

WHITNEY

Whitney Museum
of American Art
Press Office

99 Gansevoort Street
New York, NY 10014

pressoffice@whitney.org
(212) 570-3633

PRESS RELEASE

WHITNEY MUSEUM ANNOUNCES THREE NEW EXHIBITIONS THROUGH FALL 2025



Opening in October 2025, High Wire celebrates 100 years of Alexander Calder's beloved Circus along with solo exhibitions of work by Grace Rosario Perkins and Ken Ohara.

New York, NY, August 13, 2025 — The Whitney Museum of American Art announces three new exhibitions to its fall 2025 calendar. Opening on October 18, ***High Wire: Calder's Circus at 100*** celebrates the centennial of one of the most cherished and storied works in the Whitney's collection, Alexander Calder's magnificent *Circus*. With over 100 wire sculptures and objects, *Calder's Circus* highlights the themes of movement, balance, suspense, and ephemerality that would later define Calder's signature mobiles. Artist **Grace Rosario Perkins's** first New York City solo exhibition, *Circles, Spokes, Zigzags, Rivers*, also opens on October 18 with nine dynamic mixed-media paintings created over the past three years, including two new works on view for the first time and made specifically for this exhibition. Opening on October 10, ***Ken Ohara: CONTACTS*** showcases Ohara's innovative photographic experiment, made between 1974–76, where he mailed a preloaded camera to strangers across the U.S. and instructed them to document their own lives before passing the camera along. During this process, Ohara relinquished authorship, decentralized his point of view, and facilitated the creation of uniquely personal and democratic portraits of American life at a time of economic and political unrest. In addition, two new online commissions by **Robert Nideffer** and **Frank WANG Yefeng** will launch on whitney.org.

Previously announced ***Sixties Surreal*** is a sweeping, ambitious, revisionist look at American art from 1958 to 1972 through the lens of surrealism, both inherited and reinvented. Opening on September 24, the exhibition features the work of over 100 artists who embraced the psychosexual, fantastical, and revolutionary energy of an era shaped by civil unrest, cultural upheaval, and boundless experimentation.

Presentations that feature renowned holdings from the Museum's collection will also be on view. Highlighting the Whitney's commitment to an inclusive and representative view of American art, these exhibitions focus on various mediums, from painting and sculpture to large-scale installation to video and digital art.

NEWLY ANNOUNCED EXHIBITIONS

[High Wire: Calder's Circus at 100](#)

October 18, 2025–March 2026

High Wire: Calder's Circus at 100 celebrates the centennial of one of Alexander Calder's most iconic works and one of the most beloved works in the Whitney's collection, *Calder's Circus* (1926–31). This exhibition brings together over 100 objects from this installation, along with more than twenty related works, including drawings, archival material, and film. *High Wire* is the Whitney's first exhibition dedicated to *Calder's Circus* since moving to 99 Gansevoort and celebrates its enduring impact on 20th-century art.

In 1926, Calder began constructing his miniature multi-act spectacle while living in Paris, using commonplace materials—wire, fabric, cork, wood, string, and found objects—to create a cast of acrobats, animals, and other circus performers including clowns, a sword swallower, and a ringmaster. The figures were brought to life through performances that Calder staged for audiences of artists and friends, among them Marcel Duchamp, Joan Miró, Piet Mondrian, and Isamu Noguchi. These dynamic performances were set to music, complete with lighting and narration by Calder, and could last up to two hours—representing a radical new form of performance art. Calder stored the *Circus* in a set of five suitcases and would continue to present the work on both sides of the Atlantic.

A touchstone for Calder's artistic development, *Calder's Circus* reveals his early fascination with movement, balance, suspense, and ephemerality—concepts that would shape his pioneering invention of the mobile and define his sculptural practice in the decades that followed. This exhibition situates the *Circus* within Calder's experimental engagement with this popular form, drawing connections between its energetic interplay and his later abstract works.

The Whitney holds a special relationship with Calder and his legacy. *Calder's Circus* entered the Museum's collection in 1983 following a major public acquisition campaign and has been a highlight of the Whitney's holdings ever since. The Museum is the largest public repository of Calder's work and hosted his major retrospective in 1976.

Organized to commemorate one hundred years since the inception of *Calder's Circus*, this exhibition offers a rare opportunity to experience the full scope of a work that continues to enchant audiences and illuminate the foundations of Calder's visionary practice.

High Wire: Calder's Circus at 100 is organized by Jennie Goldstein, Curator of the Collection, and Roxanne Smith, Jennifer Rubio Assistant Curator of the Collection.

