

SCREENING SOCIETY

Art21's Screening Society is a program that welcomes local communities to gather and watch films about art together. By providing free access to documentary films about contemporary artists, Screening Society promotes conversation, inspires creative thinking, and broadens engagement with contemporary art.

This guide offers hosts and participants information about the films 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. A nonprofit organization, Art21's mission is to educate and expand access to contemporary art through the production of documentary films, resources, and public programs.

CREDIT LINE

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

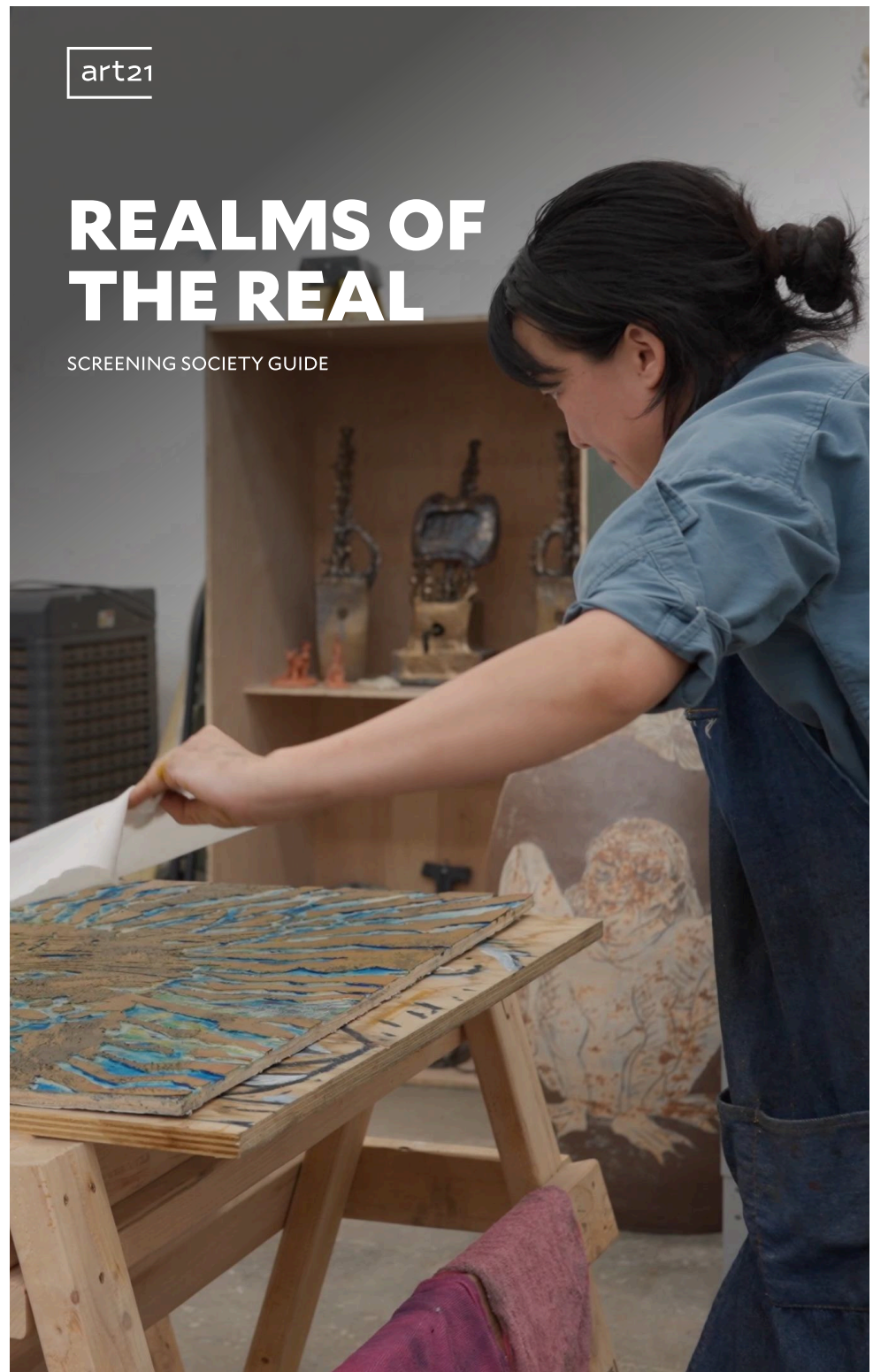
This event is presented in collaboration with Art21. For more information, visit art21.org.

