



# art:21

ART IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY



SCREENING GUIDE: SEASON TWO



### ABOUT THIS SCREENING GUIDE

This screening guide is designed to help you plan an event using Season Two of *Art in the Twenty-First Century*. This guide includes a detailed episode synopsis, artist biographies, discussion questions, group activities, and links to additional resources online.

### ABOUT ART21 SCREENING EVENTS

Public screenings of the *Art:21* series engage new audiences and deepen their appreciation and understanding of contemporary art and ideas. Organizations and individuals are welcome to host their own Art21 events year-round. Some sites plan their programs for broad public audiences, while others tailor their events for particular groups such as teachers, museum docents, youth groups, or scholars. Art21 strongly encourages partners to incorporate interactive or participatory components into their screenings, such as question-and-answer sessions, panel discussions, brown bag lunches, guest speakers, or hands-on art-making activities.

### ABOUT THE ART:21 SERIES ON PBS

*Art in the Twenty-First Century* is the only broadcast series for national public television to focus exclusively on contemporary visual art and artists in the United States. A biennial event for television, Art21 produces four one-hour episodes featuring between 16 and 21 artists each season. The *Art:21* series premieres nationwide on PBS in the United States and is distributed internationally.

The *Art:21* series reflects the current landscape of visual art by featuring a dynamic range of artists who work with diverse media, materials, and subject matter. Profiled artists include painters, sculptors, printmakers, photographers, installation and video artists, and artists working with new media, environmental or public issues, and hybrid forms. These artists represent the breadth of artistic practice across the country and reveal the depth of intergenerational and multicultural talent.

### ABOUT ART21, INC.

Art21, Inc. is a non-profit contemporary art organization serving students, teachers, and the general public. Art21's mission is to increase knowledge of contemporary art, ignite discussion, and inspire creative thinking by using diverse media to present contemporary artists at work and in their own words.

Art21 introduces broad public audiences to a diverse range of contemporary visual artists working in the United States today and to the art they are producing now. By making contemporary art more accessible, Art21 affords people the opportunity to discover their own innate abilities to understand contemporary art and to explore possibilities for new viewpoints and self-expression.

The ongoing goals of Art21 are to enlarge the definitions and comprehension of contemporary art, to offer the public a straightforward experience of artists and their work without interpretive mediation, and to encourage people of all ages to participate in interactive education and outreach programs designed by Art21. In addition to the Emmy-nominated, nationally broadcast PBS series *Art in the Twenty-First Century*, Art21 produces companion books, a comprehensive Web site, a wide range of education materials, and outreach programs.

### CREDIT LINE

Please use the following credit line in publications and publicity association with your event:

**This event is produced in collaboration with Art21, Inc., a non-profit contemporary art organization serving artists, students, teachers, and the general public worldwide.**

### CONTACT

Please send inquiries to Art21 at: [outreach@art21.org](mailto:outreach@art21.org)



#### Educators' Guide

The 32-page color manual includes information on the artists, before-viewing and after-viewing questions, and curriculum connections.

FREE | [www.art21.org](http://www.art21.org)



#### Companion Book

A 216-page book with over 350 full-color illustrations; features excerpts of artists' conversations with Executive Producer Susan Sollins.

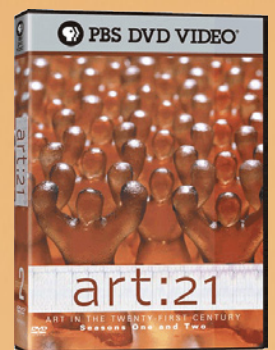
\$45.00 | [www.hnabooks.com](http://www.hnabooks.com)



#### Home Video (VHS)

Four one hour-long episodes on two VHS tapes. Season Two (2003) Includes the episodes *Stories*, *Humor*, *Loss & Desire*, and *Time*.

\$29.98 | [www.shoppbs.org](http://www.shoppbs.org)



#### Home Video (DVD)

This DVD box set includes both Season One (2001) and Season Two (2003). Eight one hour-long episodes on two DVDs.

\$49.98 | [www.shoppbs.org](http://www.shoppbs.org)

Cover, clockwise from top left: **Collier Schorr**, *Forest Bed Blanket (Black Velvet)*, detail, 2001. C-print, 35 x 44 inches. Edition of 5. Courtesy 303 Gallery, New York; **Paul Pfeiffer**, *Four Horseman of the Apocalypse (7)*, detail, 2001. Digital duraflex print, 48 x 60 inches. Edition of 6, AP of 1. Courtesy the artist and The Project, New York and Los Angeles; **Do-Ho Suh**, *Doormat: Welcome (Amber)*, detail, 1998. Polyurethane rubber, 1 1/4 x 28 x 19 inches. Edition of 5. Courtesy the artist and Lehmann Maupin Gallery, New York; **Walton Ford**, *Falling Bough*, detail, 2002. Watercolor, gouache, ink and pencil on paper, 60 3/4 x 119 1/2 inches. Private collection, Tennessee. Courtesy Paul Kasmin Gallery, New York. Pages 3-5: Production stills © Art21, Inc. 2003.

This episode explores the ways in which contemporary artists use irony, goofiness, satire, and sarcasm. The artists profiled are influenced by the history of humor and comedy, including vaudeville, cartoons, and comic books. Their artworks reveal how humor and satire can stimulate laughter as well as serve as a vehicle to explore serious subjects, such as feminism, the natural environment, the excesses of consumer culture, social injustice, and war. Introduction by **Charles Atlas** starring the comedian **Margaret Cho**.

**Eleanor Antin** is at work on her photographic series *The Last Days of Pompeii* (2001) in the hills of La Jolla, California. Antin lingers behind the camera to stage The Golden Death featuring the imagined citizens of Pompeii drowning in the excess of their own wealth—an ironic parable of American culture in the throes of over-consumption. There is a comparison to be made, Antin explains, “between America, as this great colonial power, and one of the early great colonial powers, Rome.” In her highly-theatrical films, photographs, and performances, Antin draws from childhood play, an infatuation with stand-up and slapstick comedy, and the tragic humor that is part of her Jewish heritage. “I always tend to see the funny side of things,” she says, “That’s the richest experience, when it’s the laughter and it’s the tears together.” But it is humor with an artistic message. Over two-and-a-half years, Antin created fifty-one photographic postcards in a series called *100 Boots* (1971–73) and sent them out anonymously to about 1,000 people. She arranged and photographed one hundred empty black army boots in a series of tableaux that are at once outrageously funny and incisive in their social commentary. “Even in stuff that looks like the most obviously ridiculous,” she says, “there is, I think, a relation to human experience that gives it more of a rich layer.”

**Raymond Pettibon’s** drawings and paintings pair text and image in provocative and sometimes disconcerting ways, creating a powerful comic art for adults. “It’s a thinking person’s art, isn’t it?” his mother inquires with rhetorical approval, “It’s not just drawing pretty pictures. He always has ideas.” Constantly at work, generating arresting images with fluent strokes of paint or pencil, Pettibon explains, “even though my work is usually just one drawing, it is more of a narrative than it is a cartoon with a punch line and a resolution and a laugh at the end.” But the comic book influence is strong in both his style and content. The characters of Gumby and Vavoom are recurring motifs in his work, but so are American presidents like Nixon and Reagan. “Those are the real cartoon figures, those are the real ridiculous figures,” he says. Pettibon finds subjects for satire and social commentary in a broad range of images from popular culture to classical art, from Patty Hearst to Jesus Christ, from soldiers to baseball players. “I don’t feel constrained by subject matter,” he says, “I welcome practically anything into the drawing.”

