





## art21 online

# art21

ART21 is a non-profit organization that inspires a more creative world through the work and words of living artists. ART21 is acknowledged as a global leader in art education, producing historically relevant primary source materials of the highest quality that illuminate the creative process. ART21's films include the Peabody Award-winning television series Art in the Twenty-First Century, the Peabody Awardwinning feature film William Kentridge: Anything Is Possible, and the web series Exclusive, New York Close Up, and Artist to Artist. ART21 creates educational resources and programming, including an acclaimed professional development initiative for educators; publishes books and educator guides; hosts a highly active international online magazine and multiple websites; and is home to an ever-growing unique archive.

#### Art in the Twenty-First Century, the Series

The first and only nationally broadcast public television series to focus exclusively on contemporary visual art and artists in the United States and around the world, Art in the Twenty-First Century introduces audiences to a diverse group of established and emerging artists working today, and to the art they are producing now.

- Seven seasons have been produced for PBS (2001, 2003, 2005, 2007, 2009, 2012, 2014).
- Each season contains 4 one-hour programs.
- Each hour features 3 to 5 artists in 12- to 18-minute segments.
- To date, the broadcast series has featured over 135 established and emerging artists.

#### The Artists

In the ART21 broadcast series, contemporary artists speak directly to the audience in their own words, reflecting on their lives, sources of inspiration, and working processes. Profiled artists include painters, sculptors, printmakers, photographers, installation, video, and new media artists. Executive Producer and Curator Susan Sollins and Associate Curator Wesley Miller select the artists in collaboration with a national curatorial advisory council of independent critics and museum curators.

#### Viewing the Series

All seven seasons of the ART21 series are available for viewing online at art21.org. The series is also available as a downloadto-own from the iTunes store, and on DVD from ShopPBS and Davis Publications. In addition, watch ART21 videos online through iTunes, YouTube, and Hulu.

To order from ShopPBS 1-800-PLAY-PBS (1-800-752-9727) www.shoppbs.org

To order from Davis Publications 1-800-533-2847

www.davis-art.com

Episodes can also be recorded off the air and used for educational purposes, free for one year from the date of the first national broadcast on October 24, October 31, November 7, and November 14, 2014. Check local PBS station listings as broadcast times may vary.

#### **ART21** Books

ART21's richly illustrated companion books mirror program themes and feature interviews with the artists. ART21 books are available through art21.org and where books are sold.



#### art21.org

All of ART21's materials are available for free through the ART21 website. A growing stand-alone resource, the ART21 website highlights the works and words of more than 135 artists through artist interviews, artwork surveys, production stills, artist projects, and resources for educators. The website presents more than 50 hours of video content, including full episodes from all seasons of the ART21 Art in the Twenty-First Century series, as well as original digital series produced exclusively for online viewing.

ART21 New York Close Up explores the lives of young artists living in New York City: art21.org/newyorkcloseup

ART21 Exclusive blends new original filming and previously unreleased archival footage to focus on singular aspects of an artist's process: art21.org/exclusive

ART21 Artist to Artist features contemporary visual artists in conversation with their peers: art21.org/artisttoartist

ART21 William Kentridge: Anything Is Possible, is the Peabody Award-winning one-hour film providing an intimate look into the mind and creative process of South African artist William Kentridge: art21.org/anythingispossible

#### blog.art21.org

The ART21 Magazine (previously the ART21 Blog) is part of ART21's array of programming designed to illuminate the creative process. Each issue of the magazine is devoted to a single theme. Published six times per year, it is available exclusively online.

#### pbs.org/art21

ART21 on pbs.org chronicles the television series, Art in the Twenty-First Century, and presents the artists and themes featured in the PBS broadcast series, complete episodes, and downloadable Educators' Guides for each season.

### Social Media



Instagram, Tumblr, and Pinterest.









### about this guide

The Educators' Guide is designed as a resource for planning lessons, facilitating discussions, introducing Season Seven content, and supporting further research and exploration of contemporary art, artists, and themes. Educators are encouraged to use the broadcast series, the Guide, and ART21 website in tandem to integrate contemporary art into classroom and community-based learning environments.

#### **Getting Started**

Prior to introducing particular artists or themes, it may be appropriate to initiate a broader discussion about contemporary art, including the expectations, associations, assumptions, and questions individuals may have about art being made today. The discussion questions and activities included in this introduction provide a starting point to address some of these ideas, as well as strategies for presenting video and online resources.

#### **Themes**

Each one-hour program is loosely organized around a theme that helps viewers analyze, compare, contrast, and juxtapose the works of the profiled artists. These themes are intended to inspire interpretive possibilities. In many cases the artists' work is relevant to multiple themes.



#### **Artist Pages**

Each Artist Page contains biographical information and the following:

**About the Artist** An overview of the artist's work and working methods, including current and past projects.

Media and Materials A synopsis of the artist's principal media and materials, which are documented in the artist's video segment. Featured media and materials can be cross-referenced to those used by other artists in the series.

**Key Words and Ideas** Additional thematic concepts connect the artist's work and processes to those of other artists in the series and to online curriculum. This section also highlights relevant vocabulary to support discussion and further inquiry.

Discuss Suggested discussion questions explore ideas introduced in the series.

Before Viewing questions establish key ideas in anticipation of viewing the artist segments. While Viewing questions support active viewing and encourage facilitators to pause and clarify or illuminate particular ideas or vocabulary. After Viewing questions follow up on key ideas and encourage viewers to synthesize prior knowledge and personal opinion with the narratives presented in the segment.

**Create** To encourage active, hands-on exploration of the ideas and materials presented in the **Discuss** section, **Create** activities are open-ended interdisciplinary opportunities for individual interpretation of the creative methods and interests of featured artists. Suggested activities can be modified for different age levels, learning styles, and media choices.

#### Glossary

Selected vocabulary words are highlighted in bold print throughout the Guide. Definitions can be found in the Glossary on page 32. An online glossary with additional vocabulary can be found at art21.org

#### **Audience**

Art in the Twenty-First Century is produced for a wide range of audiences and is intended to empower viewers to articulate their own ideas and interpretations about contemporary art. Series-related education materials support the use of contemporary art in K-12 classrooms, on college and university campuses, and for adult and community audiences. The Educators' Guide and additional online content introduce opportunities for critical thinking and creative problem solving relevant to middle school, high school, and college students. Teachers who work with students of all ages are encouraged to interpret material provided by ART21 to support their individual teaching methods and needs.

Contemporary art often explores controversial subject matter, and some of the artists featured in the ART21 series present provocative images and ideas in their work. While this Guide and the resources provided online offer suggestions and strategies for framing and introducing challenging material, some content may not be appropriate for all audiences and learning environments. Teachers should preview all series' segments before classroom or other screening to determine whether the content is appropriate for their students' ages, maturity levels, and learning environments.

### what is contemporary art?

ART21 defines contemporary art as the work of artists who are living in the twenty-first century. Contemporary art mirrors contemporary culture and society, offering teachers, students, and general audiences a rich resource through which to consider current ideas and rethink the familiar. The work of contemporary artists is a dynamic combination of materials, methods, concepts, and subjects that challenges traditional boundaries and defies easy definition. Diverse and eclectic, contemporary art is distinguished by the very lack of a uniform organizing principle, ideology, or ism. In a globally influenced, culturally diverse, and technologically advancing world, contemporary artists give voice to the varied and changing cultural landscape of identity, values, and beliefs.

Contemporary audiences play an active role in the process of constructing meaning about works of art. Some artists often say that the viewer contributes to or even completes the artwork by contributing his or her personal reflections, experiences, opinions, and interpretations. One of the cornerstones of the ART21 philosophy is to allow artists to present their work in their own words and to encourage viewers to access their own abilities to consider, react, and respond to visual art.

Curiosity, openness, and dialogue are important tools for engaging with the work of contemporary artists. Instead of questioning whether a work of art is 'good' or 'bad', the study of contemporary art requires a more open-ended methodology and an inquiry-based approach. Asking questions that ignite discussion and stimulate debate is an important first step toward appreciating and interpreting works of art that can defy expectation, may provoke strong responses, or contradict personal beliefs or societal values.

- Bringing contemporary art into schools and communities enables educators to promote curiosity, encourage dialogue, and initiate debate about the world and the issues that affect our lives.
- ART21 artists serve as creative role models who can inspire people of all ages to consider how ideas are developed, articulated, and realized in the contemporary world, and offer educators opportunities to support diverse learning styles.
- Contemporary artists address both current events and historical ideas. These references help educators and students make connections across their curriculum and support interdisciplinary thinking.
- As artists continue to explore new technologies and media, the work they create encourages critical thinking and visual literacy in an increasingly mediasaturated society.
- ART21 enables students to understand that contemporary art is part of a cultural dialogue that concerns larger contextual frameworks such as ideas about beauty, personal and cultural identity, family, community, and nationality.



## contemporary art in the classroom and community

#### **DISCUSS**

- Use the following questions and activities as a way to initiate a broad-based dialogue about contemporary art and specific ideas related to where art is seen, how it is made, and who makes it.
- Why is art important? What role does art play in our society? What value is placed upon artists and their art, and why?
- What makes something a work of art? Is art defined by particular boundaries? If so, what are they and how have they changed over the course of history?
- What is the role of the artist? How has this role changed over time?
- What distinguishes visual art from other forms of visual communication like advertising, design, or photojournalism?
- Who decides what a work of art means the artist, the critic, the viewer? How do history and the passage of time affect the meaning of an artwork?
- What are the most important skills an artist can have?
- What materials and tools do artists use to create art today? Have the tools for making art changed over time?
- Where do artists find inspiration?
- What is the difference between working alone and collaborating on an artwork with fabricators, audiences, or others?
- In addition to museums and galleries, where else can art be shown? How does the location or context of a work of art affect its meaning?
- What are the subjects, issues, and themes important to artists working today?
- What role does beauty play in contemporary art? Does a work of art need to be beautiful? Why, or why not? Who decides what is beautiful?

