



art21



ART IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

SCREENING GUIDE TO THE EIGHTH SEASON

GETTING STARTED

ABOUT THIS SCREENING GUIDE

This Screening Guide is designed to help you plan an event using Season Eight of *Art in the Twenty-First Century*. For each of the four episodes in Season Eight, this guide includes:

- Episode Synopsis
- Artist Biographies
- Screening Resources
 - Ideas for Screening-Based Events
 - Screening-Based Activities
 - Discussion Questions
 - Links to Resources Online

ABOUT ART21 SCREENING EVENTS

Public screenings of the *Art in the Twenty-First Century* series illuminate the creative process of today's visual artists in order to deepen audience's appreciation and understanding of contemporary art and ideas.

Organizations and individuals interested in screening ART21 films can either license films individually, or join the **ART21 Screening Society**, a free program that facilitates screenings of each new season of *Art in the Twenty-First Century* for a limited period of time. ART21 invites museums, high schools, colleges, universities, community-based organizations, libraries, art spaces, and individuals to get involved and create unique screening events in their communities.

CREDIT LINE

When hosting an ART21 screening, please use the following credit line in publications associated with your event:

This event is produced in collaboration with ART21, a nonprofit global leader in art education, producing preeminent films on today's leading visual artists and education programs that inspire creativity worldwide.

ABOUT THE ART IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY SERIES ON PBS

The first and only nationally broadcast public television series to focus exclusively on contemporary visual art and artists, *Art in the Twenty-First Century* introduces audiences to a diverse range of established and emerging artists working today, and to the art they are producing now. A biennial event for television, ART21 produces four one-hour episodes each season. *Art in the Twenty-First Century* premieres nationwide on PBS in the United States and is distributed internationally.

Through in-depth profiles and interviews, the four-part series reveals the inspiration, vision, and techniques behind the creative works of some of today's most accomplished contemporary artists. ART21 travels across the country and abroad to film contemporary artists, from painters and photographers to installation and video artists, in their own spaces and in their own words. The result is a unique opportunity to experience first-hand the complex artistic process—from inception to finished product—behind today's most thought-provoking art.

Season Eight marks a shift in the award-winning series. For the first time in the show's history, the episodes are not organized around an artistic theme such as *Fantasy* or *Fiction*. Instead the 16 featured artists are grouped according to the cities where they live and work, revealing unique and powerful relationships—artistic and otherwise—to place.

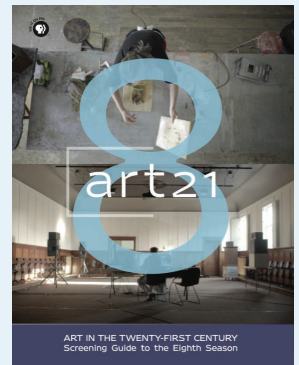
ABOUT ART21

ART21 is a celebrated global leader in presenting thought-provoking and sophisticated content about contemporary art, and the go-to place to learn first-hand from the artists of our time. A nonprofit organization, ART21's mission is to inspire a more creative world through the works and words of contemporary artists. ART21 provides unparalleled access to the artist's voice to diverse audiences around the world, using the power of digital media to introduce millions of people to contemporary art and artists. For nearly two decades, ART21 has changed the paradigm for teaching and learning about the creative process.

In addition to its Peabody Award-winning PBS television series *Art in the Twenty-First Century*, ART21 produces the online film series *New York Close Up* and *Exclusive*; special artist projects including the Peabody Award-winning feature *William Kentridge: Anything Is Possible*; educational resources and professional development; an online publication featuring guest contributors; and a comprehensive website at art21.org. ART21 also produces a number of public programs annually that connect audiences to artists and the artistic process.

CONTACT

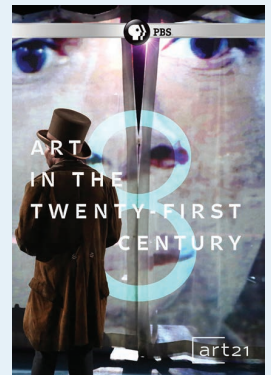
Please send inquiries to screeningsociety@art21.org



Educators' Guide

The 62-page color manual includes information on artists, before-viewing, while-viewing, and after-viewing discussion questions, as well as classroom activities and curriculum connections.

FREE | art21.org/guides



DVD Home Video

The Season 8 DVD includes sixteen segments on sixteen artists in four one-hour episodes: Chicago, Mexico City, Los Angeles, & Vancouver.

\$24.99 | shoppbs.org

Major underwriting for Season Eight of ART21 *Art in the Twenty-First Century* has been provided by National Endowment for the Arts, PBS, Lambert Foundation, Agnes Gund, The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, and The Anna-Maria and Stephen Kellen Foundation. Additional support is provided by The Joyce Foundation, The Horace W. Goldsmith Foundation, Toby Devan Lewis, Sally Ketcham and Alyx T. Fier, Brigitte and Henning Freybe, Miyoung Lee and Neil Simpkins, Isabel and Agustin Coppel, Philip Isles, and Michael Audain.

COVER: Production stills from *Art in the Twenty-First Century* Season 8. © ART21, Inc. 2016.

Chicago

EPIISODE SYNOPSIS



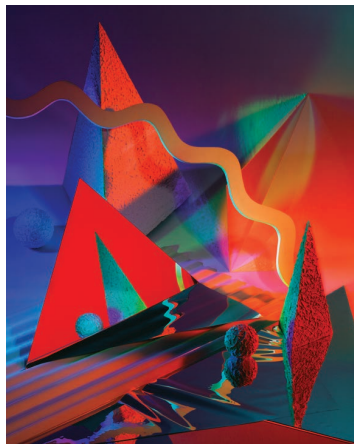
Chicago is a city rooted in industry and towering architecture, and artists in Chicago are disrupting urban experience through experimentation.

Nick Cave creates "Soundsuits"—surreally majestic objects blending fashion and sculpture—that originated as metaphorical suits of armor in response to the Rodney King beatings and have evolved into vehicles for empowerment.

Chris Ware, known for his *New Yorker* magazine covers, is hailed as a master of the comic art form. Ware's complex graphic novels, which tell stories about people in suburban midwestern neighborhoods, poignantly reflect on the role of memory in constructing identity.