[Ken Ohara: CONTACTS](#)

October 10, 2025–February 8, 2026

Ken Ohara: CONTACTS is the first U.S. institutional solo exhibition of Japanese-born, Los Angeles–based artist Ken Ohara (b. 1942). Featuring 22 photographs and 4 accompanying documents from his groundbreaking series *CONTACTS* (1974–76), this exhibition showcases Ohara's innovative photographic experiment, where he mailed a preloaded camera to strangers across the U.S., instructing them to document their own lives before passing the camera along. During this process, Ohara relinquished authorship, decentralizing his point of view but rather facilitating and cocreating a uniquely personal and democratic portrait of Americans and American life at a time of economic and political unrest.

The resulting “contact sheets,” a recent acquisition to the Whitney's collection, are shown in chronological order and offer intimate glimpses into the lives of participants across thirty-six states. The exhibition explores themes of human connection and the collective synchronicities of mundane life, utilizing the groundbreaking analog photography of the 1970s and contemporary image-sharing culture.

Ken Ohara: CONTACTS is organized by Eli Harrison, Curatorial Fellow, Whitney Museum of American Art.

[Grace Rosario Perkins: Circles, Spokes, Zigzags, Rivers](#)

October 18, 2025–February 8, 2026

Grace Rosario Perkins: Circles, Spokes, Zigzags, Rivers marks the first solo museum exhibition in New York City for Grace Rosario Perkins (Akimel O'odham/Diné, b. 1986, Santa Fe, New Mexico). The presentation brings together approximately ten recent works—primarily large-scale paintings made between 2022 and the present, including two created specially for this exhibition, as well as a new sculpture on view for the first time.

The title of the exhibition draws on imagery that connects the artist's family to their tribal homelands in the southwestern United States. Perkins's vibrant and densely layered works are shaped by an intuitive, dynamic process of addition and removal. Working with acrylic, spray paint, and collage, she often incorporates wide-ranging materials that speak to both individual and collective memory, including found objects and personal belongings such as photographs, jewelry, pages from books, fabric, plastic bags, plaster, and botanicals. Guided by diaristic encounter, DIY ethos, spirituality and plant medicine, Perkins references popular and material

culture, language, music, and sports as they converge with more intimate reflections on grief, love, and hope.

Through abstraction, Perkins resists reductive representations of Indigenous identity, instead presenting an expansive vision rooted in both ancestral knowledge and the urgencies of now. *Circles, Spokes, Zigzags, Rivers* offers a vital and multifaceted portrait of an artist creating new forms of storytelling.

Grace Rosario Perkins: Circles, Spokes, Zigzags, Rivers is organized by Adrienne Edwards, Engell Speyer Family Senior Curator and Associate Director of Curatorial Programs, with Rose Pallone, Curatorial Assistant.

artport

Robert Nideffer: *12 Years in Azeroth* September 2025

Robert Nideffer's *12 Years in Azeroth* fuses ethnography, autobiography, and game design to explore a twelve-year immersion in the world of the online game World of Warcraft. Anchored by a browser-based electronic manuscript and a companion game, the project unfolds from 2006 to 2018 across three avatars, three historical periods, and three interlaced worlds: Earth, Azeroth, and Middle-earth. The game uses a minimalist interface inspired by early interactive fiction, yet behind this retro façade runs a 3D simulation that is dynamically shaped by player actions and environmental data. Players converse with AI-driven characters whose personalities and memories evolve over time, uncover manuscript fragments, and solve narrative puzzles to progress.

12 Years in Azeroth is organized by Christiane Paul, Curator of Digital Art, with David Lisbon, Curatorial Assistant. This project is a commission for artport, the Whitney Museum's portal to Internet art and an online gallery space for commissions of net art and new media art. Originally launched in 2001, artport provides access to original art works commissioned specifically for [artport](http://artport.org) by the Whitney on whitney.org.

Frank WANG Yefeng: *The Levitating Perils #2* October 2025

The next project for the Whitney's *On the Hour*—a series of Internet art projects commissioned specifically for whitney.org to mark every full hour around the clock with a thirty-second intervention—will be created by Frank WANG Yefeng. Working across media from 3D animation and video installation to painting, Wang explores the instability of identity, place, and perception, shaped by his experiences of migration and cultural displacement. For “On the Hour,” he continues to immerse viewers in imaginations where the boundaries between the human and non-human, as well as myth and history, dissolve. His work blends whimsical animated characters and uncanny landscapes with a playful aesthetic, inviting viewers into a speculative space of uncharted realms.

[On the Hour](#) is organized by Christiane Paul, Curator of Digital Art, with David Lisbon, Curatorial Assistant.