#### **CREATE**

- Encourage students to write regularly in a journal or sketchbook to record questions, ideas, or pictures related to their artviewing experiences. Use any of the **Before**, **While**, or **After Viewing** questions as journal assignments to be completed in anticipation of a group discussion.
- Initiate a debate based on any of the previous discussion questions. Turn the question into a statement and have students develop arguments for and against that statement to present to the class.
- Use ART21's series and website to prepare students to view art in museums, galleries, and other exhibition venues. Discuss the different ways audiences can see and experience contemporary art (on film, on the Internet, in person, etc.) and reflect on how those contexts influence the way we look at and interpret the work.
- View a variety of artist segments to inspire students to write his or her own artist statement or to create a video segment reflecting a personal artist profile.
- Use ART21 as a springboard to connect with your local arts community. Invite a local artist, curator, collector, or educator to discuss particular artists, issues, or concepts relevant to your students or local community.

#### PRESENTING VIDEO

- Preview all video content before presenting it in a classroom or community context. Consider viewing a single artist profile or specific portions of different artist profiles to address particular discussion questions or to anticipate a hands-on activity.
- Prepare viewers for what they will see. Initiate a discussion or writing exercise using the **Before Viewing** questions. These questions are designed to help viewers establish expectations about the content in the video and solicit personal experiences and opinion in relation to a particular topic or idea.

- Ask viewers to discuss key vocabulary words before viewing, and identify how the terms are applied, while watching the video. Use the ART21 Glossary to discuss and clarify relevant terms.
- Introduce additional resources such as artist interviews, images of specific works of art, or key words or topics found at art21.org. These resources introduce specific ideas or themes addressed in the video segments and can support postviewing discussion.
- Encourage active viewing by identifying appropriate points for pausing, clarifying, or expanding on what participants are seeing and hearing. Use the **While Viewing** questions provided in the Guide or revisit **Before Viewing** questions or ideas when relevant. Encourage participants to take notes, sketch, or consider additional questions while they watch.
- Facilitate **After Viewing** engagement by analyzing and responding to the video segment with relevant discussion and follow-up activities. Consider ways for participants to process their ideas independently before sharing them with the group, either by writing, sketching, or utilizing graphic organizers.
- Use ART21 themes to initiate conversation about multiple artists and their works. Compare and contrast artists, working methods, or interpretations of specific themes or topics.
- Screen a range of films about different artists (past and present, documentary, and from popular culture) and compare how each film approaches its subject matter and conveys a narrative about the artist and his or her work and ideas.

For more information and resources related to integrating ART21 content and contemporary art into classrooms, museums, and public events visit art21.org and download the Learning with ART21 toolkit.

ART21 production stills, 2014

# investigation

fiction

I am always trying to encounter something that has not been seen. Graciela Iturbide

**Leonardo Drew** born 1961, Tallahassee, Florida **Thomas Hirschhorn** born 1957, Bern, Switzerland **Graciela Iturbide** born 1942, Mexico City, Mexico

How do artists push beyond what they already know and readily see? Can acts of engagement and exploration be works of art in themselves? In this episode, artists use their practices as tools for personal and intellectual discovery, simultaneously documenting and producing new realities in the process.

Never content with work that comes easily, **Leonardo Drew** reaches daily beyond his comfort zone, charting a course of experimentation with his materials and processes and letting the work find its own way. While enlisting the assistance of local individuals to develop a sprawling installation out of everyday materials, **Thomas Hirschhorn** poses political and philosophical questions, and searches for alternative models of thinking and being. The process leads to the creation of a new kind of monument that, while physically ephemeral, lives on in collective memory. For **Graciela Iturbide**, the camera is a pretext for understanding the world. Her principal concern has been the photographic investigation of Mexico—her own cultural environment—through blackand-white images of landscapes and their inhabitants, abstract compositions, and self-portraits. Her interest, she says, lies in what her heart feels and what her eyes see.

#### **DISCUSS**

#### Before Viewing

- Describe the ways in which artists and other professionals learn about new ideas, processes, and strategies. What kinds of approaches do they take to build on their own experiences and inquire about things they do not know?
- When do exploration and experimentation become art?
- How do the roles of teachers, collaborators, and assistants differ, and inform the artistic process?

#### After Viewing

- How do the artists in this episode perform investigations? What do their investigations look like?
- At which stage of the artistic process is experimentation and exploration most important for each of these artists?
- How do the artists in this episode create work that is a result of their experience with teachers, collaborators, and assistants?
- What role does complexity play for the artists in this episode? How is this evident in their work?

I'm not a journalist. My work does not exist in the court of law. It exists in the space of art, and the space of art allows for ambiguities and for contradictions. Omer Fast

Omer Fast born 1972, Jerusalem, Israel Katharina Grosse born 1961, Freiburg/Breisgau, Germany Joan Jonas born 1936, New York, New York

What makes a compelling story? How do artists disrupt everyday reality in the service of revealing subtler truths? This episode features artists who explore the virtues of ambiguity, mix genres, and merge aesthetic disciplines to discern not simply what stories mean, but how and why they come to have meaning.

In multichannel video installations, Omer Fast blurs the boundaries between documentary, dramatization, and fantasy, frequently generating viewers' confusion. Fast plays with our assumptions about identity and the structure of dramatic narrative, revealing shades of meaning as stories are told, retold, and mythologized. Katharina Grosse creates wildly colorful sculptural environments and paintings that unite the fluid perception of landscape with the ordered hierarchy of painting. Her work is a material record—a story—and, perhaps, an inscription of her thoughts. Or, perhaps, it's an illusion. Working in performance, video, installation, sculpture, and drawing, Joan Jonas finds inspiration in mythic stories, investing texts from the past with the politics of the present. By wearing masks and drawing while performing on stage, Jonas disrupts the conventions of theatrical storytelling to emphasize potent symbols and critical self-awareness.

#### **DISCUSS**

#### Before Viewing

- Why collaborate? How can collaborating with others allow for creations that differ significantly from those made alone?
- Fiction and reality are usually considered opposites. When and why do artists blend them together, and in what art forms do they do so?
- What are the benefits of not knowing the meaning or message in a work of art or literature? In what ways does ambiguity inspire us?

#### After Viewing

- Why do the artists in this episode collaborate with others? What makes each collaboration unique?
- In what ways do the artists combine fiction and reality? What do these combinations produce?
- Choose a work featured in each segment and analyze the role that ambiguity played in its creation, the final product, or both.







## legacy

I see the artist as somebody that can propose things, whether creating an environment for something to happen or giving tools to people to do certain activities on their own. Tania Bruguera

**Tania Bruguera** born 1968, Havana, Cuba **Abraham Cruzvillegas** born 1968, Mexico City, Mexico **Wolfgang Laib** born 1950, Metzingen, Germany

Tania Bruguera explores the relationship between art, activism and social change, staging participatory events and interactions that build on her own observations, experiences, and understanding of the politics of repression and control. Her work advances the concept of arte útil, according to which art can be used as a tool for social and political empowerment. Abraham Cruzvillegas assembles sculptures and installations from found objects and disparate materials, through which he explores the effects of improvisation, transformation, and decay. His experiments with video, performance, family archives, and academic research reveal the deep connection between his identity, born of the harsh realities of his family's life in Mexico, and his artistic practice. Inspired by the teachings of Laotzi, by the modern artist Brancusi, and by formative experiences with his family in Germany and India, Wolfgang Laib's sculptures seem to connect the past and present, the ephemeral and eternal. His attention to human scale, duration of time, and his choice of materials give his works the power to transport us to unexpected realms of memory, sensory pleasure, and contemplation.

#### **DISCUSS**

#### Before Viewing

- What kinds of things happen when we engage with art? What are the lingering effects of being moved or inspired by a work of visual art, music, or a story?
- Distinguish between lessons we learn in school and those we learn in life. How do such lessons affect us?
- Examine a tradition in which you participate. How did you learn about it? If it has changed over time, describe those changes.

#### **After Viewing**

- Choose two works from this episode and describe the kinds of thoughts and images you remember best about them. What might these recollections inspire you to do or inquire about?
- How does each artist in this episode work with lessons learned in different contexts? How do those lessons affect their work?
- What are the traditions with which the artists engage? Where did the traditions originate, and how have artistic processes transformed them?

## secrets

I have a real appreciation for how complex it is to make something that is compelling and that changes with every view. Arlene Shechet

**Elliott Hundley** born 1975, Greensboro, North Carolina **Trevor Paglen** born 1974, Camp Springs, Maryland **Arlene Shechet** born 1951, New York, New York

How do artists make the invisible visible? What hidden elements persist in their work? Is it the artist's role to reveal them, or not? In this episode, artists share some of the secrets that are intrinsic to their work.

Elliott Hundley draws inspiration from many sources, including Greek tragedy, classical mythology, and Japanese woodblock prints, and his own family history. His intricately collaged paintings, teeming with humble materials and ephemera, are like palimpsests that simultaneously reveal and hide meaning.