Barbara Kasten makes photographs and video projections in her studio that evoke an experience of movement through modernist architecture.

Theaster Gates first encountered creativity in the music of Black churches on his journey to becoming an urban planner, potter, and artist. Gates creates sculptures out of clay, tar, and renovated buildings, transforming the raw material of the South Side into radically reimagined vessels of opportunity for the community.



COUNTERCLOCKWISE: Production still from *Art in the Twenty-First Century* Season 8. © ART21, Inc. 2016. | **Chris Ware**. *Joanne Cole — Two* (detail), 2013. Ink, pencil, and white gouache on board with offset ink color; original drawing 20 x 30 in. © Chris Ware. Courtesy of the artist. | **Nick Cave**. *Heard Detroit*, 2015. © Nick Cave. Courtesy of the artist and James Prinz Photography. | **Barbara Kasten**. *Metaphase 5*, 1986. Cibachrome; 37 x 29.375 in. © Barbara Kasten. Courtesy of the artist and Bortolami, New York. | **Theaster Gates**. *Raising Goliath*, 2012. 1967 Ford fire truck, magazines, tar bucket, mop, steel, and wire; dimensions variable. Installation view: *My Labor Is My Protest*, White Cube, London. © Theaster Gates. Photo: Ben Westoby. Courtesy of the artist and White Cube, London.



art21.org/nickcave

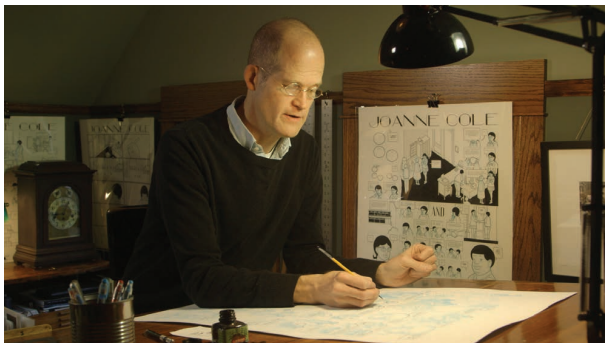
What do I have to put into place to allow you to dream?

Nick Cave

Nick Cave was born in 1959 in Fulton, Missouri, USA.

Fully concealing the body, Cave's "Soundsuits" serve as an alien **second skin that obscures race, gender, and class**, allowing viewers to look without bias towards the wearer's identity. Cave regularly performs in the sculptures himself, dancing either before the public or for the camera, activating their full potential as costume, musical instrument, and living icon. The artist also works with choreographers, dancers, and amateur performers to produce **lavish community celebrations** in untraditional venues for art.

Dazzling in their movement, Cave's sculptures are crafted in collaboration with artisans from a dizzying array of materials that include beads, raffia, buttons, sequins, twigs, fur, and fabric. The "Soundsuits" are also displayed in exhibitions as static sculptures, arranged as groups of figures in formation that are striking in their diversity and powerful stance. Cave's sculptures also include non-figurative assemblages, intricate accumulations of found objects that project out from the wall, and installations enveloping entire rooms.



art21.org/chrisware

The real process that goes into comics is not pictures with accompanying text, it's a psychological process of reading pictures. It's a symbol system.

Chris Ware

Chris Ware was born in 1967 in Omaha, Nebraska, USA.

Stories featuring many of Ware's protagonists—Quimby the Mouse, Rusty Brown, and Jimmy Corrigan—often first appear in serialized form, in publications such as *The New York Times*, *The Guardian*, or Ware's own ongoing comic book series *Acme Novelty Library*, before being organized into their own stand-alone books.

Experimenting with the form of the novel itself, Ware's *Building Stories* (which took a decade to complete) is a box set of fourteen printed works in a variety of formats—cloth-bound books, newspapers, pamphlets, and flip books—that can be read in any order. The artist's hand-drawn, **complex compositions unfold time through space in surprising arrangements** which include pages entirely absent of words, radical shifts in scale, and characters, locations, and events seen from multiple points of view.



art21.org/barbarakasten

I always think of myself as actually photographing the shadows, not the light.

Barbara Kasten

Barbara Kasten was born in 1936 in Chicago, Illinois, USA.

While abstract, Kasten's work is subversively political, asking viewers to fundamentally question their perceptions. Trained as a sculptor, Kasten began to investigate photography through cyanotypes of fabrics and photograms of objects placed directly on the paper. This led her to **photograph** elaborate compositions of objects in the studio—such as Platonic shapes, paper, plexiglass, and wire—often illuminated by theatrical lighting and colored gels.

When recorded by her large-format camera—and without digital manipulation—Kasten's arrangements become ambiguous in scale, confusing in spatial dimensions, and uncertain in differentiation between surface, shape, and shadow. On a grander scale, Kasten also pictures architectural spaces and landscapes, manipulating the environment through carefully placed mirrors and dramatic gemlike tones. Kasten's **video projections** of rotating objects and planes of drifting color, cast onto building exteriors and interiors, destabilize the architecture through the optical fragmentation of forms.



art21.org/theastergates

The world is ripe for a making—for a remaking, for a reshaping. Art has the ability to help us imagine that the world we live in is really just today's condition.

Theaster Gates

Theaster Gates was born in 1973 in Chicago, Illinois, USA.

Establishing a **virtuous circle between fine art and social progress**, Gates strips dilapidated buildings of their components, transforming those elements into sculptures that act as bonds or investments, the proceeds of which are used to finance the rehabilitation of entire city blocks.

Gates's non-profit, **Rebuild Foundation**, manages the many projects in his Chicago hometown—including the Stony Island Arts Bank, Black Cinema House, Dorchester Art and Housing Collaborative, Archive House, and Listening House—while extending its support to cities throughout the American Midwest. Many of the artist's works evoke his African-American identity and the broader struggle for civil rights, from sculptures incorporating fire hoses, to events organized around soul food, and choral performances by the experimental musical ensemble Black Monks of Mississippi.

