THE WHITNEY ANNOUNCES 2020 EXHIBITION SCHEDULE

New York, November 19, 2019—Announcing the schedule for 2020 at the Whitney Museum of American Art, Scott Rothkopf, Senior Deputy Director and Nancy and Steve Crown Family Chief Curator, noted: “In 2020 the Whitney will celebrate its ninetieth anniversary and fifth year downtown, so we’ve created a program that truly honors the spirit of artistic innovation both past and present. We remain focused on supporting emerging and midcareer artists, while finding fresh relevance in historical surveys from across the twentieth century. Also turning ninety, Jasper Johns closes out the year with an unprecedented retrospective that will reveal this American legend as never before to a new generation of audiences.”

On February 17 the Museum opens *Vida Americana: Mexican Muralists Remake American Art, 1925–1945*, a major historical look at the transformative impact of Mexican artists on the direction of American art from the mid-1920s until the end of World War II. On October 28, in collaboration with the Philadelphia Museum of Art, a landmark retrospective of the work of Jasper Johns goes on view simultaneously at both museums, paying tribute to the foremost living American artist. In addition, the Whitney will devote exhibitions to Julie Mehretu and Dawoud Bey, prominent midcareer artists. The Mehretu exhibition, co-organized by the Whitney with the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, encompasses over two decades of the artist’s work, presenting the most comprehensive overview of her practice to date. In November, Dawoud Bey, one of the leading photographers of his generation, will receive his first full-scale retrospective, co-organized by the Whitney and the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art.

The Museum will also present *Agnes Pelton: Desert Transcendentalist*—organized by the Phoenix Art Museum—the first exhibition of work by the visionary symbolist in nearly a quarter century, and *Working Together: The Photographers of the Kamoinge Workshop*, an unprecedented exhibition organized by the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, which chronicles the formative years of this collective of Black photographers who lived and worked in New York City. The year will also bring a range of focused exhibitions dedicated to emerging and midcareer artists, including Darren Bader, Jill Mulleady, Cauleen Smith, and Salman Toor, as well as Dave McKenzie and My Barbarian, who continue the Whitney’s commitment to performance and its many forms.

This September the Museum also will unveil David Hammons’s monumental public art installation *Day’s End* on Gansevoort Peninsula, across the street from the Whitney. The debut of this public artwork will be preceded by an exhibition entitled *Around Day’s End: Downtown New York, 1970–1986*, which will present a selection of works from the Museum’s collection related to the seminal work that inspired Hammons’s sculpture: Gordon Matta-Clark’s *Day’s End* (1975).

MAJOR EXHIBITIONS AND EVENTS

**Vida Americana: Mexican Muralists Remake American Art, 1925–1945**
February 17–May 17, 2020

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The cultural renaissance that emerged in Mexico in 1920 at the end of that country’s revolution dramatically changed art not just in Mexico but also in the United States. With approximately 200 works by sixty American and Mexican artists, Vida Americana reorients art history, acknowledging the wide-ranging and profound influence of Mexico’s three leading muralists—José Clemente Orozco, David Alfaro Siqueiros, and Diego Rivera—on the style, subject matter, and ideology of art in the United States made between 1925 and 1945. By presenting the art of the Mexican muralists alongside that of their American contemporaries, the exhibition reveals the seismic impact of Mexican art, particularly on those looking for inspiration and models beyond European modernism and the School of Paris.

Works by both well-known and underrecognized American artists will be exhibited, including Thomas Hart Benton, Elizabeth Catlett, Aaron Douglas, Marion Greenwood, Philip Guston, Eitarō Ishigaki, Jacob Lawrence, Isamu Noguchi, Jackson Pollock, Ben Shahn, Thelma Johnson Streat, Charles White, and Hale Woodruff. In addition to Orozco, Rivera, and Siqueiros, other key Mexican artists in the exhibition include Miguel Covarrubias, Maria Izquierdo, Frida Kahlo, Mardonio Magaña, Alfredo Ramos Martinez, and Rufino Tamayo.

Organized by Barbara Haskell, curator, with Marcela Guerrero, assistant curator; Sarah Humphreville, senior curatorial assistant; and Alana Hernandez, former curatorial project assistant.