Trevor Paglen makes the invisible visible, documenting evidence of the American surveillance state of the 21st century. Concerned with the politics of perception, Paglen investigates the development of machines that see and the historical relationship between photography and military technology. Arlene Shechet is curious about the obscured origins of industrial objects, folding clues about production processes into her handcrafted ceramic sculptures. With their hollow interiors often hidden from view, Shechet's sturdy clay vessels disguise their true nature through dazzling surface effects and the illusion of solidity.

#### **DISCUSS**

#### Before Viewing

- Who keeps secrets, and why do they keep them? Consider whether there are benefits and drawbacks to keeping secrets. What forms can secrets take?
- How do we detect or understand things that are invisible or hidden? Who helps us see and understand such things?
- Give examples of artists whose process is evident their work. Choose works that illustrate this. Describe the qualities that define these works.

#### After Viewing

- What kinds of secrets do the artists in this episode use, or reveal, through their work?
- How does each artist engage the viewer in the act of seeing differently? What kinds of things do we see with the assistance of these artists?
- Discuss the different ways in which each artist shares his or her process. Which artists emphasize process? How do they do so?



# Tania Bruguera (BREW-gare-ah)

art21.org/artists/tania-bruguera



Born 1968, Havana, Cuba

#### **Education**

Instituto Superior de Arte, Havana MFA, The School of the Art Institute of Chicago

#### Lives and Works

Queens, New York

#### **About the Artist**

Tania Bruguera, a politically motivated performance artist, explores the relationship between art, activism, and social change in works that examine the social effects of political and economic power. By creating proposals and **aesthetic** models for others to use and adapt, she defines herself as an initiator rather than an author, and often collaborates with institutions and individuals so that the full realization of her artwork occurs when others adopt and perpetuate it. She expands the definition and range of performance art, often staging participatory events and interactions that build on her own observations, experiences, and interpretations of the politics of repression and control. Bruguera has explored the Cuban Revolution in performances that provoke viewers to consider the political realities masked by government propaganda and mass-media interpretation. Advancing the concept of arte útil (literally, useful art; art as a tool), she proposes solutions to sociopolitical problems through art, and has developed longterm projects that include a community center and a political party for immigrants.

#### **Teaching Connections**

Media and Materials performance

#### Key Words and Ideas

**collaboration**, participatory events, power, **public art**, social commentary

#### **Related Artists**

Marina Abramović, Allora & Calzadilla, Laurie Anderson, assume vivid astro focus, Mark Dion, Ann Hamilton, Alfredo Jaar, Krzysztof Wodiczko For me the most important moment for an art piece is when people are not sure if it's art or not. And for me, this is the most productive moment.

#### **DISCUSS**

#### Before Viewing

- Describe the characteristics that define something as art. Are there particular characteristics that apply to all forms of art?
- What types of roles do artists have in society today?
- Research or describe a work of art that makes a specific social comment. What message or theme does this work communicate? How does it do so?

#### While Viewing

■ How would you describe Bruguera's work to someone who has never seen it? How does Bruguera's approach to art-making differ from that of other artists whose work you have seen? What does she ask her audience to do?



Destierro / Displacement, 1998–99. Embodying a Nkisi Nkonde icon. Performance: Cuban earth, glue, wood, nails, and textile, dimensions variable. Video documentation of performance; video, silent, 85 minutes 54 seconds, looped. Photo: Manuel Pina and Jose A. Figueroa. Courtesy Studio Bruguera. © Tania Bruguera

■ Describe some of the ideas Bruguera's work conveys. How does she communicate them?

#### After Viewing

- Bruguera says, "For me, the most important moment for an art piece is when people are not sure if it's art or not. And for me, this is the most productive moment." Why might Bruguera consider this the most productive moment? What response does this moment produce for the viewer and perhaps even the artist?
- Compare Bruguera's *Tatlin's Whisper #6* to *Chalk (Lima)* by Allora & Calzadilla (Season 4). In what way does each work give participants a voice? Describe the differences between the two works?
- Bruguera says, "As a political artist I always want my art to have real consequences." What are the consequences of works like *Displacement* and *Arte Útil*?

- In a written comparison, **juxtapose** one of Bruguera's performances to a work of literature. In what ways are the works similar?
- With one or more partners, create an artwork that engages public participation and teaches something to the participants. What did they learn? How might the work initiate a series of related work?



Tatlin's Whisper #5, 2008. Decontextualization of an action: mounted police, crowd control techniques, audience, dimensions variable. Performance view: UBS Openings: Live The Living Currency, Tate Modern, London. Photo: Sheila Burnett. Courtesy Tate Modern and Studio Bruquera. © Tania Bruquera



El susurro de Tatlin #6 (Versión La Habana) / Tatlin's Whisper #6 (Havana version), 2009. Decontextualization of an action: stage, podium, microphones, 1 loudspeaker inside and 1 loudspeaker outside of the building, 2 persons dressed in military outfits, white dove, 1 minute free of censorship per speaker, 200 disposable cameras with flash, dimensions variable. Performance view: Tenth Havana Biennial, Central Patio of the Wifredo Lam Contemporary Art Center, Havana. Video documentation of performance: HD video, 40 minutes 30 seconds. Edition of 5 (+ 1 AP). Courtesy Studio Bruguera. © Tania Bruguera



# (CROOS-vee-ay-gus) Abraham Cruzvillegas

art21.org/artists/abraham-cruzvillegas

The origin of autoconstruccíon as a concept is related to people making their houses as they can. It's not a method or technique or style. It's more about social . . . and political circumstance.

#### **DISCUSS**

#### Before Viewing

- How do artists plan works of art? What kinds of things influence their planning?
- How do your family life and your own biography affect your work and your interests?
- What kinds of images and memories come to mind when you think of the phrase, 'starting something from nothing'? How do artists, writers, scientists, and even chefs use this approach in their work?

#### While Viewing

- Jot down the ways Cruzvillegas prepares to make his work. Are there specific things he thinks about, regardless of the particular work?
- What roles do Cruzvillegas's family and his experiences growing up in Colonia Ajusco play in the work he makes?
- What kinds of things does Cruzvillegas associate with autoconstrucción? Describe the elements that are crucial to autoconstrucción.



La Polar, 2002. Photo umbrella, peacock and pheasant feathers, dimensions variable. Courtesy the artist and kurimanzutto. Mexico City. © Abraham Cruzvillegas

#### After Viewing

- Cruzvillegas says that the necessity of understanding is important in his work. What is he trying to understand?
- Define autoconstrucción. Why is this concept important to Cruzvillegas? Summarize the ways in which the transformation of his home relates to autoconstrucción.
- In this segment Cruzvillegas states, "Things . . . speak. I try to find a balance among them. In a way I'm making a self-portrait." Describe the relationship of Cruzvillegas's work to portraiture?



Autodestrucción 2, 2013. Installation view: Museo Experimental el ECO, Mexico City. Courtesy the artist, kurimanzutto, Regen Projects, and Galerie Chantal Crousel. © Abraham Cruzvillegas

#### **CREATE**

- Create a sculpture from materials you collect, assembling the work as you gather the pieces. What do the chosen objects say about your own history or identity? What story do they tell together as a sculpture?
- Interview members of your family or community and ask them to recount the story of a specific past event or project. How do their recollections differ when compared? Invent a way to represent the findings of the interviews through a drawing, installation, sculpture, or video.



1968, Mexico City, Mexico

#### Education

Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM)

### Lives and Works

Mexico City, Mexico

#### **About the Artist**

Inspired by the harsh landscape and living conditions of Colonia Ajusco, his childhood neighborhood in Mexico City where houses were built on inhospitable land in ad hoc improvisations according to personal needs and economic resources, Abraham Cruzvillegas assembles sculptures and installations from found objects and disparate materials. Expanding on the intellectual investigation of his own paradoxical aesthetic concepts of autoconstrucción and autodestrucción,\* he likens his works to self-portraits of contradictory elements and explores the effects of **improvisation**, transformation, and decay on his materials and work. In his experiments with video, performance, personal and family archives, and academic research, he reveals the deep connection between his **identity**—born of the realities of his family's life in Mexico-and his artistic practice.

\*The terms autoconstrucción and autodestrucción (translated literally as self-construction and selfdestruction) refer to methods of building and eventual destruction that arise from the constraints of poverty, which require scavenging, recycling, and adaptation of materials

#### **Teaching Connections**

Media and Materials assemblage, installation, sculpture

#### Key Words and Ideas

animism, architecture, contradiction, identity, improvisation, instability, landscape, transformation

#### Related Artists

El Anatsui, Mark Bradford, Mark Dion, John Feodorov, Mike Kelley, Gabriel Orozco, Pepón Osorio, Do-Ho Suh

# Leonardo <u>Drew</u>

art21.org/artists/leonardo-drew



**Born** 1961, Tallahassee, Florida

#### Education

Parsons School of Design BFA, Cooper Union

#### Lives and Works

Brooklyn, New York

#### **About the Artist**

Leonardo Drew grew up in a pubic housing project in Bridgeport, Connecticut. Although often mistaken for accumulations of found objects, his **sculptures** are instead made of "brand new stuff"materials such as wood, rusted iron, cotton, paper, mud-that he intentionally subjects to processes of weathering, burning, oxidization, and decay. Whether jutting from a wall or traversing rooms as freestanding **installations**, his pieces challenge the architecture of the space in which they're shown. Memories of his childhood surroundings—from the housing project where he lived, to the adjacent landfill—resurface in the intricate grids and configurations of many of his pieces. Never content with work that comes easily, Drew constantly reaches beyond "what's comfortable" and charts a course of daily investigation, never knowing what the work will be about, but letting it find its way, and asking, "What if. . . . "

#### **Teaching Connections**

Media and Materials

installation, sculpture

#### Key Words and Ideas

form, **process**, history, memory, **site-specific**, transformation

#### Related Artists

El Anatsui, Mark Bradford, Arturo Herrera, Allan McCollum, Judy Pfaff, Richard Serra, Jessica Stockholder, Sarah Sze, Ursula von Rydingsvard As I'm moving closer and closer to answering questions . . . I'm moving further away from the answers.