SCREENING-BASED EVENTS

Community contributions

Organize a public celebration for a small group of people (such as artists, local business owners, volunteers, educators, etc.) who have contributed to the community through their work with underserved populations. After screening the *Chicago* episode, ask the celebrated community members and the audience to describe the opportunities created by the featured artists and compare them to their personal contributions to their communities.

Workplace innovations

Each of the featured artists disrupt expectations through the work they create. View the *Chicago* episode with coworkers and discuss the kinds of disruptions these artists produce. Create a plan for a series of "productive disruptions" in the workplace that offer possibilities for doing specific daily tasks more effectively or creatively.

Professional diversity

Host a panel or roundtable discussion between professionals in the fields of education, the arts, and architecture about their approaches to implementing diversity in their planning and work. After the discussion, screen the *Chicago* episode, and ask participants to compare their ideas to how the featured artists engage with and explore forms of diversity.

SCREENING-BASED ACTIVITIES

Art as diplomacy

In his segment, Nick Cave says, "I want to change our way of engaging with one another. I want to use art as a form of diplomacy." Ask participants to work in pairs or small groups and discuss the *Chicago*-episode artists and artworks that utilize art as a form of diplomacy.

Improving public spaces

View the *Chicago* episode as inspiration for a proposal that improves a public space or creates a structure that makes a public space more welcoming. Consider not only the space itself but also what is within the space (such as books, seating areas, communal tables, etc.). Share this proposal with local government officials in order to explore possibilities for improving the idea and funding the project.

Abstraction and symbols

Barbara Kasten asserts, "In my work I try to find that uniqueness of what's in the world and then try and highlight it with light." Discussing his comics, Chris Ware states, "The real process that goes into comics is not pictures with accompanying text; it's a psychological process of reading pictures. It's a symbol system." Create a slideshow of works by Barbara Kasten and Chris Ware to illustrate how both artists work with abstraction and symbols.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- ▶ Theaster Gates states that, "The world is ripe for a making—for a remaking, for a reshaping." What do you think Gates wants to remake and reshape?
- ▶ Nick Cave proclaims that at a certain point he realized he was "an artist with a conscience." How do his soundsuits convey this realization? How can his soundsuits be seen as having political meanings?
- ▶ What do you learn about the city of Chicago from this episode? Consider the way the episode is filmed and what the four featured artists say about the city.
- ▶ Compare the effect of Nick Cave's soundsuits when activated by performers and Chris Ware's illustrated characters. How do both function in similar ways, both privately and publicly?
- ▶ Barbara Kasten's abstract photographs resemble modernist architecture and often provide viewers with an experience of movement through these spaces. Kasten does not digitally manipulate her images. How is her process related to the field of architecture?
- ▶ Compare how Nick Cave and Theaster Gates work with groups of people. Using examples from both segments, compare their roles as artists.

RESOURCES ONLINE

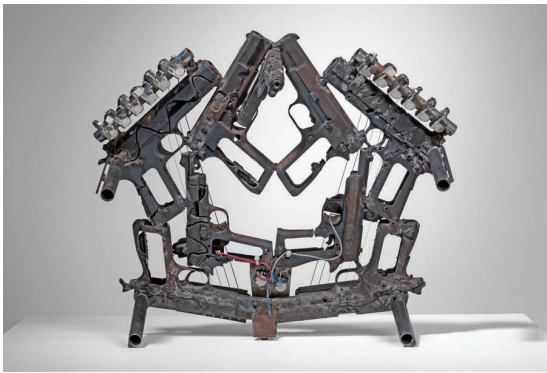
Chicago episode
art21.org/chicago
Nick Cave
nickcaveart.com
Theaster Gates
theastergates.com

Barbara Kasten
barbarakasten.net
Chris Ware
newyorker.com/contributors/chris-ware



Mexico City

EPISODE SYNOPSIS



Mexico City artists exit their homes and studios to use the growing megalopolis as their canvas. The artists present everyday materials as artworks, mine recognizable images for their poetic potential, and take their art to the streets.

Damián Ortega uses objects from his everyday life—Volkswagen Beetle cars, Day of the Dead posters, locally sourced corn tortillas—to make spectacular sculptures, which suggest stories of both mythic import and cosmological scale.

Pedro Reyes designs ongoing projects that propose playful solutions to urgent social problems. From turning guns into musical instruments, to hosting a People's United Nations to address pressing concerns, to offering ecologically friendly grasshopper burgers from a food cart, Reyes transforms existing problems into ideas for a better world.

Minerva Cuevas is a conceptual and socially-engaged artist who creates sculptural installations and paintings in response to politically charged events such as the tension between world starvation and capitalistic excess.

Natalia Almada, the greatgranddaughter of Mexico's controversial 40th president, Plutarco Elías Calles, makes intimate films that delve into the tragedies of her Mexican-American family's personal history as well as the Sinaloa region's violent present.



COUNTERCLOCKWISE: Production still from *Art in the Twenty-First Century* Season 8. © ART21, Inc. 2016. | **Pedro Reyes**. *Disarm (double psalter)*, 2012. Recycled metal; 20 x 50 x 50 cm. Photo: Ken Adlard. / *People's United Nations (pUN)*, 2013-present. View of Queens Museum, New York, 2013. Photo: Ramiro Chaves. © Pedro Reyes. Courtesy of the artist. | **Damián Ortega**. *Controller of the Universe*, 2007. Found tools and wire; 285 x 405 x 455 cm. © Damián Ortega. Courtesy of the artist and White Cube, London. | **Minerva Cuevas**. *Del Monte*, 2003. Installation view, Museo de la Ciudad, México City. Acrylic paint on wall, a black and white research scheme on paper, and 100 relabeled tomato cans (english); Scheme: 90 x 60 cm, Mural: 500 x 600 cm. Photo: Gabriel Batiz. © Minerva Cuevas. Courtesy of the artist and kurimanzutto, Mexico City. | **Natalia Almada**. *El Velador*, 2011. Production still of feature film; 72 minutes. © Natalia Almada. Courtesy of the artist.



If you asked me to...put in the balance, what is more important, the object or the idea, I think what's important is the combination—the sparks between both.

Damián Ortega

Damian Ortega was born in 1967 in Mexico City, Mexico.

