

Art21 Unveils Four New Films Devoted to Artists Motivated by Feminisms

New season opens today with a film featuring Loie Hollowell



Clockwise from top-left: Loie Hollowell, Guan Xiao, Rachel Rossin, Lynn Hershman Leeson. © Art21, Inc. 2021.

(NEW YORK — April 14, 2021) — Art21 introduced today a group of four new films comprising its second season of programming for 2021. Across **four consecutive Wednesdays**, Art21 will deliver four stories of artists whose practices address feminisms, freedoms, and the preciousness and precarity of life as an artist.

Starting today, each film will be released on **Wednesdays at 12:00 p.m. ET** on [Art21.org](https://www.art21.org), YouTube (youtube.com/art21org), and Vimeo (vimeo.com/art21).

Four artists—**Guan Xiao, Lynn Hershman Leeson, Loie Hollowell, and Rachel Rossin**—complicate public and private, tradition and innovation,

commanding transformative artworks in the face of social, generational, and individual adversities.

“To excel in life’s challenges in this moment requires resilience both personal and professional,” said [Tina Kukielski](#), the Susan Sollins Executive Director and Chief Curator of Art21. “These artists’ stories serve as a reminder that being an artist demands navigating the complexity of the system of art, its hegemonies and its opportunities.”

With today’s premiere of “[Loie Hollowell’s Transcendent Bodies](#),” the award-winning *New York Close Up* series releases its **milestone 100th film**. This coming June will mark **ten years** since the *New York Close Up* series made its debut.

All four films are among a year-long collection of releases that comprise Art21’s participation in the multi-institutional [Feminist Art Coalition](#) (FAC) initiative. FAC is a platform for art projects informed by feminisms, fostering collaborations between arts institutions that aim to make public their commitment to social justice and structural change.

Following the year’s [opening season this past January](#)—headlined by artists [Firelei Báez](#), [Abigail DeVille](#), [Shaun Leonardo](#), and [Michael Rakowitz](#)—the latest group of films arrives on the heels of record-breaking viewership for Art21’s productions, buoyed by nearly **three million annual views** across digital streaming platforms.

Art21’s latest offerings join over **65 hours of original video** in the Art21 library—the most comprehensive documentary film collection on today’s greatest artists—all available to stream free of charge at [Art21.org](#).

Spring 2021 Film Guide

Screeners available by request

Loie Hollowell

From the *New York Close Up* series; [Premieres today](#)

Inspired by her personal experiences as a mother and as a daughter, Loie Hollowell paints colorful organic shapes suggestive of human genitalia, sacred geometry, and primordial forms. Returning to her Queens studio following the birth of her daughter, Hollowell is driven to make work about

bodily experiences all the while questioning her own creative desires and assumptions.

Lynn Hershman Leeson

From the *Extended Play* series; Premieres April 21

Recalling her formative years as an artist in the 1960s and 1970s, pioneering multidisciplinary artist Lynn Hershman Leeson describes the suppression of her literal and figurative voice as motivation to make and show work. Hershman Leeson shares memories of moments that have shaped her practice, including a near-fatal complication during pregnancy, as well as being rejected by the museum system.

Guan Xiao

From the *Extended Play* series; Premieres April 28

Working on a series of sculptures in her Beijing studio, Guan Xiao challenges the expectations for social and political art. Examining a cultural and generational shift amongst Chinese artists and art patrons, Guan identifies a bellwether opportunity for breaking the expectations that have bound her and her peers for so long.

Rachel Rossin

From the *New York Close Up* series; Premieres May 5

At work on a group of plexiglass sculptures that form the physical component of an augmented reality experience, Rachel Rossin explores the tension of simultaneously operating in digital and physical spaces. A self-taught programmer, Rossin describes the ways that her sculptures, paintings, and virtual reality works reflect a desire for escape, safety, and neutrality.

New York Close Up—Celebrating Ten Years of New York Stories

Now entering its tenth year, Art21's celebrated *New York Close Up* series profiles early career artists living and working in New York City. Providing a unique window into the next wave of art-making in the city, Art21 collaborates with artists to tell stories about their creative processes, diverse backgrounds, and daily realities.

Since its inaugural film premiere in June 2011, the series has profiled almost 50 artists across 100 films, including **Rashid Johnson, Diana Al-Hadid, LaToya Ruby Frazier, Jacolby Satterwhite, Jamian Juliano-Villani, Kalup Linzy, Keltie Ferris, Mika Rottenberg, Erin Shirreff, Mika Tajima,** and **Lucas Blalock**, among others.

Loie Hollowell and **Rachel Rossin** join **Firelei Báez** and **Shaun Leonardo** as the latest artists to have *New York Close Up* debuts in 2021.

Other recent roster additions have included **Jes Fan, Maryam Hoseini, Dan Herschlein, Jordan Casteel, Meriem Bennani, Avery Singer,** and **Raúl de Nieves**.

Among the honors for *New York Close Up* are a Webby Award nomination, multiple Vimeo Staff Picks, and over 75 acceptances at film festivals worldwide including BlackStar, DC Shorts, DOC NYC, and Outfest Fusion.

New York Close Up is supported by The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts; and, in part, by public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council; Dawn and Chris Fleischner; and by individual contributors.

Extended Play—A Pioneering Digital Series

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 recent years, the series achieved a new milestone by chronicling artists not previously featured in other Art21 series, including **Luchita Hurtado, Jack Whitten, Marcel Dzama, Alex Da Corte, and Michael Rakowitz.**

Lynn Hershman Leeson and **Guan Xiao** each make their *Extended Play* series debuts with their forthcoming films. Both artists were previously featured on the ninth and tenth seasons, respectively, of the *Art in the Twenty-First Century* series.

The *Extended Play* series holds the distinction of being granted exclusive access to major works in progress, including **Julie Mehretu's** historic commission for the atrium of the recently-reopened San Francisco Museum of Modern Art and **Kara Walker's** monumental 2014 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, 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.

Extended Play is supported by The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts; and, in part, by public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council; the Art21 Contemporary Council; Dawn and Chris Fleischner; and by individual contributors.

Always on View

The Art21 film collection features **over 65 hours** of video content, all available to view **around the clock** and **free of charge** at **Art21.org** and **Art21.live**.

In addition to full episodes from each of the **ten seasons** produced to date of the Peabody Award-winning PBS-broadcast series, *Art in the Twenty-First Century*, the Art21 film collection is rounded out by over **300 films** across two digital series, *Extended Play* and *New York Close Up*—demonstrating Art21's ongoing commitment to **digital-first video**

programming, and underscoring the nonprofit organization's position as the **leading producer** of films documenting the creative processes of today's artists.

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 film library houses over 65 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, Art21 Ambassadors professional development workshops, the production of interpretive resources, editorial commissions written by educators, and participatory programs and screening events.

To date, Art21's digital films have received over 100 film festival acceptances and industry honors from across the world, including two Webby Award nominations, multiple Vimeo Staff Picks, and screenings at prestigious film festivals such as BlackStar, DOC NYC, and DC Shorts.

Art21 programs are made possible through the generosity of The Anna-Maria and Stephen Kellen Foundation; PBS; the Lambent Foundation Fund of the Tides Foundation; the B & M Wright Foundation; Dawn and Chris Fleischner; The David S. Howe Foundation; the National Endowment for the

art21

Arts; Jessica and Natan Bibliowicz; The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts; The New York Community Trust; Brenda Potter; Bloomberg Philanthropies; and Henri Lambert.

For a full list of Art21 supporters, please visit [Art21.org](https://art21.org).

###

Press Contact

Jonathan Munar
Director of Digital, Art21
press@art21.org