PREVIOUSLY ANNOUNCED EXHIBITIONS

Previously announced presentations include [Sixties Surreal](#), a sweeping survey of American art from “the long 1960s,” highlighting the era’s most underrecognized and yet fundamental aesthetic current. This group exhibition includes works by artists like Diane Arbus, Romare Bearden, Lee Bontecou, Louise Bourgeois, David Hammons, Yayoi Kusama, and more to offer a revisionist survey that focuses on the 1960s’ surrealist psychosexual, fantastical, and revolutionary tendencies.

[“Untitled” \(America\)](#), currently on view, presents a refreshed look at the Museum’s leading collection of American art. Coinciding with the Whitney’s ten-year anniversary in its current building downtown, the Whitney’s collection is a testament to the ambitious and experimental practices of artists in the United States, offering diverse stories of American life through formal, social, and political lenses. [“Untitled” \(America\)](#) features recognizable favorites by renowned American artists, including Jean-Michel Basquiat, Barkley L. Hendricks, Edward Hopper, Jasper Johns, Archibald John Motley, Jr., Georgia O’Keeffe, Mark Rothko, Ed Ruscha, Alma Thomas, Kay WalkingStick, and Andy Warhol, alongside more recent acquisitions from the Museum’s collection. Beginning in 1900 and spanning the early 1980s, [“Untitled” \(America\)](#) highlights key ideas and artistic approaches from over eight decades. The exhibition explores throughlines from the collection that, at times, cut across chronological boundaries. The exhibition considers how artists have engaged with place and memory in the American landscape, popular culture and consumerism, the enticing illusions of mass media, and the spatial and cultural dynamics of abstraction.

Additional current exhibitions include [Christine Sun Kim: All Day All Night](#), on view through September 21; [Marina Zurkow: Parting Worlds](#), on view through January 11, 2026; [Mary Heilmann: Long Line](#) on view through January 19, 2026; [Shifting Landscapes](#), on view through January 25, 2026; and the digital art commissions [INFANT: \(BANNED SKILLS\)](#) and [Maya Man: A Realistic Day In My Life Living In New York City](#).

PRESS CONTACT

For press materials and image requests, please visit our press site at whitney.org/press or contact:

Ashley Reese, Director of Communications
(212) 671-1846
Ashley_Reese@whitney.org

Whitney Press Office
whitney.org/press
(212) 570-3633
pressoffice@whitney.org

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 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 ninety 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, 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.

Whitney Museum Land Acknowledgment

The Whitney is located in Lenapehoking, the ancestral homeland of the Lenape. The name Manhattan comes from their word Mannahatta, meaning “island of many hills.” The Museum’s current site is close to land that was a Lenape fishing and planting site called Sapponckanikan (“tobacco field”). The Whitney acknowledges the displacement of this region’s original inhabitants and the Lenape diaspora that exists today.

As a museum of American art in a city with vital and diverse communities of Indigenous people, the Whitney recognizes the historical exclusion of Indigenous artists from its collection and program. The Museum is committed to addressing these erasures and honoring the perspectives of Indigenous artists and communities as we work for a more equitable future. To read more about the Museum’s Land Acknowledgment, [visit the Museum’s website](#).

VISITOR INFORMATION

The Whitney Museum of American Art is located at 99 Gansevoort Street between Washington and West Streets, New York City. Public hours are Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday, 10:30 am–6 pm; Friday, 10:30 am–10 pm; and Saturday and Sunday, 10:30 am–6 pm. Closed Tuesday. Visitors twenty-five years and under and Whitney members: FREE. The Museum offers FREE admission and special programming for visitors of all ages every Friday evening from 5–10 pm and on the second Sunday of every month.

Image credit:

Alexander Calder, *Tightrope Artists* and *Circus Structure: Tightrope*, from *Calder’s Circus*, 1926–31. Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; purchase with funds from a public fundraising campaign in May 1982. One half the funds were contributed by the Robert Wood Johnson Jr. Charitable Trust. Additional major donations were given by The Lauder Foundation; the Robert Lehman Foundation, Inc.; the Howard and Jean Lipman Foundation, Inc.; an anonymous donor; The T. M. Evans Foundation, Inc.; MacAndrews & Forbes Group, Incorporated; the DeWitt Wallace Fund, Inc.; Martin and Agneta Gruss; Anne Phillips; Mr. and Mrs. Laurance S. Rockefeller; the Simon Foundation, Inc.; Marylou Whitney; Bankers Trust Company; Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth N. Dayton; Joel and Anne Ehrenkranz; Irvin and Kenneth Feld; Flora Whitney Miller. More than 500 individuals from 26 states and abroad also contributed to the campaign 83.36.45, 83.36.47, 83.36.26a. © 2025 Calder Foundation, New York / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York. Photograph by Sheldon C. Collins

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