Julie Mehretu
June 26–September 20, 2020

This midcareer survey of Julie Mehretu (b. 1970; Addis Ababa, Ethiopia), co-organized by the Whitney with the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA), covers over two decades of the artist’s career and presents the most comprehensive overview of her practice to date. Featuring approximately forty works on paper and more than thirty paintings dating from 1996 to today, the exhibition includes works ranging from her early focus on drawing and mapping to her more recent introduction of bold gestures, saturated color, and figuration. The exhibition will showcase her commitment to interrogating the histories of art, architecture, and past civilizations alongside themes of migration, revolution, climate change, and global capitalism in the contemporary moment. Julie Mehretu is on view at LACMA through May 2020, and following its presentation at the Whitney from June 26 through September 20, 2020, the exhibition will travel to the High Museum of Art, Atlanta, GA (October 24, 2020–January 31, 2021), and the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, MN (March 13–July 11, 2021).

Julie Mehretu is co-organized by the Whitney and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. The exhibition is curated by Christine Y. Kim, associate curator in contemporary art at LACMA, with Rujeko Hockley, assistant curator at the Whitney.
Jasper Johns
Opens October 28, 2020

Jasper Johns (b. 1930) is arguably the most influential living American artist. Over the past sixty-five years, he has produced a radical and varied body of work marked by constant reinvention. In an unprecedented collaboration, the Philadelphia Museum of Art and the Whitney will stage a retrospective of Johns’s career simultaneously across the two museums, featuring paintings, sculptures, drawings, and prints, many shown publicly for the first time. Inspired by the artist’s long-standing fascination with mirroring and doubles, the two halves of the exhibition will act as reflections of one another, spotlighting themes, methods, and images that echo across the two venues. A visit to one museum or the other will provide a vivid chronological survey; a visit to both will offer an innovative and immersive exploration of the many phases, facets, and masterworks of Johns’s still-evolving career.

This exhibition is co-organized by the Whitney Museum of American Art and the Philadelphia Museum of Art. The organizing curators are Scott Rothkopf, Senior Deputy Director and Nancy and Steve Crown Family Chief Curator, the Whitney Museum of American Art, and Carlos Basualdo, The Keith L. and Katherine Sachs Senior Curator of Contemporary Art, the Philadelphia Museum of Art.

Public Art Project: David Hammons: Day’s End
Opens September 2020

Day’s End, a public art project by the immensely influential New York-based artist David Hammons (b. 1943), derives its inspiration and name from Gordon Matta-Clark’s 1975 artwork in which he cut five openings into the original Pier 52 shed. Developed in collaboration with the Hudson River Park Trust, Hammons’s artwork will be an open structure that follows the outline, dimensions, and location of the original shed—and like Matta-Clark’s work, it will offer an extraordinary place to experience the waterfront and view the sunset. Affixed to the shore on the south edge of Gansevoort Peninsula, the structure will extend over the water, employing the thinnest possible support system. It will appear evanescent and ethereal, seeming to shimmer and almost disappear, changing with the light of day and atmospheric conditions. Hammons’s Day’s End also alludes to the history of New
York’s waterfront—from the heyday of its shipping industry to the reclaimed piers that became a gathering place for the gay community. Open to everyone, the artwork will allow easy access to the river’s edge.

MORE EXHIBITIONS IN 2020

**fruits, vegetables; fruit and vegetable salad**
January 15–February 16, 2020

![Image of fruits, vegetables; fruit and vegetable salad](image1)


In *fruits, vegetables; fruit and vegetable salad*, an untitled work by Darren Bader (b. 1978), on view for the first time since entering the Museum’s collection, stands alone in the Museum’s eighth floor galleries. Fresh fruits and vegetables—“nature’s impeccable sculpture,” according to Bader—are presented as formal objects on pedestals. Before over-ripening, the produce is removed from the pedestals by museum staff and is then chopped, sliced, shaved, and diced into a salad. Visitors are invited to eat the salad and experience the fruits and vegetables as both art objects and food. The artwork is then refreshed with a new selection of fruits and vegetables.

The exhibition is organized by Christie Mitchell, senior curatorial assistant.

**Cauleen Smith: Mutualities**
February 17–May 17, 2020

![Image of Cauleen Smith and dancers](image2)


This exhibition is the first solo New York presentation of multi-disciplinary artist Cauleen Smith (b. 1967), whose work, which was featured in the 2017 Whitney Biennial, draws on elements of poetry, science fiction, and non-Western cosmologies to reflect on Afro-diasporic histories and new models of self-reliance and agency. The exhibition features two recent films, newly acquired for the Whitney’s collection, in an installation that reimagines the future as a utopian space of care, acceptance, and mutuality. In *Sojourner*, women carry six banners bearing words by the jazz composer and spiritual leader Alice Coltrane, whose music forms the soundtrack for both films. The women walk in procession through locations including Noah Purifoy’s Outdoor Art Museum in Joshua Tree. *Pilgrim* traces the artist’s pilgrimage to Coltrane’s ashram, Watts Towers in Los Angeles, and Rebecca Cox Jackson’s Shaker communities in Philadelphia and Watervliet. In both films, Smith uses the camera and light as improvisational instruments to reveal the power of invention and generosity as resources to transform and rebuild.