#### **DISCUSS**

#### **Before Viewing**

- Why keep a sketchbook? What purposes do sketchbooks serve?
- How do the materials used to make sculpture influence the meaning of the work? For example, what do we associate with materials such as wood and cotton?
- In what ways do artists work with restrictions and rules? How might restrictions or rules help you to form ideas?



Number 167, 2013. Wood, 26 x 35 x 16 inches. Photo: John Berens. Courtesy the artist and Sikkema Jenkins & Co.

#### While Viewing

- Take notes or make sketches about how Drew's sketchbooks might look today in comparison to those in the video segment. How did his early sketches influence his later work?
- What does Drew do to transform the materials for his sculptures? How do his working methods and choice of materials affect the way viewers interpret his work?
- How does Drew work with self-imposed restrictions? How have they influenced his process and artwork?



Number 80, detail, 2002. Cast paper, installation dimensions variable. Photo: Aaron Igler/Courtesy of The Fabric Workshop and Museum. Courtesy the artist and Sikkema Jenkins & Co. © Leonardo Drew

#### After Viewing

- Compare Drew's Number 8 and Number 80. How has Drew transformed the materials used in these sculptures, and how do the materials convey ideas, histories, or meanings? Compare Drew's approach and process to those of Mark Bradford (Season 4) and El Anatsui (Season 6).
- Discuss the ways in which restraints, limitations, or failure can affect or change an artist's work or processes. Brainstorm personal or arthistorical examples.
- What does Drew mean when he says that his "ability to draw and paint well got in the way of realizing something larger. It's hard to get past something so beautifully done."

- Write two or three rules or restrictions for making an artwork, and share them with a classmate. Trade ideas for using restrictions, and co-curate a small exhibit of work based on *creating* rules vs. breaking them.
- Choose an approach to making art that is the opposite of what you are used to, and use that approach to create a piece that challenges you to in unaccustomed ways. Document your thoughts and responses during the process.
- Choose two materials (other than those featured in this segment) that have **symbolic** associations. Create a diagram or plan for using one or both materials to convey an idea or story. Share your process by writing a description that could accompany the work.



Number 8, 1988. Animal carcasses, animal hides, feathers, paint, paper, rope, and wood, 108 x 120 x 4 inches. Photo: Frank Stewart. Courtesy the artist and Sikkema Jenkins & Co. © Leonardo Drew





Two installation views of Everything That Rises Must Converge, 2013. Four-channel digital film, color, sound, 56 minutes. Photo: Marc Domage. Courtesy the artist; gb agency, Paris; Arratia Beer, Berlin; and Dvir Gallery, Tel Aviv. © Omer Fast

## Omer Fast

art21.org/artists/omer-fast

I'm not a journalist. My work does not exist in the court of law. It exists in the space of art, and the space of art allows for ambiguities and for contradictions.

#### **DISCUSS**

#### **Before Viewing**

- Fast works with controversial subject matter, such as the use of drones for surveillance and warfare. Describe other subjects that you consider controversial. Which ones would be difficult for you to represent visually? Why?
- What is a portrait? Consider different approaches to **portraiture** that artists have taken over time.
- Describe a time when you retold a true story and added fictional elements. Why did you add them?
- Define **identity**. Is identity formed over time, constructed, or shaped?



Five Thousand Feet Is the Best, video still, 2011. Single channel, HD video, color, sound, 30 minutes. Courtesy the artist; gb agency, Paris; Arratia Beer, Berlin; and Dvir Gallery, Tel Aviv. © Omer Fast

#### While Viewing

■ How do the interviews from 5000 Feet Is the Best affect you? Why do you think

Fast wants to tell this story? Describe your thoughts as you watch. How do the fictional elements affect Fast's videos?

- How does Fast use **portraiture**? What do you learn from the video portraits of the drone pilot and adult-video performers?
- Fast says, "Identity is . . . a performance, a kind of construction." What does he mean? How does his work reflect this idea?

#### After Viewing

- Fast says, "When I find my subjects the process involves a lot of doubt about the ethical dimension of what I'm doing vis-à-vis someone else's story, someone else's life." What kinds of ethical challenges do you recognize in Fast's work? Why is it important for him to work with these challenges?
- Fast says that notions of reality and fiction are not interesting for him in the space of art. What kinds of ideas interest *you* in the space of art? How does Fast include fictional elements in his work? Why did he choose to use fiction in the video portraits of the drone pilot and adult-video performers?
- Fast says that **identity** is a performance. Do you agree or disagree? Why?
- What are **genres**? What do you think Fast means when he says that he uses genres to unpack their languages?

#### **CREATE**

- Using one of Fast's works as inspiration, create an artwork or written narrative that blends truth and fiction to tell a new story.
- Describe examples of contradiction. Write a song, a poem, or choreograph a dance that uses a particular contradiction as the work's subject matter.



The Casting, production still, 2007. Four-channel synchronized video projection, 35mm film transferred to video, sound, 14 minutes. Commissioned by Museum Moderner Kunst Stiftung Ludwig, Wien. Photo: Nicholas Trikonis. Courtesy the artist; gb agency, Paris; Arratia Beer, Berlin; and Dvir Gallery, Tel Aviv. © Omer Fast



Born 1972, Jerusalem, Israel

#### **Education**

BA/BFA, Tufts University/School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston MFA, Hunter College

#### **Lives and Works**

Berlin, Germany

#### **About the Artist**

Omer Fast's multichannel video installations blur the boundaries between documentary, dramatization, and fantasy, frequently generating viewers' confusion. Fast often anchors his narratives with a conversation between two peoplewhether subjects recounting their own stories or actors playing roles of interviewer and interviewee. As dialogues escalate in tension, portraits of carefully calibrated identity emerge. Through repetition and reenactment, multiple takes of given scenes build shades of interpretation as a story is told, retold, and mythologized. Stories of origin, trauma, and desire mutate into one another, forming blended genres that confound expectations and disrupt **narrative** conventions. Projected into space or unfolding simultaneously on multiple screens, the work resonates with characters—whether a drone pilot, worker in the adult film industry, or a wife talking to her husband—who seem to express the elemental complications and disparities of their own identities.

#### **Teaching Connections**

Media and Materials performance, video

#### Key Words and Ideas

ambiguity, contradiction, **convention**, **documentary**, **genre**, **identity**, **juxtaposition**, **narrative**, **popular culture**, **portraiture** 

#### **Related Artists**

Marina Abramović, Ida Applebroog, John Baldessari, Pierre Huyghe, Mary Reid Kelley, An-My Lê, Paul McCarthy, Catherine Opie, Paul Pfeiffer, Cindy Sherman, Nancy Spero, Krzysztof Wodiczko

## Katharina Grosse (GROSS-Uh)

art21.org/artists/katharina-grosse



#### Born

1961, Freiburg/Breisgau, Germany

#### Education

Kunstakademie Düsseldorf

#### **Lives and Works**

Berlin, Germany

#### **About the Artist**

Katharina Grosse is a painter who often employs electrifying sprayed acrylic colors to create large-scale sculptural environments and smaller wall works. Interested in the shifts of scale between 'imagining big' while being small in relationship to one's surroundings, she explores the dynamic interplay between observing the world and simply being in it. By uniting a fluid perception of **landscape** with the ordered hierarchy of painting, Grosse treats both architecture and the natural world as an armature for expressive compositions of dreamy abandon, humorous juxtaposition, and futuristic flair. Her projects often suggest complex narratives through the inclusion of everyday objects, psychedelic vistas, and evocative titles. By building up layers of color with an expressive immediacy, she enables her work to become a material record of its own making and, perhaps, an inscription of her thoughts. But, Grosse says, "I am the painting trickster. Don't believe me!"

#### **Teaching Connections**

#### Media and Materials

painting, sculpture, fiberglass, spray paint, organic materials

#### Key Words and Ideas

architecture, **collaboration**, fabrication, **gesture**, **installation**, landscape, **process**, **public art**, scale, **site-specific**, transformation

#### Related Artists

David Altmejd, Ida Applebroog, Barry McGee, Elizabeth Murray, Martin Puryear, Jessica Stockholder, James Turrell, Ursula von Rydingsvard I'm talking to the world while painting on it, or with it, or in it.

#### **DISCUSS**

#### **Before Viewing**

- Discuss what painters do, and the different forms paintings take. Are paintings always flat? Colorful? Consider why, or why not.
- Describe the experience of seeing a work of **public art**, and include information about its size, context, materials used, and meaning.
- How might a team work on a single painting together? What roles could team-members play?

#### While Viewing

- How does Grosse challenge our assumptions about painting? Describe her painting process.
- Jot down some of the steps necessary to make Just Two of Us, and characterize Grosse's role in the process of creating it.



Taxi und Tour, 2006. Acrylic on wall, floor, stone, styrofoam, and various objects, dimensions variable. Installation view: Gallery Mark Müller, Zurich. Photo: Heinrich Helfenstein. Courtesy the artist. © Katharina Grosse and VG Bild-Kunst Bonn

■ What did Grosse's team do during this video segment? How do her collaborators help her realize her vision for each work?