“When you’re painting, it’s so physical,” **Elizabeth Murray** observes as she squeezes thick white paint out of a tube. “It’s making something happen with a very, sort of fluid material that is constantly somewhat out of control—harnessing that energy of the paint.” In her studio, Murray is painting a shaped, colorful canvas with inflated, bulbous forms. “I want there to be conflict and I want there to be tension. And yet somehow I want to make these very conflicting things live together, and not just butt up against each other.” Murray has spent a lifetime developing her particular vision of zany and vibrant images, beginning with her time as a student at the Art Institute of Chicago where she was surrounded by great works of art such as the Abstract Expressionist paintings by DeKooning. “I just realized this was going to be my life,” says Murray. But as fun as it looks to paint her joyful canvases, Murray is philosophical about the struggle to get a painting right. “You leave at night...and you think, wow I’ve got it. And then you come back in the morning and it’s gone—like, it looks awful. And that’s when I think, ‘Why did I go on this journey in the first place? What am I doing this for? It’s just so painful.’ And then, you know, the next morning you are back at it, bright-eyed and bushy-tailed, trying again.”

A voracious reader of colonial letters and diaries, **Walton Ford** is fascinated by the fear and wonder of nature that he finds in historical texts. “The big thing I’m always looking for in my work is a sort of attraction-repulsion, where the stuff is beautiful to begin with until you notice that some sort of horrible violence is about to happen or is in the middle of happening.” Commenting on a large watercolor depicting a frenzy of birds falling with a massive branch, he explains that the birds are “satisfying all their lusts...as they are going down” while the background captures a “Hudson River kind of beautiful landscape.” At first glance Ford’s paintings are painstakingly naturalistic portraits of animals and birds in the tradition of John James Audubon, but a closer examination reveals that there is something disturbing and unsettling in the work. Contrasting the romanticized tradition of Audubon with the destructive qualities of existence, Ford merges a dreamlike vision with a frenetic and comic reality. Reflecting on the impulse that drives his art-making, Ford says: “I like kind of overwrought emotion, melodrama, a very nineteenth-century mode of communication. I’m not a minimalist, I’m a maximalist. The more you throw at it the better.”





**Eleanor Antin** was born in New York City in 1935. An influential performance artist, filmmaker, and installation artist, Antin delves into history—whether of ancient Rome, the Crimean War, the salons of nineteenth-century Europe, or her own Jewish heritage and Yiddish culture—as a way to explore the present. Antin is a cultural chameleon, masquerading in theatrical or stage roles to expose her many selves. Her most famous persona is that of Eleanora Antinova, the tragically overlooked black ballerina of Sergei Diaghilev's *Ballets Russes* which Antin performed in scripted and non-scripted pieces for over a decade. Her more recent work includes the photographic series *The Last Days of Pompeii* (2001), staging the final, catastrophic days of Pompeii in the affluent hills of La Jolla, California, and *Roman Allegories* (2004), a series of large-scale painterly photographs chronicling a ragged band of players journeying through a ruined pre-Greco-Roman landscape. Antin has been a professor at the University of California, San Diego since 1975, and lives with her husband and son in southern California.

**Charles Atlas** was born in St. Louis, Missouri in 1958. Atlas is a filmmaker and video artist who has created numerous works for stage, screen, museum, and television. Atlas is a pioneer in the development of media-dance, a genre in which original performance work is created directly for the camera. Atlas worked as filmmaker-in-residence with the Merce Cunningham Dance Company for ten years. Many of the Atlas' works have been collaborations with choreographers, dancers, and performers, including Yvonne Rainer, Michael Clark, Douglas Dunn, Marina Abramovic, Diamanda Galas, and John Kelly. His film, *The Legend of Leigh Bowery* (2002), is an outrageous and revealing portrait of costume/clothing designer, nightclub impresario, performer, and musician Leigh Bowery. Atlas created the opening segments for each episode of Season Two. Charles Atlas lives and works in New York City and Paris.

**Walton Ford** was born in 1960 in Larchmont, New York. Ford began his career with the intention of becoming a filmmaker, but later adapted his talents as a storyteller to his unique style of large-scale watercolor. Blending depictions of natural history with political commentary, Ford's meticulous paintings satirize the history of colonialism, and the continuing impact of slavery, and other forms of political oppression on today's social environmental landscape. Each painting is as much a tutorial in flora and fauna as it is as a scathing indictment of the wrongs committed by nineteenth-century industrialists or contemporary American consumer society. An enthusiast of the watercolors of John James Audubon, Ford celebrates the myth surrounding the renowned naturalist-painter while simultaneously repositioning him as an infamous anti-hero who, in reality, killed more animals than he ever painted. Each of Ford's animal portraits doubles as a complex, symbolic system, which the artist layers with clues, jokes, and erudite lessons in colonial literature and folktales. After living in New York City for more than a decade, Walton Ford relocated his studio to Great Barrington, Massachusetts. Ford and his family reside in upstate New York.

**Elizabeth Murray** was born in Chicago in 1940. A pioneer in painting, Murray's distinctively shaped canvases break with the art-historical tradition of illusionistic space in two-dimensions. Jutting out from the wall and sculptural in form, Murray's paintings and watercolors playfully blur the line between the painting as an object and the painting as a space for depicting objects. Her still lifes are reminiscent of paintings by masters such as Cézanne, Picasso, and Matisse; however, like her entire body of work, Murray's paintings rejuvenate old art forms. Breathing life into domestic subject matter, Murray's paintings often include images of cups, drawers, utensils, chairs, and tables. These familiar objects are matched with cartoonish fingers and floating eyeballs—macabre images that are as nightmarish as they are goofy. Taken in as a whole, Murray's paintings are abstract compositions rendered in bold colors and multiple layers of paint. But the details of the paintings reveal a fascination with dream states and the psychological underbelly of domestic life. Elizabeth Murray and her family reside in New York.

**Raymond Pettibon** was born in Tucson, Arizona in 1957. A cult figure among underground music devotees for his early work associated with the Los Angeles punk rock scene, Pettibon has acquired an international reputation as one of the foremost contemporary American artists working with drawing, text, and artist's books. Pettibon is as likely to explore the subject of surfing as he is typography; themes from art history and nineteenth-century literature appear in the same breath with American politics from the 1960s and contemporary pop culture. In his anthology, *Raymond Pettibon: A Reader* (1998) the viewer can read over Pettibon's shoulder to discover a handful of the artist's muses—Henry James, Mickey Spillane, Marcel Proust, William Blake, and Samuel Beckett, among others. Beginning in the 1990s, Pettibon extended his work beyond the printed page and onto the walls of the exhibition space, creating wall-sized drawings and collages. Pettibon lives and works in Hermosa Beach, California.





### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

In the introduction, comedian Margaret Cho demonstrates the comic consequences of misinterpretation. What are other situations where open interpretation ends in hilarity? How can satire and sarcasm lead to miscommunication? Is this always funny?