Ortega began his career as a political cartoonist and his works balance humor with incisive observations on political, social, and economic conditions. In many of the artist's sculptures, vernacular objects are presented in precise arrangements—**often suspended from the ceiling** or as part of mechanized systems—that become witty representations of diagrams, solar systems, words, buildings, and faces. These shifts in perception are not just visual but also cultural, as the artist draws out the **social history of the objects** featured in his sculptures, films, and performances. The intellectual leap between recycled quotidian objects and complex systems of thought is what lends Ortega's work a humble yet profound poesis.



art21.org/damianortega



I believe that anything can become material for art.

Pedro Reyes

Pedro Reyes was born in 1972 in Mexico City, Mexico.

In the Reyes's hands, complex subjects like political and economic philosophies are reframed in ways that are easy to understand, such as a puppet play featuring Karl Marx and Adam Smith fighting over how to share cookies. When encountering a project by the artist, **viewers are often enlisted as participants**, whether through one-on-one conversations, therapeutic acts, or as creators of objects in collaborative workshops.



Originally trained as an architect, Reyes is acutely aware of how people interact with the built environment, with many of the artist's works taking the form of enclosures. Reyes's own home, featuring an extensive library that he draws from for inspiration, is a work of art in itself that's continually adapted by the artist and his family.

art21.org/pedroreyes



art21.org/minervacuevas

We don't have a way to measure how art can impact society and that's good, because that's part of the freedom.

Minerva Cuevas

Minerva Cuevas was born in 1975 in Mexico City, Mexico.

Cuevas **documents community protests** in a cartography of resistance while also creating **mini-sabotages**—altering grocery store bar codes and manufacturing student identity cards—as part of her non-profit Mejor Vida Corp / Better Life Corporation.

Several of the artist's works take the form of re-branding campaigns—exhibited as murals and product designs—that question the role corporations play in food production, the management of natural resources, fair labor practices, and evolving forms of neo-colonialism. Cuevas finds **provocative ways to intervene in public space**, whether through the deployment of billboards and posters, or by hacking public utilities to provide discounted or free services. Cuevas addresses the negative impact that humans have on animals and the environment through sculptures coated in tar and tender paintings of animal rights activists, imagining a society that values all living beings.

The act of filming is kind of an act of creating memory for yourself.



art21.org/nataliaalmada

Natalia Almada

Natalia Almada was born in 1974 in Mexico City, Mexico.

Ranging from **documentary to fiction to experimental narrative**, Almada's films portray a world filtered through recollection and constructed by diverging points of view. Whether chronicling the daily lives of Mexican drug smugglers, immigrants, corrido musicians, or government bureaucrats, Almada's **camera acts a witness to lives ensnared by violence and power struggles**. What comes into view is a portrait of society, both its political history and collective memory, as told through individual experiences.

Her lyrical films adopt **non-linear and multilayered approaches to storytelling**, advancing the narrative through arresting images, poetic observations, and meditative scenes that unfold in real time. Almada's own presence—sympathetic yet questioning—pervades each film through her role as director, cinematographer, editor, narrator, and at times autobiographical subject of the work.

SCREENING-BASED EVENTS

Storytelling

After screening the *Mexico City* episode for an audience, ask a small group of writers to discuss their different approaches to storytelling. Ask the group to compare their methods to the artists featured in the episode and to highlight commonalities across disciplines.

Community solutions

Invite local government or community representatives to a panel discussion and ask them to prioritize the current challenges for the community. Screen the *Mexico City* episode and, utilizing the film to inspire ideas, ask the panelists and audience members to propose playful solutions to the challenges.

Social change

Minerva Cuevas states, "Art is totally connected to social change." Ask a local historian, educator, and government official to share images of public artworks and their connections to social changes. After screening the *Mexico City* episode, ask the audience and invited guests to propose a new public artwork inspired by changes and improvements in the community.

SCREENING-BASED ACTIVITIES

Creating memory

Natalia Almada says in her segment, "The act of filming is kind of an act of creating memory for yourself." With a partner, compose a short video that creates, or recreates, a shared memory.

Narrative of place

Organize a walking tour of your community, or city, led by local historians and lifetime residents. Take photographs during the tour and record audio descriptions in order to produce a narrative of the place, inspired by history and personal memory.

Using play

Damián Ortega recalls that during his childhood, his parents often encouraged play. After viewing the *Mexico City* episode, discuss in small groups how each featured artist engages in different forms of and approaches to play. Using these examples, create a new form of play that results in an artwork.

Bringing communities together

View the *Mexico City* episode and discuss how each of these artists engage in different ways with their respective communities. How can different groups

of people in your community work together in new ways? Create a plan that brings two or more groups together for a specific event, celebration, or initiation of a project.

Transforming materials

Pedro Reyes explains, "I believe that anything can become material for art." With a partner, choose an unlikely or nontraditional material in order to create an artwork or functional object that employs the theme of change.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- ▶ Describe what Minerva Cuevas considers when making works such as *Del Monte—Bananas* and *Bittersweet—Hershey's*. What are the possible effects of such works?
- ▶ Damián Ortega utilizes everyday objects to create works of art. Which of these materials resonate with you, and why? What experience(s) do you have with these materials? Ortega says, "Every material has some political meaning, coded into the materials." Does the material you chose carry any political meaning? If so, how?
- ▶ After viewing the *Mexico City* episode, describe some of what you learned and discovered about the city. What surprises you, and why?
- ▶ Natalia Almada creates films that explore family history and personal tragedy, as well as the violence that persists in Sinaloa. Discuss the similarities among Almada's films. What techniques and approaches to filmmaking help to convey her stories?
- ▶ Pedro Reyes often involves viewers as participants in his works. Describe the roles that viewers play in the works featured during this segment. How do these roles allow them to see and experience the work in ways beyond simply being observers?
- ▶ Compare the installation work of Damián Ortega and Minerva Cuevas featured in this episode. How do these artists engage viewers and the community in unique ways?

Mexico City episode
art21.org/mexicocity
Natalia Almada
altamurafilms.com

Pedro Reyes
pedroreyes.net
Minerva Cuevas
irational.org/mvc/english.html



Los Angeles

EPISODE SYNOPSIS



While sprawling Los Angeles has world-class museums and art schools, artists working in the shadow of the entertainment industry are more “under the radar,” affording them the space and time to imagine.