WUNDERBLOCK, 2013. Acrylic on glass fiber reinforced plastic, 14 x 8½ x 67 feet. Installation view: Nasher Sculpture Center, Dallas. Photo: Kevin Todora. Courtesy Galerie Nächst St. Stephan, Wien.  $\circledcirc$  Katharina Grosse und VG Bild-Kunst Bonn

#### After Viewing

- What are the benefits and challenges of 'painting in space'? Grosse says, "Am I a painter? Am I a sculptor? I don't know. I'm talking to the world while painting on it, or with it, or in it." How would you characterize the work she creates with her team? Would you describe her as a painter, a sculptor, or something else? Why?
- Look at several of Grosse's works, and discuss how she answers her own question, "How can painting appear in space, and what do I need to show in the painting?"
- Compare Grosse's work and processes with those of Elizabeth Murray (Season 5).

- Grosse says that painting something can sometimes transform it. Paint a three-dimensional object in a way that makes the viewer reconsider its form and/or use. How did that action transform the object and your approach to painting?
- Grosse says, "I'm really fascinated by that condition of . . . being *in* something and at the same time looking at it. . . . That's a condition we have all the time." List other contexts in which this idea applies. How might this condition be expressed or examined through a written **narrative**, historical source, or scientific problem?
- Use color to transform a space in your home, school, or community. Consider other ways to use color in addition to painting, such as incorporating lighting or "wrapping" objects.





# Thomas Hirschhorn

art21.org/artists/thomas-hirschhorn

I want my work [to have] a density, a non-hierarchy, a reason to be, a necessity, an urgency, something I love. That's why it's energy, and that's why I use this term, "Energy yes, quality no."

#### **DISCUSS**

#### Before Viewing

- What is a **monument**? What is its typical function? List some materials used in creating public monuments, and explain why they are used.
- Describe the similarities and differences between a **monument** and a work of **public art**.
- Who was Antonio Gramsci, and why might his writings and ideas interest artists working today?

#### While Viewing

■ Describe the materials and tools used by Hirschhorn and the Forest Houses residents to create *Gramsci Monument*. Why did Hirschhorn use those materials? What are their benefits and challenges?



Nail Family, 2006. Wood, board of agglomerate, models, cardboard, transparent adhesive tape, nails, screws, prints and African statuette, 94 x 98 x 94 inches. Courtesy the artist and Gladstone Gallery, New York and Brussels. © Thomas Hirschhorn

- How do the residents of Forest Houses respond to Hirschhorn's project? What do their statements about the project say about coexisting with the work, as well as the effects of making and sharing in this work?
- Why is Antonio Gramsci important to Thomas Hirschhorn?

#### After Viewing

- Compare or relate *Gramsci Monument* to other more traditional monuments. Describe the similarities and/or differences between them.
- What did Hirschhorn and the Forest Houses residents gain from the project? Why create an impermanent **monument** like this one? How does it relate to Hirschhorn's goal of creating memory?
- Compare Hirschhorn's interest in Antonio Gramsci with that of Alfredo Jaar (Season 4).
- Hirschhorn says, "Energy, yes. Quality, no." What does this mean?



Thomas Hirschhorn and Marcus Steinweg. Foucault Map, 2004. Cardboard, paper, plastic, foil, tape, prints, marker pen, 179 x 108 inches. Photo: Rita Burm enter. Courtesy the artist and Stephen Friedman Gallery, London. © Thomas Hirschborn

#### **CREATE**

- Develop a plan for a **monument** that would best reflect the ideas and interests of your favorite writer. What materials would you use? What effect would you like this monument to have on viewers?
- Collaborate with classmates to create a **site-specific** artwork inspired by an important question. Then, engage the school or local community in a dialogue.



**Born** 1957, Bern, Switzerland

#### Education

Schule für Gestaltung, Zürich

#### **Lives and Works**

Paris, France

#### **About the Artist**

Thomas Hirschhorn shapes public discourse that relates to political discontent, and offers alternative models for thinking and being. Believing that every person has an innate understanding of art, Hirschhorn resists elitist aesthetic criteria-for example, quality—in favor of dynamic principles of energy and coexistence. He creates sprawling installations from mundane materials (packing tape, cardboard, foil). Using **collage** as a form of interpretation and critique, Hirschhorn presents intellectual history and philosophical theory much as he does everyday objects and images, and poses questions about aesthetic value, moral responsibility, political agency, consumerism, and media spectacle. He has produced a series of **monuments** to great philosophers—Spinoza, Bataille, Deleuze, Gramsci—that while physically ephemeral are intended to live on in the collective memory of those who have experienced them. In the process of creating such work, Hirschhorn has enlisted individuals living near the monument sites, paying them to assist him (though not to collaborate, per se, in the artwork). "To me," he says, "it seems much more honest to say coexistence than collaboration."

#### **Teaching Connections**

#### Media and Materials

cardboard, found materials, paper, tape, wood

#### Kev Words and Ideas

coexistence, **collaboration**, **collage**, **installation**, **monument**, **site-specific art** 

#### Related Artists

Ai Weiwei, Eleanor Antin, Alfredo Jaar, William Kentridge, Mike Kelley, Doris Salcedo, Nancy Spero, Krzysztof Wodiczko

# Elliott Hundley

art21.org/artists/elliott-hundley



Born

1975, Greensboro, North Carolina

#### Education

BFA, Rhode Island School of Design MFA, UCLA

#### Lives and Works

Los Angeles, California

#### **About the Artist**

Elliott Hundley draws inspiration for his paintings from diverse sources, but especially from his Southern heritage, steeped in family history. Many of his works also contain references to Greek tragedy and classical mythology, and to Japanese woodblock prints. He also stages improvisational photo shoots to generate imagery for his multi-panel tableaus, casting friends and family in roles from antiquity and various other sources. With these and other images anchored by thousands of pins to bulletin-board-like surfaces, his shallow reliefs form a palimpsest that teems with humble materials such as cutup magazines, string, plastic, gold leaf, and other **ephemera**. He frequently recycles leftover scraps from one work to the next and uses images of completed paintings as substructures for new projects, creating continuity between old and new.

#### **Teaching Connections**

#### Media and Materials

**assemblage**, **collage**, embroidery, mixed media, photography, sculpture

#### Key Words and Ideas

**appropriation, craft, ephemera,** found object, **palimpsest, tableau** 

#### **Related Artists**

Eleanor Antin, John Baldessari, Mark Bradford, Trenton Doyle Hancock, Arturo Herrera, Oliver Herring, Lari Pittman, Jessica Stockholder Relinquishing some control allows me some distance. I start to feel like the artwork is responding to me—giving me something back or becoming something I never expected. I really enjoy that moment of not recognizing my own hand.

#### **DISCUSS**

#### Before Viewing

- In this video segment, Hundley says, "Acquiring objects is a way of learning about objects."
  What kinds of things do people collect? Why?
- How does **collage** differ from other approaches to art-making?
- Recall a work of art or literature that influenced you. Explain how that experience informed something you participated in or produced.
- Outline the major steps one takes to create an artwork, and develop a plan that differs significantly from the one you outlined. How do the two approaches compare?

#### While Viewing

■ How does Hundley's practice of collecting things influence his **collage** making?



I'll Get You, 2013. Sound board, wood, inkjet print on Kitikata, paper, string, pins, gouache, found taxidermy pheasants, metal, electroformed parabolic reflector, plastic, wire, 78 x 60% x 13% inches. Courtesy the artist, Andrea Rosen Gallery, and Regen Projects. © Elliott Hundley

- Hundley mentions various forms of **collage**—from arranging things on a refrigerator to keeping a scrapbook. How do they differ. Which ones have you used?
- How have art history and contemporary visual culture influenced Hundley? List the art-historical references that you noticed in this video segment.
- What kinds of skills and expertise do Hundley's assistants contribute to his work?



The Hesitant Hour, 2014. Wood, foam, paper, inkjet print on gold leaf, pins, string, oil paint; 96 x 192 x  $10\frac{3}{4}$  inches. Courtesy the artist, Andrea Rosen Gallery, and Regen Projects. © Elliott Hundley

#### After Viewing

- Compare and contrast Hundley's work and **process** with El Anatsui's (Season 6). Describe the similarities and differences.
- Compare Hundley's *The Hesitant Hour* with several examples of Japanese woodblock prints. Describe their influence on Hundley's work.
- Summarize the steps Hundley and his assistants take to complete the works shown in this video segment. How does your summary compare with the one you outlined earlier?

- Using a favorite work of art or literature as a starting point, create a **collage** that refers to it in some way. Share the collage with classmates and, if possible, create a video introduction that explains how you incorporated influences from the original work.
- Hundley's assistant says that Hundley is like a choreographer. Design a plan for an art work, dance, or performance that a small group of people will produce from start to finish.



The sound of its own ringing, 2014. Wood, foam, paper, gesso on linen, pins, string, 96 x 84 x 5 inches. Courtesy the artist, Andrea Rosen Gallery, and Regen Projects. © Elliott Hundley



Our Lady of the Iguanas, Juchitán, Oaxaca, 1979. From the series, Juchitán. Silver gelatin print, 24 x 20 inches. Courtesy the artist. © Graciela Iturbide

art21.org/artists/graciela-iturbide

For me, photography is a pretext to know the world, to know life, to know yourself, and to capture everything you bring inside.