"I think that there's almost no subject matter that you can't treat with some humor, no matter how brutal it can seem," says Walton Ford. Likewise, Raymond Pettibon remarks, "I don't think humor is a bad thing at any time...I don't think there is subject matter to consider too important to use humor with." How do these artists in this episode use humor—including irony, satire, alter-egos, and sarcasm—to address graver issues, such as poverty, diversity, or politics? Where can you find other examples of humor being used to explore controversial or challenging topics? Discuss examples from television (including the news), print publications, film, and/or advertising.

Walton Ford says that what he looks for in his work "is a sort of attraction-repulsion, where the stuff is beautiful to begin with until you notice that some sort of horrible violence is about to happen." What is the connection between attraction and repulsion? How do you think this relates to humor?

Discuss how the phrase "imitation is the greatest form of flattery" does or does not apply to Walton Ford's mimicry of Audubon's folios or to Eleanor Antin's ballerina persona. What is the difference between imitation and impersonation? How do these artists use imitation to make socio-political commentary?

How do Elizabeth Murray and Eleanor Antin use humor to comment on gender roles? What, in their art, can be traditionally defined as men's work and women's work, and how do they spoof or exaggerate these divisions? What are some situations in movies or television where gender roles are mined for their comedic value?

### GROUP ACTIVITIES

Screen *Humor* in conjunction with a local humor-related event (such as an improv festival, a carnival, a vaudeville show, a comedy film series, or a school or community theater's Follies production).

Invite a speaker or organize a panel discussion around the notions of humor addressed in the *Humor* program. Suggested participants could include: a local illustrator or cartoonist, the owner of a comic book store, an actor or drama teacher, a feminist writer or women's rights activist, a curator, a nature conservationist, an art teacher, or an arts journalist or critic.

Ask participants to draw a storyboard for their own opening segment to the *Humor* episode. How would you introduce the theme of humor? Consider using dialogue, pantomime, slapstick, or visual puns.

In conjunction with a screening of *Humor*, host a comedy club night. Invite local comedians and students to perform skits in response to the film.

Use humor to create a work of art that confronts a serious current issue.

Look for fictional or historical texts to discuss in tandem with the screening, such as stories by Rudyard Kipling about colonialism (*The Man Who Would Be King*). Books about Pompeii, articles about Nixon and Watergate, video clips from the Gumby series, or the film *Pompeii: The Last Day* are also relevant. See if your library has a copy of Audubon's book, *Birds of America*.

### ADDITIONAL REFERENCES

<i>Humor</i>	<a href="http://www.pbs.org/art21/series/seasontwo/humor.html">www.pbs.org/art21/series/seasontwo/humor.html</a>	
Eleanor Antin	<a href="http://www.pbs.org/art21/artists/antin">www.pbs.org/art21/artists/antin</a>	<a href="http://www.feldmangallery.com">www.feldmangallery.com</a>
Charles Atlas	<a href="http://www.pbs.org/art21/artists/atlas">www.pbs.org/art21/artists/atlas</a>	<a href="http://www.participantinc.org">www.participantinc.org</a>
Walton Ford	<a href="http://www.pbs.org/art21/artists/ford">www.pbs.org/art21/artists/ford</a>	<a href="http://www.paulkasmin.com">www.paulkasmin.com</a>
Elizabeth Murray	<a href="http://www.pbs.org/art21/artists/murray">www.pbs.org/art21/artists/murray</a>	<a href="http://www.pacewildenstein.com">www.pacewildenstein.com</a>
Raymond Pettibon	<a href="http://www.pbs.org/art21/artists/pettibon">www.pbs.org/art21/artists/pettibon</a>	<a href="http://www.regenprojects.com">www.regenprojects.com</a>



Thoughts and responses to *Loss & Desire* surface in many areas of our lives, from the philosophical to the emotional. In this episode, specific works of art cause us to contemplate issues such as war and peace; the loss of community and the desire for connection; and the age-old human longing for perfection. Created by **Charles Atlas**, the opening for *Loss & Desire* begins with four-time Oscar-nominated actress **Jane Alexander** seated before a mirror in a glamorous dressing room, reflecting on the emotions that motivate some of the characters she has brought to life on stage and screen. Alexander notes that as an actress this emotional range is “familiar territory.” Alexander introduces the artists featured in the hour, commenting that they create works that are “both personal and universal.”

“Gender, religion, nationality—they’re all sort of things that are in flux in my work,” comments **Collier Schorr**, pointing out the ambiguity that is so important to each image. Filmed taking pictures of a wrestling practice and match, we see Schorr shooting sublime moments of exhilaration and exhaustion as she moves comfortably among the athletes. She describes how she was always intrigued by the camaraderie among boys that she watched her brother enjoy. Through these portraits, she explains, “I’m creating a boy’s world, but from the brain—from the emotional center—of a woman.” Shifting to the subject of art history, Schorr’s images of her male model and friend, Jens, dramatize poses made by American painter Andrew Wyeth’s female model Helga. The segment ends in Germany where Schorr recreates a fictionalized military occupation of the landscape, bringing to the surface the personal histories buried and repressed by war. Using her camera to explore the psychologically complex feelings she has about Germany and being Jewish, Schorr photographs her young friends, dressed in military uniforms—both German and American. Commenting on her photo of a young man dressed as an SS soldier in the woods, Schorr says, “he didn’t rise up as the ultimate villain and he didn’t rise up as the ultimate victim. He rose up as just a guy—you know—who fought. Just a guy who died.”

“I don’t have a studio, so I don’t have a specific place of production,” remarks **Gabriel Orozco**. “You have to be confronted with reality all the time.” The segment follows Orozco as he creates situations with objects on the street and photographs them. Walking through Paris, he finds beauty in the serendipity of an unexpected still life. “I try to be intimate with everything I can. To be intimate you have to open yourself and you have to trust what is around you,” he explains. Orozco’s interest in logic, systems, and physics is revealed in his series of games and in the dramatic *La D.S.* (1993). He recalls how he spent a month in a garage carefully cutting apart a Citroën car and rebuilding it to emphasize both its cultural significance as an icon and also its function as a high-speed machine. As he discusses artwork as varied as his *Ping Pond* (1998) sculpture, which explores the new space created at the intersection of two ping pong tables, and his elliptical *Oval Billiard Table* (1996), which forces the player to invent new rules, Orozco describes the philosophical concepts that underpin his work. Orozco’s process of making art is central to the outcome. Exploring the creative possibilities of clay at a pottery workshop, Orozco says, “the connection between the brain, and the breathing, and the sweating, and time that you spend, and how you slow down thinking, is very important too because you just generate the different aspects of thinking. So, in the final result of the piece it should be evident, the thinking process.”