Diana Thater makes video installations that poetically grapple with threats to the natural world. She is filmed preparing for her monumental exhibition, *The Sympathetic Imagination*, at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art.

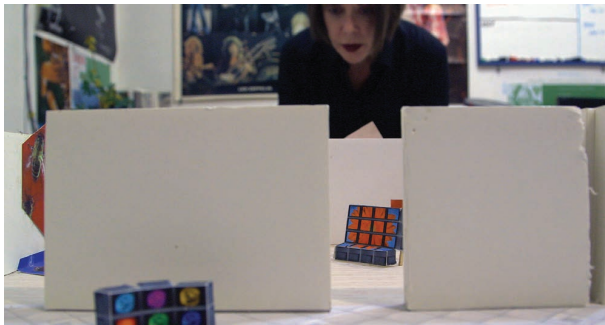
Liz Larner experiments with abstract sculptural forms in a dizzying array of materials, including polychromatic ceramics that evoke the tectonic geologic shifts of the western landscape.

Tala Madani skewers stereotypes in her sharply satirical paintings that evoke clashes of culture: men and women, the rational and the absurd, Western and non-Western.

And **Edgar Arceneaux** investigates historical patterns through drawings, installations, and multimedia events, such as the reenactment of Ben Vereen’s tragically misunderstood blackface performance at Ronald Reagan’s 1981 Inaugural Gala.



COUNTERCLOCKWISE: Production still from *Art in the Twenty-First Century* Season 8. © ART21, Inc. 2016. | **Liz Larner**. *2 as 3 and Some, Too*, 1997-98. Mulberry paper, steel, and watercolor; 112 x 137 x 95 in. © Liz Larner, Courtesy of Regen Projects, Los Angeles. | **Diana Thater**. *Delphine*, 1999. Installation view: *Diana Thater: The Sympathetic Imagination*, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, November 22, 2015 - Feb. 21, 2016, © Diana Thater, photo © Fredrik Nilsen. Courtesy of David Zwirner, New York/London. | **Tala Madani**. *Grey shadows*, 2014. Oil on linen; 40.64 x 56 cm. © Tala Madani. Courtesy the artist and Pilar Corrias, London. | **Edgar Arceneaux**. *Until, Until, Until...*, 2015. A Performa Commission. Photo: © Paula Court. Courtesy of Performa.



art21.org/dianathater

Abstraction in art is the abstraction of the figurative. But abstraction in film and video is the abstraction of time.

Diana Thater

Diana Thater was born in 1962 in San Francisco, California, USA.

Many of the Thater's works take **the space where people and animals meet** as their subject, exploring the experiences of wild gorillas in a Cameroon park, a wolf trained to work in Hollywood films, a monkey-inhabited temple in India, zebras at an exotic animal farm, dolphins in the Caribbean, and trained horses at Medieval Times Dinner and Tournament.

Thater also provides a window onto animal subjectivity through her use of **atypical camera angles, dramatic shifts in scale, and colored lights** that alter the spectrum of her exhibitions. Adopting cyclical time signatures and extended durations, Thater's ambient works are **abstractions of time which diverge from the linear narratives** humans use to make sense of themselves and the cosmos. Whether using floor-to-ceiling video projections, stacks of television monitors, or screens placed flat on the ground, Thater's installations are site-dependent and subtly change from venue to venue.



art21.org/lizlarner

If I keep using the same techniques then it's going to become more permanent and I don't want it to be permanent, I want it to be about impermanence.

Liz Larner

Liz Larner was born in 1972 in Sacramento, California, USA.

An inventor of new forms, Larner's sculptures are not easy to categorize. They defy easy description by design, such as the geometric sculpture of a cube turning into a sphere that is both yet neither, or a complex chain of linked metal rings that never tangles and can also be worn as jewelry. **Optically they allure and confuse**, such as her sculptures of wiry boxes that appear to solidify into new shapes based on the alignment of colors.

Working with both analog and digital tools, Larner's materials change from work to work and can include **fiberglass, crystals, paper, clay, aluminum, steel, rubber, epoxy, mirror, cloth, and even bacteria**. As daring as her investigation into new forms can be, Larner's sculptures are approachable in their human scale and idiosyncratic vision that favors **personal narrative** over minimal austerity.



art21.org/talamadani

For me I think the salvation is to behave like children. So in a sense the true oppressor is the frontal lobe.

Tala Madani

Tala Madani was born in 1981 in Tehran, Iran.

Madani's **figurative paintings often feature a riotous cast of middle-aged men**, balding and stocky, whose libidinal mayhem wreaks havoc on any situation the artist thrusts them into. Acerbic caricatures of both machismo and a childlike desire for mischief, the physical comedy at work in Madani's paintings is anchored by intense pleasures, pathos, and a pervasive sense of violence.

Painted with quick gestures, where **oozing paint often doubles as bodily fluids, food, and stains**, Madani's compositions are derived from sketchbooks where countless studies provide the skeleton for her speedy execution. Madani's pictures are also transformed into **stop-motion animations** where the artist photographs a freshly created scene over time—wet paint still glistening—resulting in stories of small calamities that are once hilarious, tender, and ghoulish.



art21.org/edgararceneaux

Drawing for me is both a technique, but is also a methodology. It's a way of thinking about how we make connections between things.

Edgar Arceneaux

Edgar Arceneaux was born in 1972 in Los Angeles, California, USA.

In Arceneaux's work, **linear logic is abandoned in favor of wordplay and visual associations**, revealing how language, technology, and systems of ordering produce reality as much as describe them. Seemingly disparate elements—such as science fiction, civil rights era speeches, techno music, and the crumbling architecture of Detroit—find a new synchronicity in the artist's hands, **ultimately pointing to larger historical forces** such as the rise of the surveillance state.

Arceneaux's installations have taken the form of labyrinths, libraries, multi-channel videos, and drawn landscapes that change over the course of an exhibition, only ever offering a partial view of the whole at any given moment. This **fragmentation** extends to the artist's use of historical research in his work, such as FBI documents concerning civil rights leader Martin Luther King, Jr., where redacted passages are presented on mirrors that reflect the viewer's curious gaze.