Artists & the Unknown

Art21's second compendium of artist interviews explores how we use the randomness, complexity, and unknowability of life to push the boundaries of art and culture.



Available at shop.art21.org



EPISODE SYNOPSIS

The internationally acclaimed artists in “Realms of the Real” conduct extensive historical research, examine the nuances of culture and identity, and explore the boundaries of art and science to create worlds of fantasy and fiction that expand our understanding of ourselves and our world. These four artists expand on the realities of shared history and experience to create fantastical and speculative worlds, offering new possibilities for culture, identity, and the future.



RAGNAR KJARTANSSON

Born 1976; Reykjavík, Iceland

Through performance, music, video, drawing, painting, and sculpture, Kjartansson explores humanity’s fundamental concerns, from myth-making and national identity to love and beauty. Engaging with the history of music, television, and performance, the artist employs simple yet effective strategies, such as repetition and extended duration, to transform everyday experiences into profound works of art that resonate with the human condition.



CANDICE LIN

Born 1979; Concord, Massachusetts

In her research-based practice, Lin works with a wide variety of materials driven by a deep interest in their histories and offers alternative understandings of society and ourselves. Equally engaging historical fact and speculation, the artist gives voice to overlooked perspectives, creating visceral and sensorial experiences through sculptures, videos, texts, paintings, and installations.



TOMÁS SARACENO

Born 1973; Tucumán, Argentina

Saraceno proposes more just and eco-social ways of experiencing and inhabiting our environment through interactive artworks that bridge architecture, engineering, and sculpture. Uniquely inspired by the structures and behaviors of the more-than-human world, the artist often embraces a collaborative ethos working with specialists across varied fields. In particular, Saraceno studies and replicates the behaviors of spiders to gain a deeper understanding of our collective existence and to imagine new ways of coexisting.



NJIDEKA AKUNYILI CROSBY

Born 1983; Enugu, Nigeria

Akunyili Crosby uses painting, drawing, printmaking, and collage to reflect the complex construction of her own identity and those around her. Layering paintings with material from her ever-growing personal archive of Nigerian magazines, album covers, traditional Igbo patterns, and her own photographs, the artist creates a visual language that celebrates the evolving cultural, social, and individual dynamics of diaspora.

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 films 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

- Several artists in the episode draw inspiration from the natural world, such as the climate, animals, and different ecosystems. Why might an artist be interested in exploring the environment today?
- Make note of how artists throughout the episode describe or depict a “realm.” How are their interpretations different or similar?
- What role does collaboration play in the work of these artists? Consider its role in the artmaking process, research, and the final work.

GO FURTHER

- How can an artwork represent a relationship? Drawing inspiration from Akunyili Crosby and Kjartansson and their work with their respective family members, have the audience work with a partner to discuss a relationship important to them. Then have each person make a drawing of the ideas and concepts that represent the relationship. Avoid making a portrait or figuration.
 - What is the history of your favorite artmaking material or tool? Have attendees spend 10-15 minutes doing research on their phone or another device to learn more about their chosen material or tool (consider where it comes from, how it was made, and how it became an artmaking device). If time allows, have participants do a brief flash presentation on the two most interesting things they learned.
 - If you could design a utopian office/workplace, what would it look and feel like? Find other attendees that work in a similar environment as you and draw a design plan of a new realm for your work place. Begin the project by asking each other, “What is a utopian workplace?”
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