The third and final artist in the hour is **Janine Antoni**. Making final adjustments on her work, *Moor* (2000), she explains that the project, which looks like a rope, is “an umbilical cord” that connects all the people in her life by weaving together diverse materials from each of their lives. Antoni’s use of unusual sculptural materials, such as chocolate, soap, lard, and rawhide is explored as the artist takes the viewer on a tour of a major exhibition at SITE Santa Fe. “I love the handmade in any form it takes.” She weaves and sculpts and works in unlikely mediums because, she says, “so much meaning is in how we chose to make something, both in art and in all objects that we deal with in our lives.” Antoni’s choices often include using her body in her art works, whether it is the extreme act of painting on the floor with her hair or the gentle act of taking a bath in a dairy barn, which was captured in a memorable photograph. Looking at the picture, Antoni recalls her spontaneous impulse to see if curious cows would come to drink if she submerged herself in their water trough. They did. “She looks like she’s nursing from me,” says Antoni of one cow lowering its head over her shoulder, a classic image of motherhood with roots in paintings of the Virgin Mary. Later, Antoni returns to her recurring interest in rope making through tightrope walking as a metaphor for finding stability by learning to accept imbalance. She is shown walking a tightrope, preparing for the video *Touch* (2002) where she appears to walk on the blue ocean horizon of her childhood home in the Bahamas.





**Janine Antoni** was born in Freeport, Bahamas in 1964. Antoni's work blurs the distinction between performance art and sculpture. Transforming everyday activities such as eating, bathing, and sleeping into ways of making art, Antoni's primary tool for making sculpture has always been her own body. She has chiseled cubes of lard and chocolate with her teeth, washed away the faces of soap busts made in her own likeness, and used the brainwave signals recorded while she dreamed at night as a pattern for weaving a blanket the following morning. In the video *Touch* (2003), Antoni appears to perform the impossible act of walking on the surface of water. She accomplished this magician's trick, however, not through divine intervention, but only after months of training to balance on a tightrope that she then strung at the exact height of the horizon line. Balance is a key component in the related piece, *Moor* (2000), where the artist taught herself how to make a rope out of unusual and often personal materials donated by friends and relatives. By learning to twist the materials together so that they formed a rope that was neither too loose nor too tight, Antoni created an enduring life-line that united a disparate group of people into a unified whole. Janine Antoni lives and works in New York.

**Charles Atlas** was born in St. Louis, Missouri in 1958. Atlas is a filmmaker and video artist who has created numerous works for stage, screen, museum, and television. Atlas is a pioneer in the development of media-dance, a genre in which original performance work is created directly for the camera. Atlas worked as filmmaker-in-residence with the Merce Cunningham Dance Company for ten years. Many of the Atlas' works have been collaborations with choreographers, dancers, and performers, including Yvonne Rainer, Michael Clark, Douglas Dunn, Marina Abramovic, Diamanda Galas, and John Kelly. His film, *The Legend of Leigh Bowery* (2002), is an outrageous and revealing portrait of costume/clothing designer, nightclub impresario, performer, and musician Leigh Bowery. Atlas created the opening segments for each episode of Season Two. Charles Atlas lives and works in New York City and Paris.

**Gabriel Orozco** was born in Jalapa, Veracruz, Mexico. An avid traveler, Gabriel Orozco uses the urban landscape and the everyday objects found within it to twist conventional notions of reality and engage the imagination of the viewer. Orozco's interest in complex geometry and mapping find expression in works like the patterned human skull of *Black Kites* (1997–2001), the curvilinear logic of *Oval Billiard Table* (1996), and the extended playing field of the chessboard in *Horses Running Endlessly* (1995). He considers philosophical problems, such as the concept of infinity, and evokes them in humble moments, as in the photograph *Pinched Ball* (1993), which depicts a deflated soccer ball filled with water. Matching his passion for political engagement with the poetry of chance encounters, Orozco's photographs, sculptures, and installations propose a distinctive model for the ways in which artists can affect the world with their work. Orozco was featured at Documenta XI (2002), where his sensuous terra-cotta works explored the elegance and logic of traditional ceramics—a pointed commentary on Mexican craft and its place in a "high art" gallery space. Gabriel Orozco lives and works in New York, Paris, and Mexico City.

**Collier Schorr** was born in New York City in 1963. Best known for her portraits of adolescent men and women, Schorr's pictures often blend photographic realism with elements of fiction and youthful fantasy. For her project *Neue Soldaten* (1998), Schorr juxtaposed documentary-style pictures of a Swedish army battalion with pictures of fake Swedish soldiers played by German teenagers. Several of these young men reappear in Schorr's project *Forests and Fields* (2001), where this time they are dressed in an anxious assortment of German, Israeli, Nazi, and Vietnam-era American Army uniforms. Schorr's dubious images not only call into question the fractured role of soldiering in today's society, but also examine the way nationality, gender, and sexuality influence an individual's identity. For her *Jens F./Helga* project, Schorr set out to create a comprehensive, yet unusual portrait of a young man by photographing a German schoolboy posed as Helga, the housewife whom American painter Andrew Wyeth studied in secret for nearly twenty years. Whereas in this body of work Schorr is comparing the way men and women pose differently for the artist's gaze, in photographs of American high school and collegiate wrestlers the artist trains her camera on a tribe of young men whose bodies and athletic training homogenize personal differences. Collier Schorr currently lives and works in New York.



### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

The artists in *Loss & Desire* often empathize with their subjects, as with Antoni's *Saddle* (2000) and Schorr's photographs of young men. How can empathy infuse a work of art with meaning? Can it also be self-destructive or painful? If so, how?

Gabriel Orozco takes cars apart and puts them back together, photographs everyday objects in unusual positions, and makes new games from old ideas. How does his work help us consider objects in new ways? What can new ways of seeing teach us about our lives and our environment?

Janine Antoni takes a very physical approach to making art. From chiseling chocolate with her teeth to using her hair as a paintbrush, she often uses her body as a tool in her art making. How might you understand her work differently had you not known how she made it? What physical processes would you use to make art and why?

Collier Schorr deliberately chooses and poses her subjects in ambiguous ways, playing with notions of nationality and gender. Discuss your impressions of her photographs. What stories can you elicit from her images?

Gabriel Orozco says, "What happens when you don't have a studio is that you have to be confronted with reality all the time." How does where you produce your work affect what you produce? Do you prefer to work in isolation to be creative or do you need those constant reminders of reality to be inspired? Why?

In *Loss & Desire*, Janine Antoni and Collier Schorr are shown collaborating with others to create work, while Gabriel Orozco is shown working alone. What might the artwork featured in this episode look like if Antoni and Schorr worked alone and Orozco worked with others? Must art be an inherently individual activity? Make an argument for and against this idea.

### GROUP ACTIVITIES

Host a three-part event featuring the episode *Loss & Desire*: 1) after the screening ask participants to shoot a series of photographs of people or things in action, Collier Schorr-style (such as at a supermarket, classroom, or nightclub), with the aim of sharing the photographs. 2) After the participants have taken their photos, ask them to write short narratives about the photo series and reconvene the group for discussion of the photos and narratives. 3) Organize an exhibition of the photographs and include the accompanying narratives.

Thinking about Janine Antoni's *Moor* (2001), ask your friends and loved ones to each donate a small personal item. Transform their belongings into a new work of art that's personally meaningful to you.

After screening *Loss & Desire*, lead participants on a walk through your neighborhood. Encourage them to photograph found objects they see in such a way that their juxtaposition tells a story. Feature the photographs in a public space in your community.

