

Three New Art21 Films Capture A Portrait of Contemporary American Experiences

Featured artists include Kara Walker, Jason Moran, Marcel Dzama, and Alex Da Corte



(NEW YORK — October 31, 2018) — Today, Art21 announced the premiere of **three new films** featuring four of today’s greatest innovators, each revealing unique and personal portraits of contemporary American culture. This newest batch of films from Art21’s ongoing *Extended Play* digital series provides viewers with intimate access to the creative process behind new and recent work by artists **Kara Walker, Jason Moran, Marcel Dzama, and Alex Da Corte**.

The first film is available to watch in full **today** at art21.org. Subsequent films will premiere across two Wednesdays in November.

Each new film in the series finds the artists responding to histories both personal and public. “The four artists featured in these films borrow from

American culture past and present to exercise their visions,” said Tina Kukielski, Art21 executive director and chief curator. “On the heels of an international television season, we return to documenting our current social climate, with an urgency to document and share this stunning collective portrait of American experiences.”

The series leads off with a film capturing an intimate discussion between **Kara Walker** and composer/musician **Jason Moran** on the occasion of their recent collaboration for the Prospect.4 triennial in New Orleans. In the second release, **Marcel Dzama** (November 14) investigates the evolution of the personally- and politically-influenced worlds captured in his paintings and drawings, tracing the artist’s relocation from Winnipeg to New York City. The final film follows **Alex Da Corte** (November 28) as he develops the video and sculptural elements of his monumental show-stopping film and sculptural commission for the 57th edition of the Carnegie International. From Fred Rogers, to Universal Classic Monsters, to a 19th century-inspired calliope, together these artists share an affinity and interest in remixing cultural icons.

Kara Walker and Jason Moran have both been previously featured by Art21. Marcel Dzama and Alex Da Corte each make their Art21 debuts with their respective films.

Following the September premiere of a new television season for PBS and the October launch of a new book of interviews, Art21 returns to its digital video programming with the release of these three short films. Film premieres from Art21’s digital series bookend the year-long celebration of the organization’s 21st anniversary.

All three films were produced by *Extended Play* series producer Ian Forster, whose recent work includes producing and directing the “Johannesburg” episode from the latest season of Art21’s *Art in the Twenty-First Century* television series.

Watch the first film of the series, “Kara Walker & Jason Moran: Sending Out A Signal,” today on art21.org.

Episode Guide

Kara Walker & Jason Moran (*October 31*)

In a candid one-on-one conversation, Kara Walker and composer/musician Jason Moran discuss their collaboration for the Prospect.4 triennial in New Orleans, “Katastwóf Karavan” (2018). Installed at Algiers Point on the bank of the Mississippi River and activated daily across three days in February 2018, the work featured a thirty-two-note steam calliope performed by Moran and housed in a wagon developed by Walker. A contemporary calliope, “Katastwóf Karavan” uses the mechanics of American manufacturing to uplift the voices it once suppressed.

Marcel Dzama (*November 14*)

From his home and studio in Brooklyn, Marcel Dzama discusses the evolution of his practice, spanning his time as a student in his native Winnipeg up to his more recent responses to U.S. politics and media. Drawing upon a mix of influences—from childhood monsters, like the Wolfman and Dracula, to the work of artists like Marcel Duchamp, William Blake, and Francis Picabia—Dzama creates unique worlds that are at once surreal and familiar, sweet and violent, chaotic and elegant.

Alex Da Corte (*November 28*)

Working in and around the Greater Philadelphia area, Alex Da Corte and his community of assistants create a video and sculptural commission for the 57th Carnegie International, currently on view in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. The epic installation blends art history with pop culture in 57 lovingly-handcrafted videos, which finds Da Corte exploring and embodying characters such as Mr. Rogers, the Wicked Witch, and puppeteer Carroll Spinney. Through the videos, as well as the neon-infused house-like structure in which the videos are screened, Da Corte explores his personal connection to home and family.

A Pioneer in Digital Filmmaking

Prefacing the 21st anniversary programming was a special series of five film premieres across Art21’s two digital series, *Extended Play* and *New York Close Up*. The five-film series demonstrated Art21’s ongoing commitment to digital-first video programming, underscoring the

nonprofit organization's position as the leading producer of films documenting the creative processes of today's artists.

Launched in March 2008, *Extended Play* is the first and longest-running digital film series committed to documenting the lives and works of contemporary artists. Through process-revealing footage and intimate interviews, *Extended Play* uncovers the provocative ideas and biographical anecdotes that inspire an artist's work from conceptualization, to creation, to presentation.

Initially introduced as a digital complement to the *Art in the Twenty-First Century* television series, *Extended Play's* scope and ambitions have since expanded. In 2018, the series achieved a new milestone by introducing an artist to the series roster not previously featured in another Art21 series, Jack Whitten. The series also holds the distinction of being granted exclusive access to major works in progress, including Julie Mehretu's historic commission for the atrium of the newly-reopened San Francisco Museum of Modern Art and Kara Walker's monumental public project at the former site of the Domino Sugar Factory in Brooklyn, NY.

Over 100 artists have been featured in the Extended Play series throughout its first 10 years, including Barbara Kruger, Sarah Sze, William Kentridge, Do Ho Suh, Cindy Sherman, Nancy Spero, Gabriel Orozco, Jeff Koons, Mike Kelley, Andrea Zittel, and Carrie Mae Weems, among others.

Now in its seventh year, Art21's celebrated digital series *New York Close Up* profiles young artists living and working in New York City during the first decade of their career. Since its inaugural film premiere in June 2011, the series has profiled over 30 artists in over 75 films, including Diana Al-Hadid, Lucas Blalock, Jamian Juliano-Villani, Kalup Linzy, Rashid Johnson, Keltie Ferris, LaToya Ruby Frazier, Mika Rottenberg, Jacolby Satterwhite, Erin Shirreff, and Mika Tajima, among others. In the past year, the series introduced six additional artists to its roster: Doreen Garner, Jordan Casteel, Aki Sasamoto, Meriem Bennani, Avery Singer, and Raúl de Nieves.

About Art21

Since 1997, Art21 has been recognized as a celebrated global leader in presenting thought-provoking and sophisticated content about contemporary art. It is the go-to place to learn firsthand about some of the

most interesting working artists today—from the artists themselves—and is responsible for introducing millions of people to contemporary art and artists. Founded on the belief that artists are role models for creative and critical thinking, Art21's mission aims to inspire a more creative and tolerant world through the works and words of contemporary artists.

Art21.org provides an unparalleled year-round, always-on look at working artists, a continuous digital presence for an organization that is widely recognized for a biennial television series. The Art21 video library houses over 50 hours of original video content—over 500 videos all open and free to the public. Reaching audiences of over 5 million a month, Art21's digital initiatives continue the organization's long-standing tradition of using the power of digital media to inspire audiences worldwide by exposing them to contemporary artists.

Through its education program, Art21 engages audiences in dialogue about the contemporary art and artists featured in Art21 films. Art21's educational initiatives include the Art21 Educators learning community, the production of interpretive resources, professional development workshops and lectures, and participatory programs and screening events.

To date, Art21's short form films have had over 50 film festival acceptances across the world and have been nominated for a Webby Award and won a Cine Golden Eagle.

Art21 programs are made possible through the generosity of The Anna Maria and Stephen Kellen Foundation; Agnes Gund; PBS; the Lambent Foundation Fund of the Tides Foundation; the National Endowment for the Arts; The Andreas Foundation; The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts; The Horace W. Goldsmith Foundation; and the Rockefeller Brothers Fund.

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