

# Four New Art21 Films Investigate the Relationship Between Memory and Materials

Wangechi Mutu among four artists to be featured in the new season, opening today



*Clockwise from top-left: Phyllida Barlow, Wangechi Mutu, Guadalupe Maravilla, and Adam Milner. © Art21, Inc. 2021.*

(NEW YORK — July 7, 2021) — Art21 introduced today a group of four new films comprising its third season of programming for 2021. Across **four consecutive Wednesdays**, Art21 will deliver four stories of artists whose practices investigate the complex interconnectedness between artistic materials and personal experiences.

Across the season, four artists—**Phyllida Barlow, Guadalupe Maravilla, Adam Milner, and Wangechi Mutu**—each challenge artmaking conventions, confronting tradition through explorations of memory, migration, and trauma.

The season **opens today** with a new film featuring Barlow. The remaining films will be released on **Wednesdays at 12:00 p.m. ET** on Art21.org, YouTube ([youtube.com/art21org](https://youtube.com/art21org)), and Vimeo ([vimeo.com/art21](https://vimeo.com/art21)).

“These four artists remind us that creative energy can transform elusive yet formative memories into something tangible,” said **Tina Kukielski**, the Susan Sollins Executive Director and Chief Curator of Art21. “The stories surrounding the works being made in these films build upon years of personal experiences whose moments can be shared and appreciated through material manifestations unfolding on screen.”

Mutu, as well as Maravilla and Milner, each make their **Art21 film debuts** with their respective releases this season—Mutu in the *Extended Play* series, Maravilla and Milner in the *New York Close Up* series. Barlow, whose upcoming film will be released as part of the *Extended Play* series, was previously featured in the 2020 season of the long-running television series, *Art in the Twenty-First Century*.

Art21’s first two programming seasons of 2021 included eight total films, headlined by artists **Firelei Báez, Abigail DeVille, Guan Xiao, Lynn Hershmann Leeson, Loie Hollowell, Shaun Leonardo, Michael Rakowitz, and Rachel Rossin**. The summer season arrives on the heels of record-breaking viewership for Art21’s productions, buoyed by over **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.

## Summer 2021 Film Guide

*Screeners available by request*

### **Phyllida Barlow**

From the *Extended Play* series; Premieres today

From her home studio in London, Barlow recalls her childhood, where she witnessed her mother’s ad-hoc way of making clothing and toys for her children. Her mother treated the materials of everyday domestic life as resources with endless potential, an attitude that has affected Barlow’s artmaking. Shown at a 2021 exhibition at Haus der Kunst in Munich,

Germany, Barlow's anti-monumental, yet enormous tilting and teetering sculptures are composed of nontraditional materials like cardboard, plywood, and colorful fabric.

### **Adam Milner**

From the *New York Close Up* series; Premieres July 14

Fascinated by our complicated relationships to objects, Adam Milner's practice involves collecting, arranging, combining, and releasing various mementos and detritus from domestic life. Touring some of Milner's most potent sites of inspiration—from neighborhood bodegas and thrift stores in Brooklyn, to the august Metropolitan Museum of Art in Manhattan—the film reflects the artist's own interest in blurring boundaries between high and low culture. Among the works featured are sculptures placed at thirteen different locations around New York City, which collectively comprise Milner's 2021 exhibition for the nomadic museum, Black Cube.

### **Wangechi Mutu**

From the *Extended Play* series; Premieres July 21

In her collages, drawings, sculptures, and films, Wangechi Mutu centers the female body to create powerful and self-possessed figures that are a hybrid of human, plant, animal, and machine forms. Shown at work from her Nairobi, Kenya studio, the artist samples from a diverse array of sources—from natural materials to fashion magazines, medical diagrams, and traditional African arts—to create otherworldly realms that examine cultural identity, the feminine, colonial history, and global consumption. Included in the film are works currently on view at the Legion of Honor museum in San Francisco, California.

### **Guadalupe Maravilla**

From the *New York Close Up* series; Premieres July 28

Evoking traumas from experiences of migration and cancer survival, Guadalupe Maravilla generates sound-draped sculptural environments to promote self healing and community empowerment. Shown at work in the artist's Brooklyn studio, Maravilla embarks on creating their first outdoor sculpture for an exhibition at Socrates Sculpture Park in Queens, New York. The resulting installation, the latest in the artist's "Disease Throwers"

series, is activated by Maravilla through a series of participatory sound bath events, which will continue at the park throughout 2021.

In addition to Art21's channels, the film featuring Maravilla will also be available in the Bloomberg Connects app.

## *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.

**Phyllida Barlow** and **Wangechi Mutu** each make their *Extended Play* series debuts with their forthcoming films. Barlow was previously featured in the tenth season of the long-running *Art in the Twenty-First Century* series. This is Mutu's first film with Art21. Both films are among a year-long collection of releases that comprise Art21's participation in the multi-institutional Feminist Art Coalition (FAC) initiative—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.

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**.

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.

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

Now in 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.

**Guadalupe Maravilla and Adam Milner** join **Firelei Báez, Loie Hollowell, Shaun Leonardo, and Rachel Rossin** 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.

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

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

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