Host a call for entries, inviting local artists to make artwork in unconventional media and that is clearly inspired by the artwork featured in *Loss & Desire*. Put together a juried panel made up of students, local artists, and museum staff. Curate the winning picks in a local exhibition and, if you'd like, publish the results online.

Invite participants to bring old family clothes with them to a screening of *Loss & Desire*. After viewing, ask participants to share personal stories about their family histories and pose in the clothes, while someone else in the group photographs their portrait.

After screening *Loss & Desire*, have the participants reflect on a personal experience of loss. Have them compose a story or represent the experience visually in a work of art. Discuss these experiences as they are represented in written or visual form.

### ADDITIONAL REFERENCES

<i>Loss &amp; Desire</i>	<a href="http://www.pbs.org/art21/series/seasontwo/lossanddesire.html">www.pbs.org/art21/series/seasontwo/lossanddesire.html</a>	
Janine Antoni	<a href="http://www.pbs.org/artists/antoni">www.pbs.org/artists/antoni</a>	<a href="http://www.luhringaugustine.com">www.luhringaugustine.com</a>
Charles Atlas	<a href="http://www.pbs.org/art21/artists/atlas">www.pbs.org/art21/artists/atlas</a>	<a href="http://www.participantinc.org">www.participantinc.org</a>
Gabriel Orozco	<a href="http://www.pbs.org/artists/orozco">www.pbs.org/artists/orozco</a>	<a href="http://www.mariangoodman.com">www.mariangoodman.com</a>
Collier Schorr	<a href="http://www.pbs.org/artists/schorr">www.pbs.org/artists/schorr</a>	<a href="http://www.303gallery.com">www.303gallery.com</a>





The artists profiled in *Stories* tell tales—autobiographical, fictional, satirical, or fantastical—through architecture, literature, mythology, fairytales, and history. These artists provoke us to think about our own stories, the characters and caricatures, the morals and messages that define our real and imagined lives. Created by **Charles Atlas**, the opening for *Stories* is a gloss on the classic *Masterpiece Theater* host introduction. Filmmaker **John Waters** greets the audience dressed for the part in a checkered smoking jacket, surrounded by his extensive collection of art books in his Baltimore home. “Good art provokes and inspires,” declares Waters. For Waters, “a strong reaction” is an important measure of success.

As the documentary brings the viewer into the circular exhibition space at the 2002 São Paulo Bienal in Brazil, **Kara Walker** explains her motive “to lure the viewer into the feeling of being part of this scene.” But what a horrific scene it is. “The illusion,” she says of her subversive use of the traditional silhouette technique, “is that it’s simply about a particular point in history, and nothing else.” The segment traces the evolution of Walker’s work, from time spent in the studio to the artist’s more recent installations of projected light. “A lot of what I was wanting to do in my work and what I have been doing has been about the unexpected...that unexpected situation of wanting to be the heroine and yet wanting to kill the heroine at the same time.” Projecting fiction into fact, Walker’s art upsets the conventions of history and storytelling. But in these richly narrative images, Walker is exploring the complexities of her own heritage as an African-American artist. The creative decision to appropriate the popular nineteenth century tradition of silhouette art evolved from her work with pencil and black paint. “I was making silhouette paintings, but they weren’t the same thing,” she realized. “I had this black paper, and if I just made this cut in it I was creating a hole. And it was like the whole world was in there for me.”

“Basically, I think art is just a way to think,” remarks **Kiki Smith**, “it’s like standing in the wind and letting it pull you in whatever direction it wants to go.” Adept in bronze, wax, textiles, and printmaking, the segment follows Smith on a journey through a diversity of narrative subjects including witches, saints, death, animals, family members, domestic objects, and dolls. One image that has captivated her is a painting of St. Genevieve, the savior of Paris, and she has used that inspiration as a point of departure, exploring different mediums and imagining different narratives through many of her works of art. The perspectives and stories of her religious upbringing seep into much of the way Smith thinks about her work, but she offers it to the viewer without forcing her point of view. “I’d rather make something that’s very open-ended that can have a meaning to me, but then it also can have a meaning to somebody else who can fill it up with their meaning.” At work in her studio, Smith explains that the physical process of making art, from the “scratchy, scratchy, scratchy motion” of printmaking to the constant filing and burnishing of creating metal sculptures, is intensely satisfying and brings depth to the artwork. “The more you manipulate it,” she says, “the more actual life you put into it.”

**Do-Ho Suh** was born in Seoul, Korea, and the stories and images in his art are profoundly shaped by his cultural roots. When we are first introduced to him in *Art:21*, he is filmed painting outside his childhood home. “Once my fortune teller told me that I have five horses and that means that I travel a lot,” says Suh, illuminating the concept behind the artist’s transportable silk fabric sculpture *Seoul Home/L.A. Home...* (1999). Whether addressing the dynamic of personal space or considering the implications of artworks for public space, Suh’s sculptures continually question the identity of the individual in our increasingly transnational, global society. Themes of homesickness, public and private space, military conflict, conformity and difference, and art’s relationship to architecture are touched on by Suh as he installs an exhibition at the Seattle Art Museum and travels between his life and studio in New York and a lifetime full of memory and family ties in Seoul, South Korea.

Growing up in the vivid religious tradition of an African-American church, **Trenton Doyle Hancock** learned to love Biblical stories as a child. But like many American boys, he also loved comic books. “I never lost that love for that kind of storytelling,” he says, “this idea of superheroes and this panel-by-panel narrative.” Each new work by Hancock is a contribution to the saga of his Mounds, portraying the birth, life, death, afterlife and even dream states of these half-human, half-plant creatures he has imagined. While developing the most recent installment of his story, Hancock explains that his newest series of allegorical paintings are “colorful blasts of energy or communication from Mounds, these visions of hope. So in a way it’s like God’s promise with the rainbow after the flood.” When the documentary visits him at work in his studio, Hancock describes how he finds inspiration in the colorful litter that is strewn around. “In my car there’s a pile of things that’s a mound. In my studio there are piles of things all over the place, and that’s how I pick, from these piles,” he says. The segment ends with a visit to an exhibition of Hancock’s vibrant drawings and collages, and the artist comments, “in my work I feel I’m finally being able to bring together the worlds of comic book narratives and the history of abstraction.”