Los Angeles

SCREENING RESOURCES

SCREENING-BASED EVENTS

The changing local landscape

Host a panel discussion with local historians and community representatives about how the local landscape has changed and evolved historically, culturally, and geographically. View the *Los Angeles* episode and invite audience members to compare the panelists' views on the changing local landscape with their own perceptions. Ask both groups to compare their ideas to the descriptions of Los Angeles by the artists in this episode.

Combining reality and illusion

Liz Larner remarks in her segment, "I believe right now we're in a time when reality and illusion are kind of always together." Ask a group of artists and scientists to select works, objects, and instances that illustrate this idea in different ways. Share these examples with an audience and then ask audience members to compare them to works by artists in the *Los Angeles* episode.

Changes in nature

Bring together a scientist, historian, and local educator to discuss, after viewing the Los Angeles episode, some of the important patterns and changes in nature that directly affect our lives. Ask these guests and audience members to draw similarities between the patterns and changes described by the Los Angeles artists in this episode.

SCREENING-BASED ACTIVITIES

Abstraction and time

Diana Thater says in her segment, "Abstraction in art is the abstraction of the figurative. But abstraction in film and video is the abstraction of time." How do each of the artists in the *Los Angeles* episode address concepts of abstraction and time? Create a series of photos that illustrate these themes and display the works in a group exhibition.

Approaches to drawing

Tala Madani and Edgar Arceneaux utilize drawing to investigate their subjects. Describe each artist's relationships to drawing and compare them to your experiences with drawing. Use Madani's or Arceneaux's approach to inspire a new drawing or approach to drawing.

Impermanence

Liz Larner talks about seeking impermanence in her techniques and approaches to art making. With a partner, discuss examples of impermanence and change in your lives. Where do you seek regular rhythms and order? Where do you seek change and ambiguity?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- ▶ How do Tala Madani, Diana Thater, and Liz Larner employ color in specific ways? What are the similarities and differences between these artists when it comes to their uses of color?
- ▶ Edgar Arceneaux states, "I try to use materials that have certain properties that trouble things." Describe some of the materials he uses. How does he "trouble things" with them?
- ▶ Describe what you learn about the city of Los Angeles through how the episode is filmed and what the featured artists say about working in the city. How does living and working in Los Angeles affect what these four artists create?
- ▶ How would you describe Diana Thater's *The Sympathetic Imagination* to others, based on your viewing of her segment? What is unique and compelling about this enormous exhibition?
- ▶ How does Tala Madani's approach to painting compare to the approaches of other painters you have experienced?

RESOURCES ONLINE

Los Angeles episode

art21.org/losangeles

Edgar Arceneaux

studioedgararceneaux.com

Tala Madani

facebook.com/talamadaniofficial

Diana Thater

thaterstudio.com



Vancouver

EPISODE SYNOPSIS



In small and tightly-knit Vancouver, artists reframe the world through a series of sophisticated illusions. By recreating historical moments, staging photos of vernacular scenes, and crafting intricate sculptures that trick the eye, artists reveal how everyday images and moments from the past are not always what they seem.

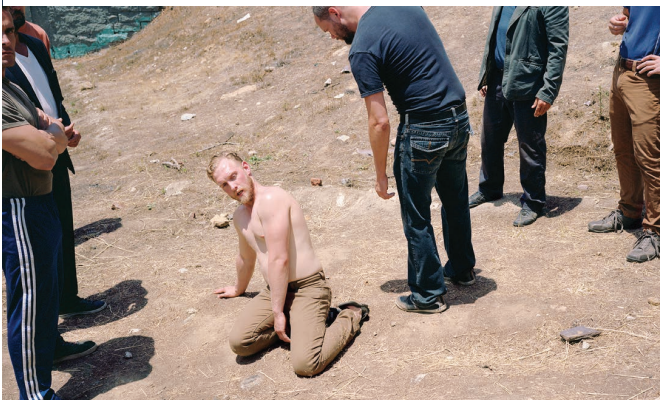
Liz Magor makes uncannily realistic casts of humble objects—gloves, cardboard boxes, cigarettes—that speak to mortality and local histories.

Through complex video installations, photos, theatrical productions, and virtual reality simulations, **Stan Douglas** reenacts historical moments of tension that connect the history of Vancouver to broader social movements of struggle and utopian aspiration.

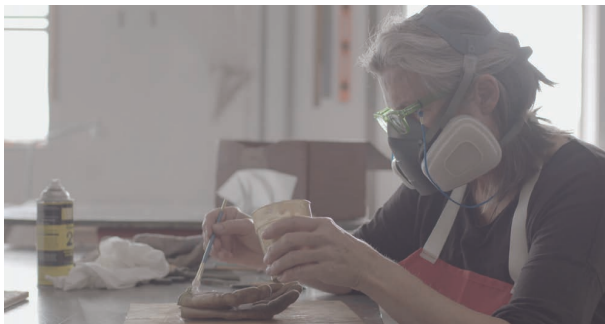


Brian Jungen draws from his family's ranching and hunting background, as well as his Dane-zaa heritage, when disassembling and recombining consumer goods into whimsical sculptures.

Attentive to the accidental encounters that can inspire an image, photographer **Jeff Wall** recreates flashes of inspiration by building sets and repeatedly photographing gestures until they coalesce into a picture that's printed on a grand scale.