Concurrent with Cauleen Smith: Mutualities, from March 5 through May 13, High Line Art will present Signals from Here, an exhibition of Cauleen Smith’s video work. Screening evenings on the park at 14th Street, the program includes Three Songs About Liberation (2017), Crow Requiem (2015), Lessons in Semaphore (2015), H-E-L-L-O (2014), and Songs for Earth and Folk (2013).

Cauleen Smith: Mutualities is organized by Chrissie Iles, Anne & Joel Ehrenkranz Curator, with Clémence White, senior curatorial assistant.
Based in Los Angeles, Jill Mulready (b. 1980; Montevideo, Uruguay) makes figurative, narrative paintings often with fantastical, surreal elements. Part of a series of public art installations, organized by the Whitney in partnership with TF Cornerstone and High Line Art, Mulready’s work will be installed on the façade of 95 Horatio Street, across the street from the Whitney and the High Line on the corner of Gansevoort and Washington Street. For Mulready, ideas and imagery drawn from both contemporary life and the history of painting are equally significant influences that she adeptly fuses within her work. For a recent cycle of paintings, Mulready imaginatively combined her interest in the work of early twentieth century painter Edvard Munch, using his paintings as a creative springboard for her surreal world-making, ultimately suggesting the possibility of the co-existence of multiple temporalities in a single composition. Combining this history with contemporary references to violence and our ongoing existential struggle, Mulready acknowledges our collective anxiety about violence in the world and what this means for our sense of personal vulnerability.

_Jill Mulready_ is organized by Jane Panetta, Curator and Director of the Collection.

**Agnes Pelton: Desert Transcendentalist**  
March 13–June 21, 2020

Agnes Pelton (1881–1961) was a visionary symbolist who depicted the spiritual reality she experienced in moments of meditative stillness. Art for her was a discipline through which she gave form to her vision of a higher consciousness within the universe. Using an abstract vocabulary of curvilinear, biomorphic forms and delicate, shimmering veils of light, she portrayed her awareness of a world that lay behind physical appearances—a world of benevolent, disembodied energies animating and protecting life. Pelton’s isolation from the mainstream art world meant that her paintings were relatively unknown during her lifetime and in the decades thereafter. This exhibition of approximately forty-five works, ranging from 1917 to 1960, forefronts a little-known artist whose luminous, abstract images of transcendence are only now being fully recognized.

_**Agnes Pelton: Desert Transcendentalist**_ is organized by the Phoenix Art Museum, and curated by Gilbert Vicario, The Selig Family Chief Curator. The installation at the Whitney Museum is overseen by Barbara Haskell, curator, with Sarah Humphreville, senior curatorial assistant.
Salman Toor: How Will I Know
March 20–July 5, 2020

For his first museum solo exhibition, Salman Toor (b. 1983; Lahore, Pakistan) presents new and recent oil paintings. Known for his small-scale figurative works that combine academic technique and a quick, sketchlike style, Toor offers intimate views into the imagined lives of young, queer Brown men residing between New York City and South Asia. Recurring color palettes and references to art history heighten the emotional impact of Toor’s paintings and add a fantastical element to his narratives drawn from lived experience. Taken as a whole, Toor’s paintings consider vulnerability within contemporary public and private life and the notion of community in the context of queer, diasporic identity.

Salman Toor: How Will I Know is organized by Christopher Y. Lew, Nancy and Fred Poses Curator, and Ambika Trasi, curatorial assistant.

Dave McKenzie: The Story I Tell Myself
April–May 2020

Dave McKenzie (b. 1977; Kingston, Jamaica) draws inspiration for his new Whitney commission, Disturbing the View, from entrepreneurial window washers common in many American urban centers, including New York City. After training with professional window cleaners, whose labor is often invisible to the public, McKenzie will choreograph a circuitous path throughout the Museum, at times suspended from a harness or perched on a ladder, as he soaps and cleans the windows, momentarily disrupting the view as he places himself into the scenes of the Museum’s daily rhythm.