#### **DISCUSS**

#### **Before Viewing**

- Describe several professions and occupations that involve some form of investigation.
- List three things you know and fully understand. How did you come to know and understand them?
- How would you describe faith? What role(s) does faith play in your own life?

#### While Viewing

- In this video segment, Iturbide and her family emphasize the importance of investigation. What kinds of investigations do they describe? How does Iturbide learn about the people and places she photographs? What does she learn?
- Iturbide says that the camera, or photography, is just a pretext for knowing the world. What does she come to understand or know, and what is the camera's role in that process? What is a pretext?
- What are the connections between Iturbide's Catholic background and her work? Which works illustrate those connections? Why?



Magnolia (1), Juchitán, Oaxaca, 1986. From the series, Juchitán. Silver gelatin print, 24 x 20 inches. Courtesy the artist. © Graciela Iturbide

### After Viewing

- How did Iturbide's work with communities of people lead her to focus on landscape? Why does she now concentrate on landscape? How does Iturbide use or explore the idea of self-reinvention, as described by her son?
- Reflect on Iturbide's words and actions in this video segment. How might you further investigate the three things you know and understand that you listed in the **Before Viewing** discussion?
- Describe a work by Iturbide, or a work you have created yourself, that connects to your concept of faith. What are the connections between the artwork and faith?



Cholos, White Fence, L.A., 1986. From the series, White Fence. Silver gelatin print, 20 x 24 inches. Courtesy the artist. © Graciela Iturbide

#### CREATE

- Using Iturbide's photos of Juchitán, the Seris, and Cholos as inspiration, create a series of photographs or interviews investigating a particular community or group of people.
- Iturbide reflects on the fact that she likes to photograph intense things. What themes and subjects do you consider intense? Choose one, and use it as the starting point for creating a series of poems, photographs, or other works of art. Share your work as a series.



Born 1942, Mexico City, Mexico

#### Education

Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM), Mexico City Honorary degree, Columbia College Chicago Honorary degree, San Francisco Art Institute

#### **Lives and Works**

Mexico City, Mexico

#### **About the Artist**

For Graciela Iturbide, the camera is just a pretext for knowing the world. Her interest lies in what her eyes see and what her heart feels. Although she has produced studies of landscapes and culture in India, Italy, and the Unites States, her principal concern has been the exploration and investigation of Mexico through blackand-white photographs of landscapes and their inhabitants, abstract compositions, and self-portraits. Her images of Mexico's indigenous people—the Zapotec, Mixtec, and Seri—are poignant studies of lives bounded by tradition, now confronted by the contemporary world. Turning the camera on herself, Iturbide reveals the influence of her mentor Manuel Álvarez Bravo in **self-portraits** that transform her quotidian self and play with formal innovation and attention to detail. She has also documented *cholo* culture in the White Fence barrio of East Los Angeles and migrants at the San Diego/Tijuana border, illuminating the bleak realities of her subjects' search for the American Dream.

#### **Teaching Connections**

Media and Materials photography

#### Kev Words and Ideas

community, **documentary**, faith, investigation, landscape, **portraiture**, series

#### Related Artists

Robert Adams, Alfredo Jaar, Sally Mann, Catherine Opie, Collier Schorr, Carrie Mae Weems

## Joan Jonas

art21.org/artists/joan-jonas



#### Born

1936, New York, New York

#### Education

BA, Mount Holyoke College School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston MFA, Columbia University

#### Lives and Works

New York, New York and Nova Scotia, Canada

#### **About the Artist**

A pioneer of performance and video art, Joan Jonas works in video, installation, sculpture, and drawing, often collaborating with musicians and dancers to realize improvisational works that are equally at home in the museum gallery and on the theatrical stage. Drawing on mythic stories from various cultures, Jonas invests texts from the past with the politics of the present. By wearing masks in some works, and drawing while performing on stage in others, she disrupts the **conventions** of theatrical storytelling to emphasize potent symbols and critical self-awareness. From masquerading in disguise before the camera to turning mirrors on the audience, she turns doubling and reflection into metaphors for the tenuous divide between subjective and objective vision, and the loss of fixed identities.

#### **Teaching Connections**

#### Media and Materials

dance, installation, performance art, video

#### Key Words and Ideas

rchetype, **collaboration**, **convention**, ritual, sound, storytelling, transformation

#### Related Artists

Marina Abramović, Ann Hamilton, Mary Reid Kelley, Kimsooja, William Kentridge, Cindy Sherman, Yinka Shonibare мве, Catherine Sullivan I don't like to talk about the symbolism; it puts too much meaning into it. I like it to be what it is in a very concrete way.

#### **DISCUSS**

#### **Before Viewing**

- How does our experience of **performance art** differ from our experience of other forms of art? How can performance art tell stories differently than other forms of art such as painting, sculpture, or graphic design?
- Brainstorm a list of artists who use themselves as models or performers. How do they transform themselves through their work?



The Shape, the Scent, the Feel of Things, 2005. Performance at Dia Beacon, Beacon, NY. Photo: Paula Court. Courtesy the artist. © Joan Jonas

Compare how Maya Lin (Season 1), Kimsooja (Season 5), and Catherine Opie (Season 6) relate to space and use it as an element in their work.

#### While Viewing

- Choose a performance from this video segment, and jot down how Jonas uses transformation and storytelling in the work. What role(s) does she play in the work?
- Jonas says, "All of my work, from the beginning, involved dealing with a space." Illustrate how she works with space in performances of different works.

#### After Viewing

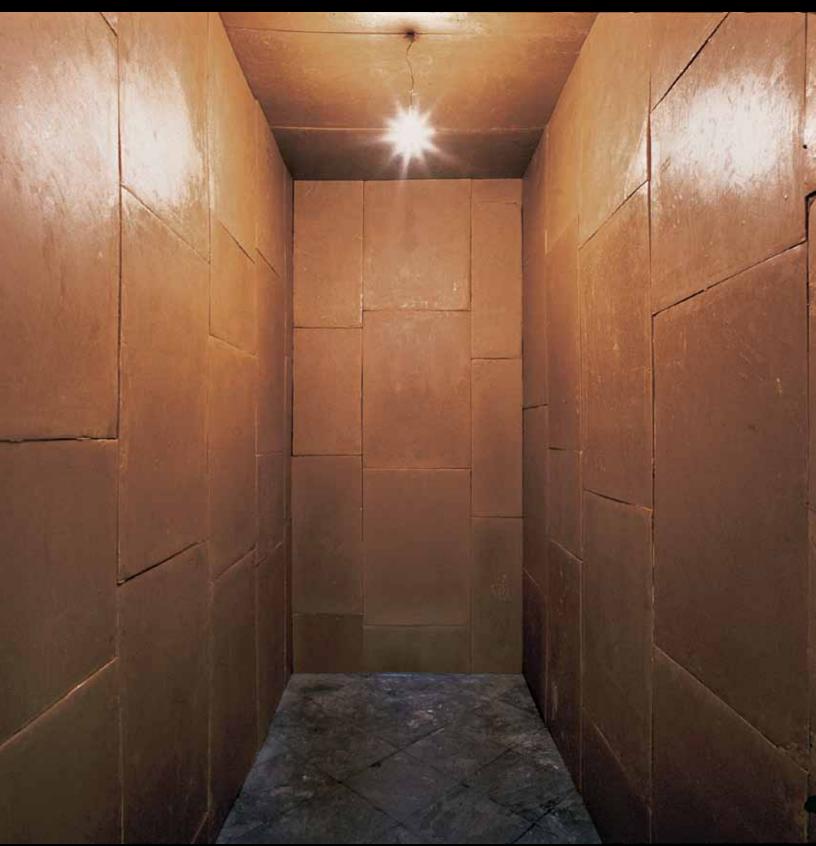
- Choose a performance from this video segment, and discuss how Jonas may have prepared for and executed the work. What kinds of things did she and her collaborators have to consider during the process?
- Compare Jonas's work and processes to those of William Kentridge (Season 5). How does each artist use drawing and performance?
- Reflect on your comparison of Lin, Kimsooja, and Opie in the **Before**Viewing discussion. How does each artist, including Jonas, offer the viewer opportunities to engage with space? What kinds of cross-disciplinary ideas or questions does each artist ask the viewer to consider?



Reanimation, 2013. Performance at Documenta 13, Kassel. Photo: Maria Rahling. Courtesy the artist.  $\circledcirc$  Joan Jonas

- Choreograph a dance or perform a series of movements that communicate a story written by you or another author.
- In your school, create an **installation** that uses the chosen space in a way that differs from any you have ever seen before. If possible, use video to document your **process**, or incorporate video into the work itself.
- Transform an excerpt from a literary text, historical event, or scientific principle in ways that create an alternate experience of the text, event, or principle.





Für einen anderen Körper (For Another Body), 1988. Beeswax, brick construction, stucco, 11½ x 5¼ x 13 feet. Installation view: Hamburger Bahnhof, Berlin, 1988. Courtesy the artist and Sperone Westwater, New York. © Wolfgang Laib

# Wolfgang Laib

art21.org/artists/wolfgang-laib

I think the goal of science is to define everything, to make everything clear. And I think art is the opposite, and our life is also the opposite.

#### **DISCUSS**

#### Before Viewing

- What does an artist do? What materials do artists use?
- Describe what inspires you to make artworks. What is your primary starting point? Which of your senses stimulates you to make art? Describe other starting points that inspire you.
- Listen to part or all of the sound track of the video segment about Laib, without watching it. Describe the kinds of work you think Laib creates.



