

Five Artists Explore Their Artistic Inheritances in Five New Art21 Films

New films feature Tanya Aguiñiga, John Akomfrah, Doreen Garner, Kameelah Janan Rasheed, and Salman Toor



Clockwise from top-left: Kameelah Janan Rasheed, John Akomfrah, Salman Toor, Doreen Garner, and Tanya Aguiñiga.
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(NEW YORK — October 20, 2021) — Art21 revealed today its **final programming season** for 2021, comprising **five new films** across its *Extended Play* and *New York Close Up* series. Spanning **five consecutive Wednesdays**, Art21 will deliver stories that find artists contemplating their unique positioning within the art historical canon.

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

Across the new season, five artists—**Tanya Aguiñiga**, **John Akomfrah**, **Doreen Garner**, Rasheed, and **Salman Toor**—each find a place amongst familial and creative lineages. Through varied practices—including painting (Toor), audiovisual (Akomfrah), craft (Aguiñiga), sculpture and tattooing (Garner), and text-based installation (Rasheed)—each featured subject considers their own journey towards becoming an artist.

“Art history is messy. These artists are not afraid to examine, confront, and argue with that history,” said [Tina Kukielski](#), the Susan Sollins Executive Director and Chief Curator of Art21. “These five stories move us to become conscious of the personal and global factors that drive creative legacies.”

Rasheed and Toor each make their Art21 debuts with their respective releases, both in the *New York Close Up* series. Garner makes her third appearance in the *New York Close Up* series. This is the first appearance in the *Extended Play* series for Aguiñiga and Akomfrah; both were initially featured by Art21 in the 2020 season of the *Art in the Twenty-First Century* television series.

Art21’s three previous programming seasons of 2021 included twelve films, headlined by artists [Firelei Báez](#), [Phyllida Barlow](#), [Abigail DeVille](#), [Guan Xiao](#), [Lynn Hershman Leeson](#), [Loie Hollowell](#), [Shaun Leonardo](#), [Guadalupe Maravilla](#), [Adam Milner](#), [Wangechi Mutu](#), [Michael Rakowitz](#), and [Rachel Rossin](#). The fall 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](#).

Fall 2021 Film Guide

Screeners available by request

Kameelah Janan Rasheed

From the *New York Close Up* series; Premieres today

A self-described “learner,” immersed in books since childhood, text-based artist Kameelah Janan Rasheed is uniquely fascinated with the written word and its power to both define and destabilize how we understand the

world. From her book-filled studio in Brooklyn, New York, Rasheed reveals her expansive ideas and miniaturist process.

Tanya Aguiñiga

From the *Extended Play* series; Premieres October 27

Challenging perceived hierarchies about art and craft, Tanya Aguiñiga invokes a working-class approach while maintaining a high level of artistry. Shown at work in and around her studio in Los Angeles, California, Aguiñiga revisits the paths that place her work amongst a history of creative traditions.

Doreen Garner

From the *New York Close Up* series; Premieres November 3

Journeying across Brooklyn, New York—from the Coney Island boardwalk to the meadows of Prospect Park—Doreen Garner navigates the different communities of her personal and working lives. Arriving at spiritual and social revelations during the pandemic-related lockdown, Garner meditates on a history of portrayals of the Black body, leading to a transformation on how the artist approaches corporeal imagery in her work.

John Akomfrah

From the *Extended Play* series; Premieres November 10

Drawn to the redemptive power of sound and music, filmmaker John Akomfrah investigates the exchange between the sonic and visual components of his multichannel video installations. Speaking from his London studio, Akomfrah recalls his transformative encounters with music in both nightclub and classical settings.

Salman Toor

From the *New York Close Up* series; Premieres November 10

Raised in a conservative environment in Pakistan, Salman Toor creates paintings that investigate extreme freedoms. Crouched on the floor of his Brooklyn, New York studio, Toor prepares work to be placed alongside paintings by Johannes Vermeer for a recent exhibition at the Frick Collection in Manhattan.

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 **over 50 artists** across **more than 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.

Salman Toor joins **Firelei Báez, Loie Hollowell, Shaun Leonardo, Guadalupe Maravilla, Adam Milner,** and **Rachel Rossin** as the latest artists to have *New York Close Up* debuts in 2021. **Doreen Garner** makes her third appearance in the series with the fall 2021 release.

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.

Tanya Aguiñiga and **John Akomfrah** each make their *Extended Play* series debuts with their forthcoming films. Both artists were previously featured in the tenth season of the long-running *Art in the Twenty-First Century* series, which aired in fall 2020.

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 renovated 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 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.

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