but when the pandemic hit, he reached out to colleagues for donations to support Guild Hall. His work and others by luminaries like Laurie Anderson, Rashid Johnson, Cindy Sherman and Eric Fischl are all for sale.
INFO 631-324-0806, guildhall.org

Valdez incorporates embroidery and sewing into her paintings, merging traditional fiber work with contemporary abstraction. Later, see work by creators you may know; when the Long Island Biennial features scores of local artists.
INFO 631-380-3230, heckscher.org

ON THE EAST END
No need to head into Manhattan when prominent galleries like Pace, Van de Weghe, Skarstedt, and even the legendary auction house Sotheby’s have set up new outposts on Newtown Lane in East Hampton. They join established galleries like Rental and Eric Firestone. Many will be open through October and beyond. On a crisp afternoon, there’s nothing like window viewing or stopping in to see modern masterpieces and sophisticated contemporary works.