COUNTERCLOCKWISE: Production still from *Art in the Twenty-First Century* Season 8. © ART21, Inc. 2016. | **Brian Jungen**. *Broken Arrangement*, detail, 2015-16. Nike Air Jordans, painted fir plywood, stainless steel; 190.5 x 50.2 x 50.2 cm. Photo: SITE Photography. © Brian Jungen. Courtesy of the artist and Catriona Jeffries, Vancouver. | **Liz Magor**. *Being This*, detail, 2012. 24 boxes, paper, textiles, found materials; installation dimensions variable. Photo: SITE Photography. © Liz Magor. Courtesy of the artist and Catriona Jeffries, Vancouver. | **Jeff Wall**. *Listener*, 2015. Inkjet print; 159.4 x 233 cm. © Jeff Wall. Courtesy of the artist. | **Stan Douglas**. *Helen Lawrence*, 2014. Play, 1 hour 35 minutes. Conceived and directed by Stan Douglas. Story by Chris Haddock and Stan Douglas, written by Chris Haddock. Pictured: Julie played by Haley McGehee (left), Helen Lawrence played by Lisa Ryder (right). Photo: Stan Douglas, Munich Kammerspiele, 2014. © Stan Douglas. Courtesy of the artist.



art21.org/lizmagor

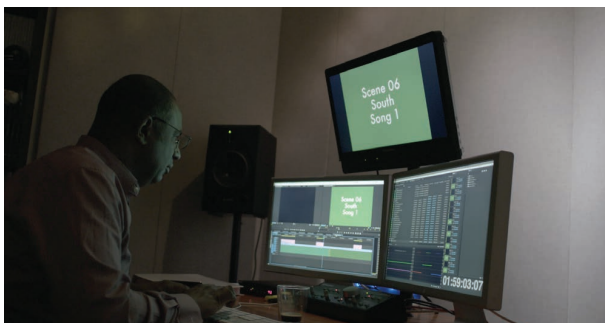
I'm not an animist, but I do feel the objects that have been in the world for a while, they've got all this stuff in them that comes out.

Liz Magor

Liz Magor was born in 1948 in Winnipeg, MB, Canada.

Magor's delicate sculptures are often combined with **found ephemera**, whether tiny vices such as cigarettes, animals in the form of taxidermied birds and stuffed toy dogs, or small mementos given to her by friends or scavenged from the limbo of thrift stores. **Social narratives of how things in the world are created, enter our lives, and depart to the junk heap as part of a vast human waste stream** are folded together with personal anxieties and small worries, such as the desire to afford nice things, to mend what's broken, and to preserve order against inevitable entropy.

The **visual doubletake** in Magor's work—of things appearing one way but being quite another—are on dramatic display in the artist's large-scale public projects where a rickety clapboard shack from a bygone era is carefully remade in cast aluminum. By **resurrecting uncared for items and moments from the recent past**, Magor preserves faint whispers of life in artworks that function as fossils do—exact copies of existence.



art21.org/standouglas

History does not repeat itself. Things do come back, symptoms do recur. But they often recur because what caused it in the first place never actually went away.

Stan Douglas

Stan Douglas was born in 1960 in Vancouver, BC, Canada.

In the artist's intricate works, time and place fold back onto themselves to create a parallax of both vision and narrative: **multiple moments in history and geography are experienced by the viewer simultaneously and reconciled into a new story.** The artist's hometown of Vancouver often serves as inspiration for research into transitional periods—the raucous early twentieth century, the noirish aftermath of World War II, the revolutionary and libertine 1970s.

Working at the forefront of new media technologies, Douglas's works have taken the form of **mobile apps, virtual reality simulations, live cinema, theatrical productions, and multi-channel video installations** where the narrative alters continuously through recombinant editing software. Douglas also produces photographs with the period detail and staging of a feature film director, freezing both reenactments and imagined scenes from the past in sumptuous color and rich black and white.



art21.org/brianjungen

When I started working with shoes in the '90s I went into Niketown. They had sneakers in glass vitrines and I thought that was so strange. I started to make connections between the commodification of those shoes and the same thing that's happened to Native art.

Brian Jungen

Brian Jungen was born in 1970 in Fort St. John, BC, Canada.

Jungen transforms plastic chairs into whale skeletons, garbage bins into a giant turtle carapace, sewing tables into a basketball court, golf bags into towering totem poles, and collectible Nike Air Jordan shoes into objects resembling both the ceremonial masks of British Columbian coastal tribes and abstract modernist sculptures. At once direct and disarming, Jungen's sculptures are entirely familiar in their material and assembly and yet still trick the eye through **complex and deft illusions**. He has created many works involving animals, from habitats and playgrounds for household pets, to paintings and drums utilizing stretched and tanned hides—demonstrating an interdependence between people and other species as well as between aesthetic form and function. While exquisite for their craftsmanship and graphic use of pattern and color, Jungen's works also contain **subtle critiques of labor practices, global capitalism, and cultural stereotypes**.



art21.org/jeffwall

I'm always searching for that picture. That's what I do. I'm always looking for that picture. Some people call it subject. I just call it a starting point.

Jeff Wall

Jef Wall was born in 1946 in Vancouver, BC, Canada.

With an idea in mind, Wall goes to exacting lengths to produce the picture, which may include constructing a scene from scratch, factoring in the position of the sun over several weeks, and improvisational rehearsals with performers. Wall's pictures include both **fantastical scenes**—a picnic with vampires, dead troops conversing, a grave flooded by the ocean—and **vernacular images of people on the margins of society or in moments of exchange and quiet contemplation**. Orchestrating his compositions with the creative liberties that a painter would take, the curious magic and discipline of Wall's work is that it all takes place in a state of **photographic realism where every action, object, and condition is simultaneously artificial and entirely natural**. Often printed on the grand scale of a history painting—exhibited either as backlit lightboxes akin to advertising displays or as crisp ink jet and silver gelatin prints—Wall's works reveal their poetic potential through portraying empathetic characters, picturing impossible vantage points, and capturing elusive moments.

SCREENING-BASED EVENTS

Working with illusion

Invite a range of filmmakers, photographers, and other artists to view the *Vancouver* episode. Ask the participants to discuss and relate how they work with illusion and how the episode's featured artists do so.

Roles and stories

Host a panel discussion with actors, models, and other professionals who work in front of cameras. After viewing the *Vancouver* episode, ask panelists to talk about the kinds of roles presented in the episode and the potential stories in the artworks by the featured artists.

Determining value

Invite three different owners of retail businesses (for example, a 99-cent store, a hardware store, and a department store) to view the *Vancouver* episode with an audience. Afterward, facilitate a discussion with the participating business owners and audience members about products that become iconic and cherished in different ways. Ask all participants to address why these products become so important and how they become so cherished.