Parallel to the new live work is an exhibition that features McKenzie’s performances for the camera and documentation of liveart. This context-setting presentation juxtaposes sculpture, photographs, and video drawn primarily from the Whitney’s collection and archives of artists who have informed the concepts, gestures, and sensibilities in McKenzie’s art. Together the performance commission and accompanying exhibition illuminate McKenzie’s characteristically humorous approach to art-making, and how he engages with and questions ideas, people, and images using his principal tool—the body.

Dave McKenzie: The Story I Tell Myself is organized by Adrienne Edwards, Engell Speyer Family Curator and Curator of Performance.
**Prints from Everyday Objects**
June–September 2020


This exhibition looks at the creative and irreverent ways that artists have employed the ordinary objects around them to make prints. Rather than etch a metal plate or carve into a block of wood, these artists work directly with the stuff of their environment—manhole covers, nylon stockings, cassette tape leader, and even a slice of prosciutto—to capture surface impressions that defamiliarize their quotidian subjects and transform them into resonant abstractions of texture, pattern, and line. Drawing from the Whitney's rich holdings of works on paper, the exhibition brings together prints from the 1950s through today and highlights a range of techniques, from street rubbings and photocopies to collagraphics and soft-ground etchings. This cross-generational presentation will feature works by Sari Dienes, Pati Hill, Virginia Overton, and Julia Phillips, among others, including several recent acquisitions.

Organized by Kim Conaty, Steven and Ann Ames Curator of Drawings and Prints.

**Working Together: The Photographers of the Kamoinge Workshop**
July–October 2020

Anthony Barboza, *Kamoinge Portrait*, 1973, Digital print, Sheet: 20 1/16" × 24" in (50.96 × 60.96 cm) Image: 18" × 20" in (45.72 × 50.8 cm) Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Eric and Jeanette Lipman Fund © Anthony Barboza photog

*Working Together* is an unprecedented exhibition that chronicles the formative years of the Kamoinge Workshop, a collective of Black photographers established in New York City in 1963. The word “Kamoinge” (Kikuyu for “a group of people acting together”) reflects the ideal that animated the collective. In the early years, at a time of dramatic social upheaval, members met regularly to show and discuss each other’s work and to share their critical perspectives, technical and professional experience, and friendship. Deeply committed to photography’s power as an art form, they boldly and inventively depicted their communities as they saw and participated in them, rather than as they were often portrayed. This presentation focuses on the influential work of early Kamoinge members during the first two decades of the collective. It includes approximately 140 photographs by fifteen members: Anthony Barboza, Adger Cowans, Daniel Dawson, Roy DeCarava, Louis Draper, Al Fennar, Ray Francis, Herman Howard, Jimmie Mannas, Herb Randall, Herb Robinson, Beuford Smith, Ming Smith, Shawn Walker, and Calvin Wilson. The photographs provide a powerful and poetic perspective of the 1960s and 1970s during the heart of the Black Arts Movement.
Working Together: The Photographers of the Kamoinge Workshop is organized by Dr. Sarah Eckhardt, associate curator of modern and contemporary art at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts. The installation at the Whitney is overseen by Carrie Springer, assistant curator, with Nectar Knuckles, curatorial project associate.

July–October 2020

As a prelude to the unveiling of David Hammons’s Day’s End, the Whitney will present a selection from the Museum’s permanent collection related to the seminal work that inspired Hammons’s sculpture: Gordon Matta-Clark’s Day’s End (1975). The exhibition will feature approximately fifteen artists, including Joan Jonas, Dawoud Bey, Alvin Baltrop, Jimmy Wright, and Martha Rosler, along with Matta-Clark, who worked in the overlapping downtown New York milieu of the 1970s and early 1980s and whose works embody various ideas of artistic intervention into the urban fabric of New York City.

This exhibition is organized by Laura Phipps, assistant curator, with Christie Mitchell, senior curatorial assistant.

My Barbarian
Opens September 2020

On the occasion of their twentieth anniversary, My Barbarian presents a two-part survey of their work. One part is a live exhibition that will feature monthly performances reimagining iconic shows representative of the group’s array of theatrical styles, including a play, a festival, a cabaret-style concert of songs, and musical theater. The other part is a historical survey of the group’s performances for the camera, as well as sculptures, paintings, drawings, masks, and puppets, drawn from projects spanning two decades. The members of the group—Malik Gaines (b. 1973), Jade Gordon (b. 1975), and Alexandre Segade (b. 1973)—use performance to theatricalize social issues, adapting modern plays, historical texts, and media narratives into structures for performances.