Pollen from Hazelnut, 1992. Pollen, 11½ x 13 feet. Installation view: Centre Pompidou, Paris, 1992. Courtesy the artist and Sperone Westwater, New York. ⓒ Wolfgang Laib

#### While Viewing

- What inspires Laib? Why?
- How does Laib go about creating his work? Describe the materials he uses, and the kinds of associations his materials evoke.

#### After Viewing

- Laib says, "Art is about not knowing where you're going." How does he illustrate this? How does "not knowing where you're going" benefit an artist?
- Describe the connection(s) between Laib's work and his experiences growing up? Describe one or more connections between the types of art or performance that interest you and your personal history.
- Before viewing the video segment, you listened to the artist describe his influences and process. What kinds of work did you imagine or expect him to make? How did your expectation compare with the work he actually creates?

#### **CREATE**

- Collect examples of a single natural material that you can use and reuse for making artworks. Use it to create a work of art, and then re-form the material into something new in order to make a second work. How do these works compare? What does each work communicate?
- Recall a time in your childhood that inspires a fond memory. In what ways has the memory influenced your work and/or actions? Design an artwork or write a poem that uses that memory and investigates its effects over time.



Brahmanda, 2011. Black granite and oil, 21½ x 21½ x 37½ inches. Installation view: Passageway, Vadehra Art Gallery, New Delhi. Photo: Vadehra Art Gallery, New Delhi. Courtesy the artist and Vadehra Art Gallery, New Delhi. © Wolfgang Laib



**Born** 1950, Metzingen, Germany

#### Education

MD, University of Tübingen

#### **Lives and Works**

Hochdorf, Germany, and Tamil Nadu, India

#### **About the Artist**

Inspired by the teachings of the ancient Taoist philosopher Laozi, by the modern artist Brancusi, and the legacy of formative life experiences with his family in Germany and India, Wolfgang Laib creates sculptures that seem to connect that past and present, the **ephemeral** and the eternal. Working with perishable organic materials (pollen, milk, wood, and rice) as well as durable ones that include granite, marble, and brass, he grounds his work by his choice of forms—squares, ziggurats, and ships, among others. His painstaking collection of pollen from the wildflowers and bushes that grow in the fields near his home is integral to the process of creating work in which pollen is his medium. This he has done each year over the course of three decades. Laib's attention to human scale, duration of time, and his choice of materials give his work the power to transport us to expected realms of memory, sensory pleasure, and contemplation.

#### **Teaching Connections**

#### Media and Materials

installation, organic materials, sculpture

#### Kev Words and Ideas

abstraction, archetype, sensory, memory, process, site-specific art, transcendence

#### Related Artists

Ai Wei Wei, Janine Antoni, Cai Guo-Qiang, Vija Celmins, Ann Hamilton, Oliver Herring, Glenn Ligon, Hiroshi Sugimoto, James Turrell

# Trevor Paglen

art21.org/artists/trevor-paglen



Born 1974, Camp Springs, Maryland

#### Education

BA, University of California at Berkeley MFA, School of the Art Institute of Chicago PhD, University of California at Berkeley

#### Lives and Works

New York, New York

#### **About the Artist**

Trained as a geographer and photographer, Trevor Paglen makes the invisible visible by documenting the American surveillance state of the 21st century. From his vantage points at various public locations he photographs distant military facilities, capturing extreme telephoto images of stealth drones. Turning his vision to the night sky, he traces the paths of information-gathering satellites. In his series of Mylar satellites, Paglen applies advanced engineering to the creation of non-functional objects, stripping technology of its intended purpose and hoping to launch his own time capsule of photographs into geostationary orbit. Tracing the ways in which the convergence of **aesthetics**, industrial design, and politics influence how we see and understand the world, he shows us images of the American West, originally photographed for military use and now considered examples of classic photography. In images that go beyond straightforward journalistic documentation, Paglen gives voice to shifting ideas of the landscape of the American West, humankind's place in the cosmos, and the surveillance state.

#### **Teaching Connections**

Media and Materials

installation, photography, sculpture, video

#### Key Words and Ideas

aesthetics, **documentary**, geography, landscape, perception, **process** 

#### **Related Artists**

Florian Maier-Aichen, Ai Weiwei, Rackstraw Downes, Jenny Holzer, Alfredo Jaar, An-My Lê, Catherine Opie, Nancy Spero, Hiroshi Sugimoto, Krzysztof Wodiczko Art is more than a series of images that are disembodied. Art is objects that live in real places, economies, spaces, architecture.

#### **DISCUSS**

#### **Before Viewing**

- Describe some functional objects that you consider aesthetically pleasing. What are the qualities that make these objects so appealing?
- With a partner, illustrate the many different ways we define space. For example, you can make a chart, draw symbols or make a list.
- How do artists, scientists, and writers go about picturing the kinds of things we can't see? Give examples for each.



Prototype for a Nonfunctional Satellite (Design 4; Build 4), 2013. Mixed media, diameter 16 feet. Courtesy the artist, Metro Pictures, Altman Siegel, and Galerie Thomas Zander. © Trevor Paglen

#### While Viewing

- List the kinds of places and objects that attract Paglen. Why is he interested in them? How have his experiences growing up contributed to his interests?
- How is the element of space pictured in this segment? What kinds of spaces does Paglen engage with? How does Paglen's interest in geography inform his work?
- How does Paglen use diverse approaches to art-making to make the invisible visible?

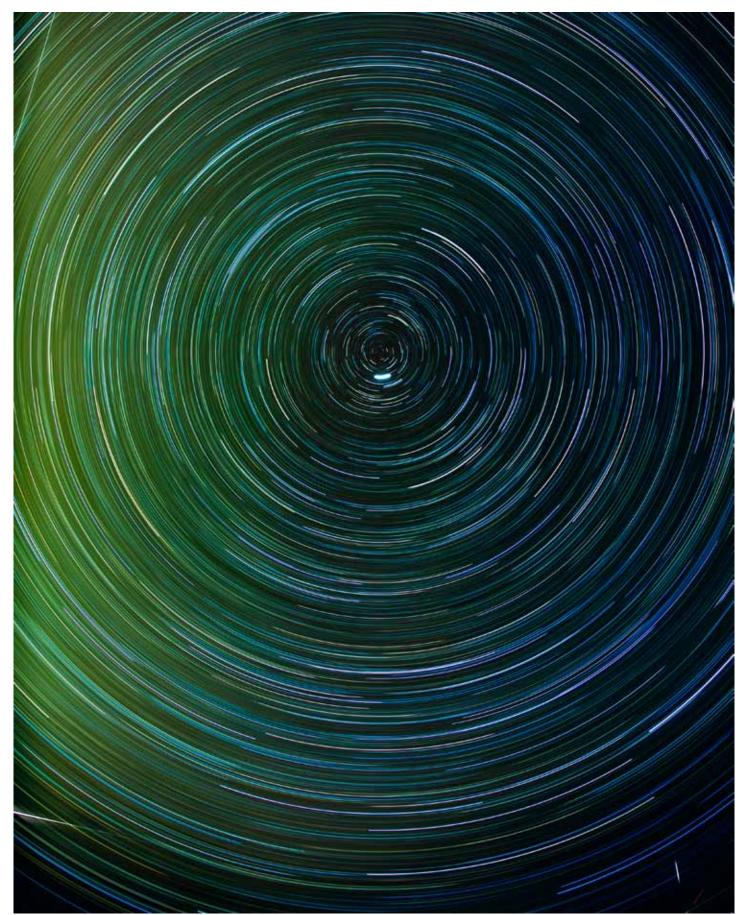


National Security Agency Utah Data Center; Bluffdale, UT, 2012. C-print, 36 x 48 inches. Courtesy the artist, Metro Pictures, Altman Siegel, and Galerie Thomas Zander. © Trevor Paglen

#### After Viewing

- Analyze the ways aesthetics, power, and technology come together in Paglen's work. What does Paglen say about each?
- What do you think Paglen means when he says his work is about the production of space? How does this idea compare with those of other artists who work with the element of space?
- What is Paglen's view of his role as an artist? What do we learn by looking into his works?

- Diagram a secret, and how it becomes one.
- Photograph or draw a series of places you see in your daily travels but do not know much about. Investigate these places, and write a description of each one to accompany your photo or drawing. Work with others to install an exhibit of your work that allows viewers to see these places more clearly.



Singleton/SBWASS-R1 and Three Unidentified Spacecraft (Space Based Wide Area Surveillance System; USA 32), 2012. C-print, 60 x 48 inches. Courtesy the artist, Metro Pictures, Altman Siegel, and Galerie Thomas Zander. © Trevor Paglen



art21.org/artists/arlene-shechet

Clay is a great three-dimensional drawing material. It leaves a record in the same way that a drawing leaves a very direct record of the artist's hand.

#### **DISCUSS**

#### **Before Viewing**

- What are the different ways in which artists, writers, and scientists describe or picture movement?
- Illustrate how drawing relates to sculpture and how each affects the other. How can these approaches to art-making be combined?
- Examine the similarities and differences between handmade and mass-produced objects. What qualities do such objects have? How do we often distinguish between the two?



A Night Out, detail, 2011. Glazed and fired ceramic on wood base,  $45 \times 13 \times 17$  inches. Photo: Alan Wiener. Courtesy the artist and Sikkema Jenkins & Co. o. Arlene Shechet

#### While Viewing

- In the video segment, Shechet says that sculpture creates movement. What kinds of movements do Shechet's sculptures inspire? How do her sculptures change as you move around them?
- Shechet likens her studio to a farm or factory. Note the ways Shechet works with her assistants, and how this compares with labor on a farm or in a factory.
- Identify moments in this video segment when the handmade and mass-produced are combined. What are the effects of these combinations? How do they affect Shechet's sculptures?