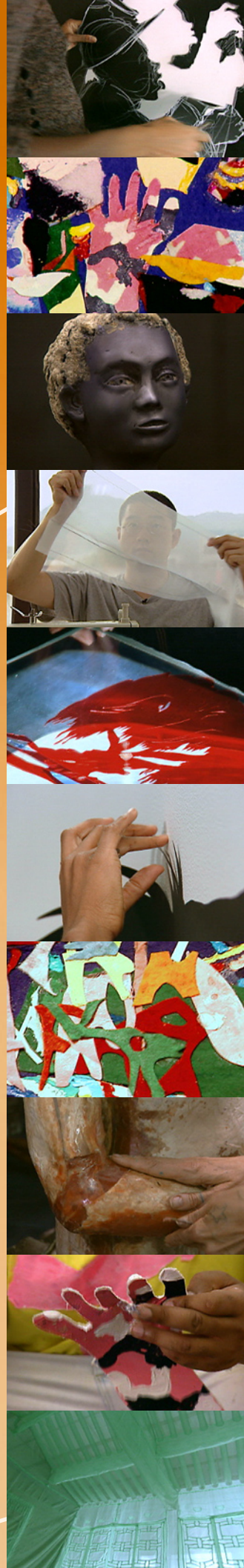
**Charles Atlas** was born in St. Louis, Missouri in 1958. Atlas is a filmmaker and video artist who has created numerous works for stage, screen, museum, and television. Atlas is a pioneer in the development of media-dance, a genre in which original performance work is created directly for the camera. Atlas worked as filmmaker-in-residence with the Merce Cunningham Dance Company for ten years. Many of the Atlas' works have been collaborations with choreographers, dancers, and performers, including Yvonne Rainer, Michael Clark, Douglas Dunn, Marina Abramovic, Diamanda Galas, and John Kelly. His film, *The Legend of Leigh Bowery* (2002), is an outrageous and revealing portrait of costume/clothing designer, nightclub impresario, performer, and musician Leigh Bowery. Atlas is a Consulting Director for *Art:21*, creating the original Program Opens for each hour-long segment of Season Two, as well as supervising the *Stories*, *Loss & Desire*, *Memory*, and *Play* hours. Charles Atlas lives and works in New York City and Paris.

**Trenton Doyle Hancock** was born in 1974 in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma and raised in Paris, Texas. Hancock's prints, drawings, and collaged felt paintings work together to tell the story of the Mounds—a group of mythical creatures that are the tragic protagonists of the artist's unfolding narrative. Each new work by Hancock is a contribution to the saga of the Mounds, portraying the birth, life, death, afterlife, and even dream states of these half-animal, half-plant creatures. Influenced by the history of painting, especially Abstract Expressionism, Hancock transforms traditionally formal decisions—such as the use of color, language, and pattern—into opportunities to create new characters, develop sub-plots, and convey symbolic meaning. Hancock's paintings often rework Biblical stories that the artist learned as a child from his family and local church community. Balancing moral dilemmas with wit and a musical sense of language and color, Hancock's works create a painterly space of psychological dimension. The recipient of numerous awards, Hancock lives and works in New York City.

**Kiki Smith** was born in 1954 in Nuremberg, Germany. The daughter of American sculptor Tony Smith, Kiki Smith grew up in New Jersey. As a young girl, one of Smith's first experiences with art was helping her father make cardboard models for his geometric sculptures. This training in formalist systems, combined with her upbringing in the Catholic Church, would later resurface in Smith's evocative sculptures, drawings, and prints. The recurrent subject matter in Smith's work has been the body as a receptacle for knowledge, belief, and storytelling. In the 1980s, Smith literally turned the figurative tradition in sculpture inside out, creating objects and drawings based on organs, cellular forms, and the human nervous system. This body of work evolved to incorporate animals, domestic objects, and narrative tropes from classical mythology and folk tales. Life, death, and resurrection are thematic signposts in many of Smith's installations and sculptures. In several of her pieces, Smith takes as her inspiration the life of St. Genevieve, the patron saint of Paris. Portrayed communing with a wolf, taking shelter with its pelt, and being born from its womb, Smith's character of Genevieve embodies the complex, symbolic relationships between humans and animals. Smith lives and works in New York City.

**Do-Ho Suh** was born in Seoul, Korea in 1962. Best known for his intricate sculptures that defy conventional notions of scale and site-specificity, Suh's work draws attention to the ways viewers occupy and inhabit public space. In several of the artist's floor sculptures viewers are encouraged to walk on surfaces composed of thousands of miniature human figures. In *Some/One* (2001), the floor of the gallery is blanketed with a sea of polished military dog tags. Evocative of the way an individual soldier is part of a larger troop or military body, these dog tags swell to form a hollow, ghost-like suit of armor at the center of the room. Whether addressing the dynamic of personal space versus public space, or exploring the fine line between strength in numbers and homogeneity, Do-Ho Suh's sculptures continually question the identity of the individual in today's increasingly transnational, global society. He lives and works in New York City and Seoul.

**Kara Walker** was born in Stockton, California in 1969. The artist is best known for exploring the raw intersection of race, gender, and sexuality through her iconic, silhouetted figures. Walker unleashes the traditionally proper Victorian medium of the silhouette directly onto the walls of the gallery, creating a theatrical space in which her unruly cut-paper characters fornicate and inflict violence on one another. In works like *Darkytown Rebellion* (2000) and *Insurrection! (Our Tools Were Rudimentary, Yet We Pressed On)* (2002), the artist uses overhead projectors to throw colored light onto the ceiling, walls, and floor of the exhibition space. When the viewer walks into the installation, his or her body casts a shadow onto the walls where it mingles with Walker's black-paper figures and landscapes. With one foot in the historical realism of slavery and the other in the fantastical space of the romance novel, Walker's nightmarish fictions simultaneously seduce and implicate the audience. Walker lives in New York, where she is on the faculty of the MFA program at Columbia University.





## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

*Stories* features biblical, mythological, and historical narratives passed down through time and across cultures. Which ones do you recognize, and how do the featured artists explore them in their work?

Why are some stories told as opposed to others? Why do some stories continue to be told over time while others are lost?

Kara Walker discusses how “the silhouette lends itself to avoidance of the subject. Of not being able to look at it directly, yet there it is, all the time, staring you in the face.” How can it be hard to confront history and the ills of the past? Describe the stories Walker’s artwork confronts, paying attention to shapes, mood, and relationships between the figures in her silhouette wall drawings.

In thinking about how he describes his work, Do-Ho Suh notes, “ironically, I had never talked about my art in Korean before. Even though my English is not good, I think I feel more comfortable actually talking about my work in English than in Korean. That’s something that I find interesting.” How can different methods of communication affect the meaning of a story? Can some stories be better communicated visually rather than through words?

The artists in *Stories* are all avid collectors of materials and objects, from bottlecaps to yearbooks, to personal belongings of family and friends, to childhood toys and historical images. How do collections relate to the act of telling stories?

What stories, histories, or historical figures are important to your community, region, or state? How did you first learn about them? How have they been preserved over time?

## GROUP ACTIVITIES

Combine a screening of *Stories* with an exhibition tour of a local museum’s art collection. Invite a local artist to talk about artwork that tells a story or relates to a narrative theme.

Organize a screening of *Stories*, followed by an open forum in which audience members share their personal stories and community histories. Invite a curator, a local writer or poet, a visual artist, and/or a historian.

After viewing *Stories*, invite a local creative writing instructor to lead a storytelling workshop, experimenting with narrative structure. Post the stories online for others to read.

Travel is an important part of Do-Ho Suh’s story. He says, “Once my fortune teller told me that I have five horses. Five horses in my fortune, in my life. That means that I travel a lot. I’m destined to leave home and live somewhere else and travel to many places...that’s a story.” After screening Suh’s segment discuss the idea of destiny as a navigation tool for a person’s story. Have audience members create their own destinies using symbols, such as the five horses in Suh’s fortune, to illustrate their future stories.

Screen several artist profiles from *Stories* and offer a hands-on workshop for the general public, encouraging them to create their own narratives by making works of art based on Trenton Doyle Hancock’s comic book forms or Kara Walker’s silhouettes.

After viewing *Stories*, invite a local artist to conduct a bookbinding demonstration with your audience. Encourage participants to use the books to record their stories employing different methods (i.e. narrative, illustration, collected materials, collage, photographs, etc.).