To celebrate My Barbarian’s creative output, the Whitney has commissioned Rose Bird, composed, directed, and performed by the trio. This performance for the camera is created in homage to the first female chief justice of the California Supreme Court, Rose Bird, a controversial figure because of her opposition to the death penalty, a sentence she repeatedly overturned. The work uses musical texts, re-imagining scenes from her biography as a teleplay and appropriating the media reports that framed her personal life as well as her work.

Organized by Adrienne Edwards, Engell Speyer Family Curator and Curator of Performance, with Mia Matthias, curatorial assistant.
Dawoud Bey: An American Project
Opens November 2020

Since the beginning of his career, Dawoud Bey (b. 1953) has used his camera to represent communities and histories that have largely remained underrepresented or even unseen. This full-scale retrospective, presented by the Whitney and the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, highlights the artist’s commitment over the course of his four-decade career to representing Black subjects and African-American history in a manner that is at once direct and poetic, immediate and symbolic. Bey is perhaps best known as a portraitist, and the exhibition includes his tender and perceptive early portraits of Harlem residents, large-scale color Polaroids, and a series of collaborative word-and-image portraits of high school students, among others. More recent projects have taken a historical turn: The Birmingham Project (2012) commemorates the 1963 bombing of the 16th Street Baptist Church in Birmingham, Alabama, in a series of deeply affective portrait diptychs. Lately, Bey has turned to landscapes: Night Coming Tenderly, Black (2018) depicts, in deep shades of black and gray, the imagined experience of a fugitive slave moving along the Underground Railroad, marking a formal departure from the artist’s earlier work but considering the same existential questions about race, history, and the possibility of bearing witness through contemporary photography.

The exhibition is co-organized by Corey Keller, curator of photography at SFMOMA, and Elisabeth Sherman, assistant curator at the Whitney.

About the Whitney
The Whitney Museum of American Art, founded in 1930 by the artist and philanthropist Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney (1875–1942), houses the foremost collection of American art from the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Mrs. Whitney, an early and ardent supporter of modern American art, nurtured groundbreaking artists at a time when audiences were still largely preoccupied with the Old Masters. From her vision arose the Whitney Museum of American Art, which has been championing the most innovative art of the United States for more than eighty years. The core of the Whitney’s mission is to collect, preserve, interpret, and exhibit American art of our time and serve a wide variety of audiences in celebration of the complexity and diversity of art and culture in the United States. Through this mission and a steadfast commitment to artists themselves, the Whitney has long been a powerful force in support of modern and contemporary art and continues to help define what is innovative and influential in American art today.

Current and Upcoming Exhibitions at the Whitney Museum of American Art
The Whitney’s Collection: Selections from 1900 to 1965
Jason Moran
Order and Ornament: Roy Lichtenstein’s Entablatures
Pope.L: Choir
Rachel Harrison Life Hack
Alan Michelson: Wolf Nation
Making Knowing: Craft in Art 1950–2019
fruits, vegetables; fruit and vegetable salad
Cauleen Smith: Mutualities
Vida Americana: Mexican Muralists Remake American Art, 1925–1945
Jill Mulleady
Salman Toor: How Will I Know
Agnes Pelton: Desert Transcendentalist
Dave McKenzie: The Story I Tell Myself
Prints from Everyday Objects

Ongoing
Through January 5, 2020
Through March 2020
Through Winter 2020
Through January 12, 2020
Through January 12, 2020
November 22, 2019–January 2021
January 15–February 16, 2020
February 17–May 17, 2020
February 17–May 17, 2020
On View March 2020
March 20–July 5, 2020
March 13–June 21, 2020
April–May 2020
June–September 2020
Julie Mehretu
Working Together: The Photographers of the Kamoinge Workshop
My Barbarian
Public Art Project: David Hammons: Day’s End
Jasper Johns
Dawoud Bey: An American Project

June 26–September 20, 2020
July–October 2020
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Opens September 2020
Opens September 2020
Opens October 28, 2020
Opens November 2020

The Whitney Museum of American Art is located at 99 Gansevoort Street between Washington and West Streets, New York City. Museum hours are: Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, Saturday and Sunday from 10:30 am to 6 pm; Friday from 10:30 am to 10 pm. Closed Tuesday. Adults: $25. Full-time students and visitors 65 & over: $18. Visitors 18 years & under and Whitney members: FREE. Admission is pay-what-you-wish on Fridays, 7–10 pm. For general information, please call (212) 570-3600 or visit whitney.org.

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