

SCREENING SOCIETY

Art21's Screening Society is a free global screening program in support of the award-winning television series, *Art in the Twenty-First Century*. With each new season, Art21 invites a wide variety of partners—schools, universities, libraries, museums, nonprofit organizations, galleries, arts and cultural spaces, community centers, and more—to screen one of the season's episodes.

This guide offers hosts and participants information about the episodes and the featured artists, as well as suggestions for further engagement through discussion questions and activities.

For more information, resources, and educational opportunities, please visit Art21.org.

ABOUT ART21

Art21 is a celebrated global leader in presenting thought-provoking and sophisticated content about contemporary art—a preeminent resource for learning first-hand from the artists of our time. Art21's mission is to inspire a more creative world through the works and words of contemporary artists.

A nonprofit organization, Art21 provides unparalleled access to artists' voices, using the power of digital media to introduce diverse audiences around the world to contemporary art and artists. For more than two decades, Art21 has changed the paradigm for teaching and learning about the creative process.

ART IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

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 and their current bodies of work.

Through in-depth profiles and interviews, the series reveals the inspiration, vision, and techniques behind the creative works of some of today's most accomplished contemporary artists. Art21 travels across the country and abroad to film contemporary artists—from painters and photographers to installation artists, video artists, and sound artists—in their own spaces and in their own words. The result is a unique opportunity to experience first-hand the complexity of the artistic processes—from inception to finished product—behind today's most thought-provoking art.

Eleven seasons have been produced for PBS (2001, 2003, 2005, 2007, 2009, 2012, 2014, 2016, 2018, 2020, 2023).

CREDIT LINE

When hosting an Art21 screening, please use the following credit line in publications associated with your event:

This event is presented in collaboration with Art21, a nonprofit global leader in art education, producing preeminent films about today's leading visual artists and education programs that inspire creativity worldwide.

Cover: Tauba Auerbach and Cameron Mesirow playing the *Auerglass Organ*. Production still from the *Art in the Twenty-First Century* Season 11 episode, "Bodies of Knowledge."

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EPISODE SYNOPSIS: BODIES OF KNOWLEDGE

The artists in “Bodies of Knowledge” are expert investigators—exploring new fields with excitement and curiosity, discovering new ways of understanding ourselves, and developing new methods of inquiry that expand our vision of the world. Featuring Tauba Auerbach, Guerrilla Girls, Hank Willis Thomas, and Anicka Yi, this hour follows three artists and a collective as they explore varied systems of sensing, representing, and interpreting that shape our perceptions. In their practices, these artists push against the normative boundaries that typically define expertise. They create their own fields of study and invite collaborators and consultants with backgrounds in art, music, science, technology, mathematics, political action, and more into their studios. Their works address what is overlooked, underestimated, and misunderstood, asking audiences to pay closer attention and establishing new grounds to do so. These artists create bodies of knowledge in their pursuit of deeper truths, and they divulge their findings through their artistic practices.



GUERRILLA GIRLS

Established: 1985; New York, NY

Working across various media, the collective challenges the systems and individuals perpetuating discrimination and inequality in the art world by publicly sharing data and statistics about the representation of women and artists of color in commercial and institutional art spaces. Embracing the disruptive, confrontational, and irreverent, Guerrilla Girls draw from street art and the legacies of feminist activism to launch their critique of the art world.



ANICKA YI

Born: 1971; Seoul, South Korea

Yi works with unexpected and unpredictable materials, ranging from bacteria to tempura batter to artificial intelligence, creating works that embrace ephemerality and challenge our expectations and biases. Using tools and techniques from varied disciplines, Yi's practice manifests our culture's fictions, fears, and possible futures, asking where they might come from and how we might actualize or move beyond them.



HANK WILLIS THOMAS

Born: 1976; Plainfield, NJ

Thomas' work traces a line between the past and the present, using photography and sculpture to call viewers' attention to how context shapes one's understanding of the world around them. Appropriating recognizable photographs, gestures, and iconography while using a variety of strategies to move viewers with and around his works, the artist weaves together narratives that reframe the present by more fully examining our history.



TAUBA AUERBACH

Born: 1981; San Francisco, CA

Interested in the relationships between materials, ideas, and people, Auerbach examines connective tissues and structures using a wide variety of materials and processes. Their practice weaves bodily craft traditions with abstract theory to create drawings, paintings, sculptures, and more that expand our comprehension of how the world is structured and connected.

“My work deals a lot with what it means that things are perpetually blossoming and decaying. Change is the most constant form that we can acknowledge and embrace.”

— Anicka Yi

FURTHER ENGAGEMENT

After viewing the episode, use the following suggestions to elicit conversation and connection. Whether virtually or in person, participants can engage with the film in a variety of ways using a broad range of platforms. Please choose the questions and suggestions that best connect with your community.

DISCUSS THE EPISODE

- ☐ How do these artists gain knowledge? Where do they draw inspiration from?
- ☐ List some of the materials these artists use. What do these materials say about the questions contemporary artists are asking? What do they want the audience to consider?

DISCUSS THE ARTISTS

- ☐ Guerrilla Girls confront power dynamics in the art world. What problems are they pointing out? How did they confront those issues? What aspects of their methods were successful? Reflecting on the past thirty years, what kinds of things have changed as a result of their work?
- ☐ Anicka Yi states “my work deals a lot with what it means that things are perpetually blossoming and decaying. Change is the most constant form that we can acknowledge and embrace.” How is change or impermanence a theme of her work? What does Yi say about the current anxiety regarding technology?
- ☐ Hank Willis Thomas presents new ways to look at familiar images of sports, history, and current events. How does his work complicate or deepen the audience's understanding of these seemingly familiar people and events?
- ☐ Tauba Auerbach uses the body to inform what they know about art and life. How does the artist use the body in their work?

GO FURTHER

- ☐ Prompt the audience to remember a moment they loved learning and what they learned in that exchange. What were the details surrounding that event (inside or outside, alone or with others, etc.)?
- ☐ Ask participants to reflect on something their body does automatically (morning stretch, golf swing, kitchen technique, running or swimming pose, etc.). Then ask those comfortable to demonstrate the action and share how it feels to know this particular motion innately.

Keep in touch: www.art21.org

Social Media: [@art21](https://twitter.com/art21)