## ADDITIONAL REFERENCES

<i>Stories</i>	<a href="http://www.pbs.org/art21/series/seasontwo/stories.html">www.pbs.org/art21/series/seasontwo/stories.html</a>	
Charles Atlas	<a href="http://www.pbs.org/art21/artists/atlas">www.pbs.org/art21/artists/atlas</a>	<a href="http://www.participantinc.org">www.participantinc.org</a>
Trenton Doyle Hancock	<a href="http://www.pbs.org/art21/artists/hancock">www.pbs.org/art21/artists/hancock</a>	<a href="http://www.jamescohan.com">www.jamescohan.com</a>
Kiki Smith	<a href="http://www.pbs.org/art21/artists/smith">www.pbs.org/art21/artists/smith</a>	<a href="http://www.pacewildenstein.com">www.pacewildenstein.com</a>
Do-Ho Suh	<a href="http://www.pbs.org/art21/artists/suh">www.pbs.org/art21/artists/suh</a>	<a href="http://www.lehmannmaupin.com">www.lehmannmaupin.com</a>
Kara Walker	<a href="http://www.pbs.org/art21/artists/walker">www.pbs.org/art21/artists/walker</a>	<a href="http://www.sikkemajenkinsco.com">www.sikkemajenkinsco.com</a>





How do artists evoke and transform time in their work? Can a work of contemporary art be timeless? How does contemporary art relate to art of the ancient past, to nature, and to the rhythms of the life? "Tap-dancing is a way of articulating time, and it's a long time since I did it," says pioneering dancer/choreographer **Merce Cunningham** in the introduction to *Time* created by **Charles Atlas**. Cunningham speaks of his childhood dance teacher, an early influence, who made a strong impression with her tap-dancing, including a remarkable moment when "she did it on the side of her foot. I never forgot it." Cunningham begins to tap while seated, allowing the syncopated rhythms of his dance to set the tone for the episode.

Patiently working at her easel, **Vija Celmins** dabs tiny specks of paint on a canvas and bemoans her fate, "I ended up doing this extremely detailed work that I detest, but I somehow worked myself into this space and I'm hoping to work myself out," she explains. The object of her attention is a starry night sky, an image that she has been painstakingly creating by applying paint, rethinking, sanding it off, and adding more. "This is all part of the work," she says, "in fact, I often now talk about building a painting." A prolific artist with a long career, Celmins has created sculptures, paintings, drawings and prints that find a timeless authenticity in natural forms from stones to waves and spider webs. "The reason, I think, I do images that require so much time," she reflects, is to give the work the opportunity to ripen. "It's like something unconsciously seeps into the work," Celmins explains about the labor-intensive process she is well-known for, "some subtlety that my brain was not capable of figuring out, by spending so much time with it."

**Tim Hawkinson** tinkers with everyday materials to build surprising mechanical art works. "I guess it comes from early on in childhood, a fascination with moving parts and sort of the magical," he suggests. The inspiration can be mundane, like a leaky ceiling on a rainy day, but the result is astounding. In his studio, Hawkinson explains how he used gears, switches, nozzles, buckets, and pie tins to build a drumming machine that captures random drips of rain, amplifies them, and organizes them into music. "It's not even electronics. I don't know what it is," he admits. One of Hawkinson's largest projects, *Überorgan* (2000) is a series of giant inflated balloons with reeds activated by air pressure machines and driven by a light-sensitive player piano. For this installation—which is the size of a football field—and a different configuration of *Überorgan* at a New York gallery, Hawkinson created a score for the organ using old church hymns and *Sailor's Hornpipe* and *Swan Lake*. The Protestant hymns "bring strong connotations and memories back and also, you know, reflect faith." Seeing visitors to the gallery walking through the installation, it is apparent that the sounds also produce joy.

**Martin Puryear's** respect for age-old techniques and his knowledge of woodworking, masonry and non-western crafts are essential to the archetypal forms he creates. "I'm really interested in vernacular cultures where people lived a little closer to the source of materials..." The artist tapped his carpentry skills to create *Ladder for Booker T. Washington* (1996), a sculptural country ladder reaching 36 feet into the air. Built with an artificial, forced perspective, the ladder recedes to an almost impossibly distant point. "The title came after the work was finished," Puryear reveals. It struck him that the ladder shared a resonance with Washington's life and that "his idea of progress for the race was a long slow progression." The segment continues with Puryear on a visit to Northern California where he built a massive stone folly working with a team of masons. Finally, traveling with the artist to a stone yard in China and a sculpture site in Japan, the documentary reveals the complex practical and artistic calculations that go into Puryear's large-scale work.

**Paul Pfeiffer** uses popular culture as a point of departure to explore the complex relationship between images and us. Inspired by the classic horror movie *The Amityville Horror*, his installation *Dutch Interior* (2001) recreates the ominous staircase of the house in Amityville where the film's fictional family encountered the evil presence of the devil, giving the viewer a virtual experience of that eerie space and the fraught potential of an encounter. But Pfeiffer's art also finds inspiration in real events. Courtside at a San Antonio Spurs game, Paul Pfeiffer remarks "I'm really attracted to images of amazing spectacle." Pfeiffer pulls video of sports events, pageants, and newscasts off television and then digitally manipulates the images to comment on the frenetic pace and dehumanizing qualities of a consumption-oriented, media-driven culture. His video project called *Fragment of a Crucifixion* freezes a moment of glory when a basketball player is screaming while the crowd of fans roars. Pfeiffer isolates this image, recalling a Francis Bacon painting from the 1950s, because he finds the questions it raises so provocative. "There is a kind of humiliation in that process of simply becoming objects of admiration or people simply becoming consumers," he observes. Finding that same pathos in his Long Count boxing series, Pfeiffer worked meticulously, frame by frame, to erase the boxers from the ring, until they are mere shadows, their existence disappearing into the entertainment icons they have become.





**Charles Atlas** was born in St. Louis, Missouri in 1958. Atlas is a filmmaker and video artist who has created numerous works for stage, screen, museum, and television. Atlas is a pioneer in the development of media-dance, a genre in which original performance work is created directly for the camera. Atlas worked as filmmaker-in-residence with the Merce Cunningham Dance Company for ten years. Many of the Atlas' works have been collaborations with choreographers, dancers, and performers, including Yvonne Rainer, Michael Clark, Douglas Dunn, Marina Abramovic, Diamanda Galas, and John Kelly. His film, *The Legend of Leigh Bowery* (2002), is an outrageous and revealing portrait of costume/clothing designer, nightclub impresario, performer, and musician Leigh Bowery. Atlas is a Consulting Director for *Art:21*, creating the original Program Opens for each hour-long segment of Season Two, as well as supervising the *Stories*, *Loss & Desire*, *Memory*, and *Play* hours. Charles Atlas lives and works in New York City and Paris.