SCREENING-BASED ACTIVITIES

History in objects

Liz Magor works with objects that have many possible histories, and Stan Douglas creates films that reenact specific moments in history. Work with a small group to collect objects that refer to moments in history, both public and personal. Create an installation or public display of the objects and decide how to use these objects as teaching tools for viewers.

Stories through gestures

Create a silent video that communicates a story through a series of gestures. Compare your methods and approaches to how Jeff Wall creates his photographs.

Transforming everyday materials

Brian Jungen highlights his Dane-zaa heritage and juxtaposes it with contemporary culture in his sculptures made from consumer goods, such as sneakers and lawn chairs. With a partner, discuss how these materials become transformed. Closely observe how everyday materials are transformed in your community and document these examples to share with others.

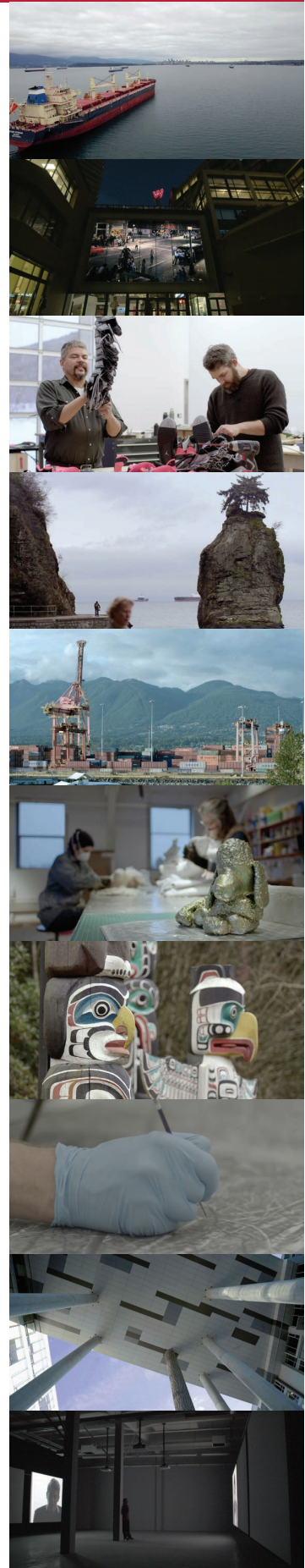
DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Recall some of your favorite images from the *Vancouver* episode. Describe what you learned about the city of Vancouver through the way this episode is filmed.
- Based on Brian Jungen's description and your reactions to his work, why do you think he chooses to work specifically with Nike sneakers?
- How does Stan Douglas's video and theatrical works compare and relate to current social movements?
- How do the artists in the *Vancouver* episode utilize the city in their art? What connections exist between the ways these artists navigate the city and integrate it in their work?
- Describe what the process of casting allows Liz Magor to do as she creates her sculptures. How do the steps involved in casting affect the final product?
- Jeff Wall states, "There's really no difference between capturing a gesture by accident and capturing a gesture by design." Do you agree? Why or why not?

RESOURCES ONLINE

Vancouver episode

art21.org/vancouver



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

ART21 VIDEO art21.org

All of ART21's films, including short form video and all eight seasons of *Art in the Twenty-First Century*, are available for free online.

In addition to eight seasons of the broadcast series *Art in the Twenty-First Century*, ART21 also produces the short form video series *New York Close Up* and *ART21 Exclusive*. Past projects include the feature-length documentary *William Kentridge: Anything is Possible* (2010) and the short film series *Artist to Artist* (2013-2014).

SEASON 8 SCREENING SOCIETY art21.org/screeningsociety

Public screenings of the *Art in the Twenty-First Century* series illuminate the creative process of today's visual artists in order to deepen audience's appreciation and understanding of contemporary art and ideas.

Organizations and individuals interested in screening ART21 films can either license films individually, or join the **ART21 Screening Society**, a free program that facilitates screenings of each new season of *Art in the Twenty-First Century* for a limited period of time.

ART21 invites museums, high schools, colleges, universities, community-based organizations, libraries, art spaces, and individuals to get involved and create unique screening events in their communities.

These public events can include viewing parties, panel discussions, brown bag lunches, guest speakers, or hands-on art-making activities.

ART21 EDUCATION art21.org/learn

ART21 Educators is a year-long professional development initiative designed to cultivate and support K-12 educators across the United States, Canada, and Mexico interested in bringing contemporary art, artists, and themes into their classrooms.

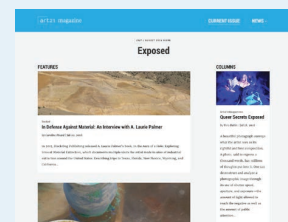
ART21 also presents workshops for teachers in partnership with schools, school districts, and museums. Workshops introduce multimedia resources and related strategies for bringing contemporary art, artists, and themes into classroom and community learning.

For more information about ART21 Education programming contact education@art21.org

SEASON 8 EDUCATORS' GUIDE art21.org/educatorguides

The Season Eight Educators' Guide contains episode synopses and detailed artist pages that include biographies, images of featured artworks included in the film, and discussion questions for before, while, and after viewing each artist segment.

ART21 has produced Educators' Guides and Screening Guides for all eight seasons of the broadcast series *Art in the Twenty-First Century*.



ART21 Magazine

Drawing connections between ART21-featured artists and the larger context in which they thrive, the *ART21 Magazine* chronicles this landscape, post-by-post—from indexing daily events and activities to posing broader, meditative questions about the place of art in our world.

The magazine is home to both bi-monthly thematic issues and news on ART21 films, education programs, and screenings.

blog.art21.org



Creative Chemistries

Creative Chemistries is an event involving exchanges, dialogues, and experiments between artists and educators that explore how we might shift the paradigm of education in and through visual art to better reflect contemporary art practices, motivations and curiosities. The first Creative Chemistries was held in February 2015 at the Park Avenue Armory.

art21.org/creativechemistries

CREDITS: This Screening Guide was written by Joe Fusaro, Senior Education Advisor. It was designed by Lindsey Davis, Digital Content Editor.

Unless otherwise noted, all images in this publication are production stills from *Art in the Twenty-First Century* Season 8. © ART21, Inc. 2016.