#### After Viewing

- Compare Shechet's work and processes to those of Lynda Benglis (Season 6). How does each artist use drawing and the theme of movement? Why does Shechet think that clay is a great three-dimensional drawing material?
- What do you think Shechet means when she says, "What some person might think of as mechanized and frightening, I think of as mechanized and fascinating." What fascinates her, and how does it influence her work?

#### **CREATE**

- Choose a mass-produced object whose design or form interests you. Use it as the starting point for a sculpture or installation that combines handmade and mass-produced elements.
- Create an artwork, dance, or story, juxtaposing two or more kinds of movement in it. Share your work, and ask a partner to describe how the movements come together in it.



Sounds Like, 2013. Glazed ceramic on glazed kiln bricks, 107 x 17½ x 17 inches. Photo: Alan Wiener. Courtesy the artist and Sikkema Jenkins & Co. © Arlene Shechet

Born 1951, New York, New York

#### Education

BA, New York University MFA, Rhode Island School of Design

#### Lives and Works

New York, New York and Woodstock, New York

#### **About the Artist**

Fascinated by the way things are made, Arlene Shechet likens her studio to both farm and factory. Employing an experimental approach to **ceramic** sculpture, she tests the limits of gravity, color, and texture by pushing against the boundary of classical techniques, sometimes fusing her kiln-fired creations with complex plinths formed of wood, steel, and concrete. By incorporating casts of firebricks and porcelain slip molds into her sculptures (revealing the tools of industry), she reflects on and investigates the tradition of decorative arts. Variously sensual, humorous, and elegant, her clay-based vessels evoke the tension between control and chaos, beauty and ugliness, perfection and imperfection. Considering herself an **installation** artist who happens to make objects, Shechet focuses intently on ensuring that the display, sight lines, and relationships of the objects in her exhibitions change with every view while maintaining formal equilibrium.

#### **Teaching Connections**

Media and Materials

ceramic, installation, sculpture

Key Words and Ideas

**abstraction**, form, movement, perspective

#### Related Artists

David Altmejd, Lynda Benglis, Mark Dion, Gabriel Orozco, Allan McCollum, Josiah McElheny, Do-Ho Suh, Ursula von Rydingsvard This glossary includes both art and non-art terms. Many of these words have been defined in the context of art but also have nuanced meanings and additional significance. Additional vocabulary can be found on the website art21.org

#### abstraction

In visual art, the use of shape, color, and line as elements in and for themselves. The term also refers to artwork in which the artist has reduced natural appearances to simplified or nonrepresentational forms.

#### activism

Direct, vigorous action in support of or opposition to one side of a controversy, particularly with respect to social, political, or environmental issues.

#### aesthetic

Beautiful or pleasing in appearance. Aesthetics is the philosophy or academic study of beauty and taste in art. The term was first used by philosophers in the 18th century.

#### appropriation

The act of borrowing imagery or forms to create something new.

#### assemblage

A work of art made by grouping found or unrelated objects.

#### collaboration

A working arrangement between an artist and another person, group, or institution. Artists often work in collaboration with a variety of specialists, assistants, colleagues, and audiences.

#### collage

The process or product of creating an artwork by arranging and attaching to a backing various objects and materials, such as photographs, pieces of paper, or fabric, among others.

#### composition

The way in which an entire work is designed and organized. Composition also refers to a work of art, music, or literature.

#### conceptual art

A movement that emerged in the 1960s, which proposed that an artist's idea or concept of an artwork should take precedence over the aesthetic or material aspects of traditional works of art. Conceptual art can take many forms (such as photographs, texts, videos), and sometimes there is no art object at all. Emphasizing ideas and the way things are made more than how they look, conceptual art often raises questions about what a work of art can be.

#### convention

An established technique, practice, or device used in literature, the visual arts, or other disciplines.

#### craft

The family of artistic practices within the decorative arts that traditionally are defined by their relationship to functional or utilitarian products. Craft can also refer to the labor or skill of an artist or artisan.

#### culture

A system of beliefs, values, and practices that shape one's life; the customary beliefs shared by people in a time and place.

#### documentary

A work of art that provides a factual record or report about people, places, or events.

#### ephemera

Something of no lasting significance. This term also refers to paper items (posters, tickets, and the like) that were originally meant to be discarded after use but have since become collectibles. The root of the word is from the Greek *ephemeros*, lasting one day.

#### fabrication

The act of forming something into a whole by constructing, framing, or uniting its parts. The fabrication of a work of art often involves specialists and collaborators who work with artists to realize their work.

#### gesture

A movement of a part of the body to express an idea or meaning.

#### genre

A category of artistic composition, as in music or literature, characterized by a particular form, style, or subject matter.

#### icon

A symbol or image that represents an idea or object and has a particular meaning.

#### identity

The distinguishing characteristics that define how one views oneself, how others perceive you, and how society as a whole categorizes groups of people.

#### improvise

The act of creating and/or performing spontaneously or without preparation; to make or fabricate something out of what is conveniently at hand.

#### installation

A work of art created for a specific architectural situation; installations often engage multiple senses such as sight, smell, and hearing.

#### juxtaposition

The placement of two or more objects, ideas, or images close together or side by side, especially for comparison and contrast. This combination of elements may reveal new meaning and lead to the creation of a new object, idea, or image.

#### metapho

A relationship between disparate visual or verbal sources where one kind of object, idea, or image is used in place of another to suggest a likeness or analogy between them.

#### monument

A lasting reminder or of someone or something notable or great—most often a statue, building, or other structure erected to commemorate a person or event.

#### narrative

A written or artistic representation of a story, commentary, or series of events.

#### palimpsest

A surface comprised of successive layers and erasures over time, so that traces of information, material, and/or medium on the older surface remain visible despite the addition of new layers. The word comes from the Greek *palimsestos*, the scraping away of marks or writing from a parchment so that it can be written on again.

#### performance art

An art form, which may be public, private, or documented, that features an activity performed and/

#### popular culture

Literature, music, dance, theater, sports, and other aspects of social life, usually disseminated through mass media and distinguished by their widespread popularity across ethnic, social, and regional groups.

#### portraiture

The art of creating a graphic and detailed description, especially of a person.

#### process

The activities, procedures, and investigations engaged in by an artist in the course of making an artwork.

#### public art

Artwork designed specifically for, or placed in, public areas.

#### site-specific art

Artwork created especially for a particular place or location. Site-specific art can be permanent or impermanent.

#### social history

An area of study, considered by some to be a social science, that approaches history from the point of view of developing social trends. Social history is often described as history from below because it deals with the masses and how they, as opposed to their leaders, shape history.

#### symbolism

The practice of representing something by an image, sign, symbol, convention, or association.

#### tableau

A depiction of a scene from a story or from history, usually presented on stage by a group of costumed participants.

#### transcendence

The state of being beyond the range of normal perception, or of being free from the constraints of the material world.

#### vignette

A brief, evocative description or episode. A short descriptive literary sketch; an incident or scene in a play or movie.



## get involved

### art21.org

#### **Educator Workshops**

**ART21 Educators** A year-long professional development initiative designed to cultivate and support K-12 educators interested in bringing contemporary art, artists, and themes into their classrooms.

**ART21 Workshops** ART21 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 Educators or ART21 Workshops contact education@art21.org

#### **Screenings**

ART21 Access '14 Host a preview event for ART21's seventh broadcast season. ART21 offers preview DVDs and a project toolkit containing event suggestions and publicity materials. Museums, schools, community-based organizations, libraries, and individuals are encouraged to host events, inspire new audiences for contemporary art, and alert local communities about the Fall 2014 PBS broadcast.

**Independent Screenings** ART21 provides screening toolkits for every thematic episode presented in its seven broadcast seasons. Toolkits support individual and institutional screening and discussion forums.

For more information about hosting a screening contact access@art21.org

ART21 Education stills 33



133 West 25th Street, #3E New York, NY 10001

#### artists and themes season 1 to 7

Pepón Osorio

**Identity**Louise Bourgeois

#### Spirituality

James Turrell

#### Consumption

Matthew Barney Mel Chin

#### Stories

Do-Ho Suh Kara Walker

### Loss & Desire

Janine Antoni Gabriel Orozco Collier Schorr

### Humor

Eleanor Antin Walton Ford

#### Time

**Memory** Mike Kelley

#### Power

Krzysztof Wodiczko

Ellen Gallagher Jessica Stockholder

#### **Structures**

Matthew Ritchie Richard Tuttle Fred Wilson

#### Commissioned Video Art

Teresa Hubbard & Alexander Birchler

### Romance

Judy Pfaff Laurie Simmons

#### Protest

Jenny Holzer An-My Lê Nancy Spero

#### Paradox

Jennifer Allora & Mark Bradford

#### Ecology

#### Compassion

Doris Salcedo Carrie Mae Weems

## **Fantasy**

Mary Heilmann Jeff Koons Florian Maier-Aichen

#### Systems

Kimsooja Allan McCollum Julie Mehretu

### Transformation

Yinka Shonibare MBE

#### Balance

Rackstraw Downes

#### Boundaries

Lynda Benglis

#### Change

Catherine Opie

#### History

Mary Reid Kelley

#### Investigation

#### **Fiction**

Katharina Grosse

Tania Bruguera

#### Secrets

Arlene Shechet