**Vija Celmins** was born in Riga, Latvia in 1938. Celmins immigrated to the United States with her family when she was ten years old, settling in Indiana. Armed with a nuanced palette of blacks and grays, Celmins renders these limitless space—seascapes, night skies, and the barren desert floor—with an uncanny accuracy, working for months on a single image. Celmins has a highly attuned sense for organic detail and the elegance of imperfection. Her most recent series of works take as their subject delicate spider webs. A master of several mediums, including oil painting, charcoal, and multiple printmaking processes, Celmins matches a tangible sense of space with sensuous detail in each work. Vija Celmins received an American Academy of Arts and Letters Award in 1996 and a John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Fellowship in 1997. She was also featured in the 2002 Whitney Biennial. Celmins currently resides in New York and California.

**Tim Hawkinson** was born in San Francisco, California in 1960. Hawkinson is renowned for creating complex sculptural systems through surprisingly simple means. His installation *Überorgan* (2000)—a stadium-size, fully automated bagpipe—was pieced together from bits of electrical hardware and several miles of inflated plastic sheeting. Hawkinson's fascination with music and notation can also be seen in *Pentecost* (1999), a work in which the artist tuned cardboard tubes and assembled them in the shape of a giant tree. On this tree the artist placed twelve life-size robotic replicas of himself, and programmed them to beat out religious hymns at humorously irregular intervals. The source of inspiration for many of Hawkinson's pieces has been the re-imagining of his own body and what it means to make a self-portrait of this new or fictionalized body. In 2005, the first museum retrospective of Hawkinson's work was shown at the Whitney Museum of American Art. Tim Hawkinson resides in Los Angeles with his wife.

**Paul Pfeiffer** was born in Honolulu, Hawaii in 1966, but spent most of his childhood in the Philippines. Pfeiffer relocated to New York in 1990. Pfeiffer's ground-breaking work in video, sculpture, and photography uses recent computer technologies to dissect the role that mass media plays in shaping consciousness. Presented on small LCD screens and often looped, these intimate and idealized video works are meditations on faith, desire, and a contemporary culture obsessed with celebrity. Many of Pfeiffer's works invite viewers to exercise their imaginations or project their own fears and obsessions onto the art object. Several of Pfeiffer's sculptures include eerie, computer-generated recreations of props from Hollywood thrillers, such as *Poltergeist*, and miniature dioramas of sets from films that include *The Exorcist* and *The Amityville Horror*. Pfeiffer is the recipient of numerous awards and fellowships, most notably becoming the inaugural recipient of The Bucksbaum Award given by the Whitney Museum of American Art (2000). In 2003, a traveling retrospective of his work was organized by the MIT List Visual Arts Center and the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago. His most recent work has been shown in a collaborative exhibition between the Gagosian Gallery and the Project Gallery in New York in 2004.

**Martin Puryear** was born in Washington, D.C., in 1941. In his youth, he studied crafts and learned how to build guitars, furniture, and canoes through practical training and instruction. Puryear's objects and public installations—in wood, stone, tar, wire, and various metals—are a marriage of Minimalist logic with traditional ways of making. Puryear's evocative, dreamlike explorations in abstract forms retain vestigial elements of utility from everyday objects found in the world. In *Ladder for Booker T. Washington* (1996) Puryear built a spindly, meandering ladder out of jointed ash wood which narrows toward the top, creating a distorted sense of perspective that evokes an unattainable or illusionary goal. In the massive stone piece, *Untitled* (1993–94), Puryear enlisted a local stonemason to help him construct a building-like structure on a ranch in northern California. Martin Puryear represented the United States at the São Paulo Bienal in 1989, where his exhibition won the Grand Prize. Martin Puryear lives and works in the Hudson Valley region of New York.





## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

In his segment, we find Paul Pfeiffer focusing on sports events to investigate the allure of the spectacle. When these images are stripped of their context (team logos, figures in the audience, and other identifiers) and are repeated through a loop, how do they take on a different meaning? Which historical images have a lasting imprint on our collective consciousness? What is it about these images that you find compelling, and what would happen if you removed their identifying markers?

Paul Pfeiffer says that he believes that, “craft is building a relationship with the material.” What is craft and how is this different from fine art? How is Pfeiffer’s relationship with material similar to developing relationships with people? Discuss some of the requirements for cultivating any type of relationship.

Martin Puryear works in a variety of media, and a trademark feature of his work is that it bears the mark of being handmade. He says, “a lot of my work comes from an interest in how things are made and how things are done. And the way materials are manipulated and used...and the whole history of that in mankind’s past.” How do materials and process evoke a sense of history? What does the concept of the handmade mean in our era of mass production and technology?

How has technology influenced and changed the process and product of the artists featured in *Time*? How do they embrace technology and also reject it? Discuss examples of how technology can liberate our lives, as well as complicate them.

Do works of art become more valuable over time? Which is more important, a lasting meaning or the initial relevance of an idea or commentary? Do people and places become more valuable over time?

Discuss how Tim Hawkinson’s and Vija Celmins’s artworks are particularly time-based or time-sensitive. How do they help the viewer understand the passing of time and how do they provide clues that punctuate the experience? Can a work of art be experienced incrementally or gradually? What artworks stand out in your mind as memorable and/or fluid?

## GROUP ACTIVITIES

Thinking about Martin Puryear’s *Ladder for Booker T. Washington* (1996), recruit a group to come up with a sculptural memorial design to an important member of your community. Consider artifacts from the time in which he or she lived (old advertisements, newspaper clippings, antiques, etc). Like Puryear, think about how light and space fit into your plan.

Host a Polaroid photo shoot in conjunction with a screening of *Time*. Invite audience members to bring an everyday object (new or old) to the event. Ask them to pose with their objects out of their context or juxtapose them in unexpected and irreverent ways. Display the photos in a local library or museum’s gallery and have participants write brief histories of their chosen objects, as well as a short caption explaining each pose.

Screen *Time* followed by excerpts from videos of modern dance, especially works by Merce Cunningham. Discuss the choreographer’s experimentation with time and how it affects the mood and message of the piece. Then compare and contrast how the visual artists in *Time* equally play with sequence and subject.

After screening *Time*, brainstorm clues that note a passage of time. Create an installation that represent these clues.

Host a three-part film series featuring *Time* followed by screenings of original films and their remakes (*Hamlet* or *Pride and Prejudice* are good choices). First discuss how the artists in *Time* consider the past and the present in different ways. Then compare and contrast how the two films look and how they have changed over time.

## ADDITIONAL REFERENCES

<i>Time</i>	<a href="http://www.pbs.org/art21/series/seasontwo/time.html">www.pbs.org/art21/series/seasontwo/time.html</a>	
Charles Atlas	<a href="http://www.pbs.org/art21/artists/atlas">www.pbs.org/art21/artists/atlas</a>	<a href="http://www.participantinc.org">www.participantinc.org</a>
Vija Celmins	<a href="http://www.pbs.org/art21/artists/celmins">www.pbs.org/art21/artists/celmins</a>	<a href="http://www.mckeegallery.com">www.mckeegallery.com</a>
Tim Hawkinson	<a href="http://www.pbs.org/art21/artists/hawkinson">www.pbs.org/art21/artists/hawkinson</a>	<a href="http://www.pacewildenstein.com">www.pacewildenstein.com</a>
Martin Puryear	<a href="http://www.pbs.org/art21/artists/puryear">www.pbs.org/art21/artists/puryear</a>	<a href="http://www.mckeegallery.com">www.mckeegallery.com</a>
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