

WHITNEY

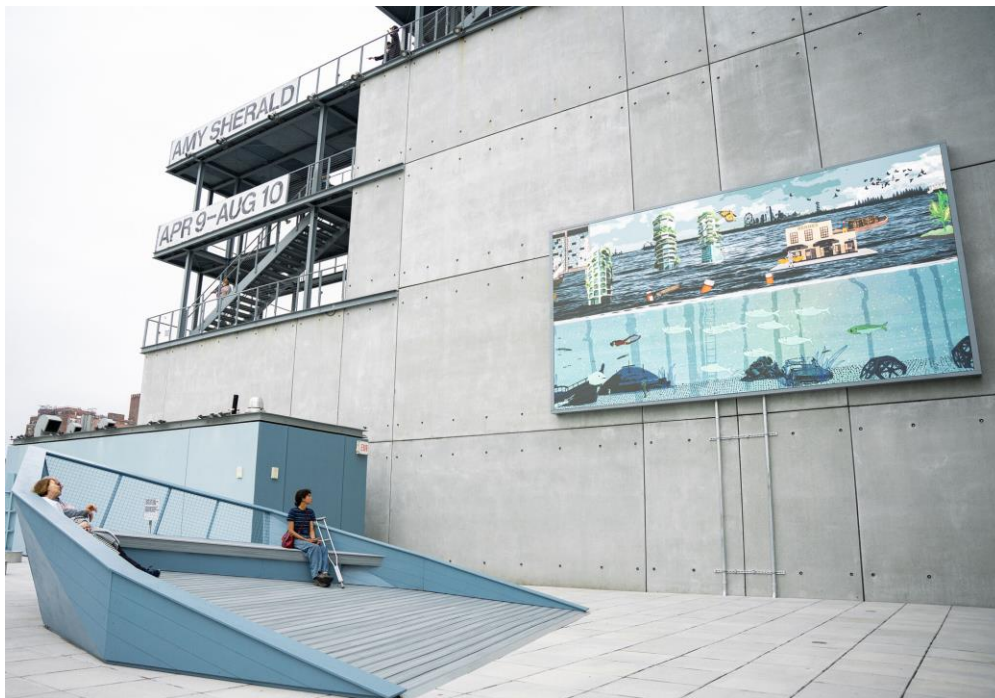
Whitney Museum
of American Art
Press Office

99 Gansevoort Street
New York, NY 10014

pressoffice@whitney.org
(212) 570-3633

PRESS RELEASE

WHITNEY MUSEUM TO HOST FREE PUBLIC PROGRAM ORGANIZED WITH ARTIST MARINA ZURKOW ON FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 5



Artist Marina Zurkow invites visitors to imagine alternative visions of the Hudson River and its surrounding areas—both of which are subjects of her installation at the Whitney and her newly launched Midnight Moment presentation in Times Square.

New York, NY, September 2, 2025 — The Whitney Museum of American Art will host [**WHAT IF? A Speculative Mixer on the Hudson**](#) on **Friday, September 5** from **6–9 pm**. Coinciding with one of the Museum's [Free Friday Nights](#), the program is organized by artists Marina Zurkow and Sarah Rothberg. Visitors are invited to consider alternative visions of the Whitney, its riverside site, and the Hudson itself—all subjects that are featured in Zurkow's recent installation [The River is a Circle](#), on view on the Museum's fifth floor. Presented by the Whitney and Hyundai Motor Company, *The River is a Circle* is a software-driven animation that presents a view of the Hudson River as a horizontal split between the world above and below the water. The dynamic composition of the animated elements is driven by algorithmic probability and reflects the current conditions and seasons in New York City.

The program coincides with the recently launched Midnight Moment presentation in Times Square featuring [The River is a Circle \(Times Square Edition\)](#) by Marina Zurkow and James

Schmitz. Midnight Moment is the world's largest, longest-running digital art exhibition, synchronized on over 95 electronic billboards throughout Times Square. *The River is a Circle (Times Square Edition)* is presented nightly from 11:57pm to midnight and will be featured through September 30. Co-presented by Times Square Arts, the Whitney Museum of American Art, and The Armory Show, Zurkow and Schmitz's *The River is a Circle (Times Square Edition)* is a special edit of the longer piece titled *The River is a Circle* (2025), made in collaboration with Schmitz and Blake Goble, and on view at the Whitney through January 11, 2026 as the second Hyundai Terrace Commission.

PROGRAM LISTING

WHAT IF? A Speculative Mixer on the Hudson

Friday, September 5, 6–9 pm

Organized by artists Marina Zurkow and Sarah Rothberg, this participatory event invites visitors to collaboratively imagine alternative visions of the Whitney Museum, its riverside site, and the Hudson itself. Participants will receive a WHAT IF? card with a scenario—absurd or provocative, possible or not—that invites them to consider the question: if this is true, what else might be true? Join with others to dream up and share worlds. Take inspiration from food created by Jen Monroe, transportive sounds by Andrew Steinmetz, scents by Una Zhang, and other playful activations. Sarah Rothberg and Marina Zurkow lead More&More Unlimited, an arts collective which has been running workshops based on their collaborative world-making framework since 2016.

Location: Whitney Museum, third-floor Theater

Tickets: Free with Museum admission.

Event Link: whitney.org/events/what-if

About Hyundai Terrace Commission: Marina Zurkow: *The River is a Circle*

Created in collaboration with James Schmitz and Blake Goble, this innovative work by Zurkow comprises an animation and accompanying installation. *The River is a Circle* builds on the artist's previous pieces, *Hudson Follies* (2022) and *Does the River Flow Both Ways?* (2022), which offer a split view of the Hudson River, allowing visitors to simultaneously observe the world above and below the water. Shown on a large-scale video wall, *The River is a Circle* is an animation based on custom software that depicts a complex river ecosystem of fluctuating social and biological groups, such as references to hyperlocal community history, barges with historical scenes traveling along the water, schools of fish, and oyster reefs. The dynamic elements of this ecosystem are driven by algorithmic probability. Responding to real-time weather, the software system continuously reflects New York City's current conditions and seasons.

Focusing on the Meatpacking District surrounding the Whitney Museum, *The River is a Circle* explores a combination of local history and river ecology, researched with the help of Hudson River Park Trust. This site-specific work alludes to significant moments that have impacted the Manhattan neighborhood's evolution, such as the Lenape trading post located nearby, the meatpacking industry, the illicit night life of the 1970s, gentrification, and the adjacent installations by artists Gordon Matta-Clark and David Hammons. The artist intends to speculate

on a circular economy and a potentially positive return to more modest strategies of maintaining ecosystems.

Hyundai Terrace Commission: Marina Zurkow: The River is a Circle is organized by Christiane Paul, Curator of Digital Art, with David Lisbon, Curatorial Assistant.

About Marina Zurkow

Marina Zurkow (b. 1962) invites people to explore ways of knowing and feeling nature-culture tensions and environmental messes. By engaging research, speculation, and technologies, she fosters intimate multispecies and geophysical connections. Zurkow works as a founding member of the collaborative initiatives *More&More (Investing in Futures)*, *Dear Climate*, and *Climoji*. Recent exhibitions include *WHAT IF?* at MoMA's Creativity Lab (New York); *Antroposcenes*, Lo Pati Centre d'Art (Amposta); *The Breath Eaters*, Wolfsonian Museum (Miami); *Underfoot/Overhead*, Wasserman Projects (Detroit); and *Can the Substrate Speak?* at Festival Art Souterrain (Montreal). Her work has also been shown at SFMOMA; Walker Art Center; Smithsonian American Art Museum; Museum of Fine Arts, Houston; and the National Museum for Women in the Arts. Zurkow was a 2022 fellow at the Environmental Media Lab, Princeton University; and received grants from the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation, Rice University, NYFA, NYSCA, the Rockefeller Foundation, and Creative Capital. She resides in the Hudson Valley, New York, is represented by bitforms gallery, and teaches at NYU.

PRESS CONTACT

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

Meghan Ferrucci, Senior Publicist
(212) 671-8346
Meghan_Ferrucci@whitney.org

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

EXHIBITION SUPPORT

Hyundai Terrace Commission: Marina Zurkow: The River is a Circle is part of a multiyear partnership with Hyundai Motor in support of an annual site-specific installation on the Whitney Museum's fifth-floor outdoor gallery.



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](#).

ABOUT HYUNDAI MOTOR COMPANY

Established in 1967, Hyundai Motor Company is present in over 200 countries with more than 120,000 employees dedicated to tackling real-world mobility challenges around the globe. Based on the brand vision ‘Progress for Humanity,’ Hyundai Motor is accelerating its transformation into a Smart Mobility Solution Provider. The company invests in advanced technologies such as robotics and Advanced Air Mobility (AAM) to bring about revolutionary mobility solutions while pursuing open innovation to introduce future mobility services. In pursuit of a sustainable future for the world, Hyundai will continue its efforts to introduce zero-emission vehicles with industry-leading hydrogen fuel cell and EV technologies.

More information about Hyundai Motor and its products can be found at:
<https://www.hyundai.com/worldwide/en/> or [Newsroom: Media Hub by Hyundai](#)

ABOUT HYUNDAI MOTOR'S ART PROJECTS

For over a decade, Hyundai Motor Company has deepened its partnerships with global museums and cultural organizations, including the National Museum of Modern and

Contemporary Art, Korea (MMCA), Tate, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA), the Whitney Museum of American Art, and the Korean Pavilion at the Venice Biennale. Most recently, Hyundai Motor announced *Hyundai Translocal Series*, a new partnership initiative that roots itself in fostering dialogues and exchanges among art institutions in Korea and across the globe. Hyundai Motor's own art initiatives include open-call programs such as the VH AWARD, Hyundai Blue Prize+, and Artlab Editorial, a digital platform dedicated to art writing by transnational voices. These ongoing collaborations embrace the complexities of the cultural landscape by exploring new ideas and perspectives within and beyond the art ecosystem.

Visit <https://artlab.hyundai.com> or follow [@hyundai.artlab](#) [#HyundaiArtlab](#) to learn more about these partnerships and programs.

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:

Installation view of *Hyundai Terrace Commission: Marina Zurkow* (Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, April 9, 2025–January 11, 2026). Marina Zurkow, *The River is a Circle*, 2025. Photograph by Summer Surgent-Gough

###