2017 WHITNEY BIENNIAL, THE FIRST TO TAKE PLACE IN THE MUSEUM'S DOWNTOWN BUILDING, TO OPEN MARCH 17

NEW YORK, November 17, 2016 – The formation of self and the individual’s place in a turbulent society are among the key themes reflected in the work of the artists selected for the 2017 Whitney Biennial, opening at the Whitney Museum of American Art on March 17, and running through June 11. Curated by the Whitney’s Nancy and Fred Poses Associate Curator Christopher Y. Lew and independent curator Mia Locks, this will be the first Biennial held in the Whitney’s home in the Meatpacking District. The country’s preeminent survey of the current state of American art, this is the seventy-eighth in the Museum’s ongoing series of Annuals and Biennials, initiated by Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney in 1932.

Lew and Locks named the sixty-three participants, whose works will fill two of the four main gallery floors of the Whitney (including the 18,000-square-foot Neil Bluhm Family Galleries on the fifth floor) and numerous other spaces throughout the Museum. The participants range from emerging to well-established individuals and collectives working in painting, sculpture, drawing, installation, film and video, photography, activism, performance, music, and video game design.

Scott Rothkopf, the Whitney’s Nancy and Steve Crown Family Chief Curator and Deputy Director for Programs, said, “Since we opened our new building, we’ve reignited our emerging artist program with venturesome solo premieres and ‘snapshot’ shows of new tendencies. This Biennial, the largest ever in terms of gallery space, marks the capstone of these efforts. Chris and Mia have done an amazing job scouring the country to discover new talents, while creating lively connections to senior figures and our rolling social landscape.”

Lew commented that, “Throughout our research and travel we’ve been moved by the impassioned discussions we had about recent tumult in society, politics, and the economic system. It’s been unavoidable as we met with artists, fellow curators, writers, and other cultural producers across the United States and beyond.” Locks noted: “Against this backdrop, many of the participating artists are asking probing questions about the self and the social, and where these intersect. How do we think and live through these lenses? How and where do they fall short?”
Rothkopf is leading a team of advisors who are working closely with Lew and Locks to help shape the exhibition. They include: Negar Azimi, writer and senior editor at Bidoun, an award-winning publishing, curatorial, and educational initiative with a focus on the Middle East and its diasporas; Gean Moreno, curator of programs at the Institute of Contemporary Art Miami and founder of [NAME] Publications; Aily Nash, co-curator of Projections, the New York Film Festival's artists' film and video section, and Film and Media Curator at Basilica Hudson; and Wendy Yao, a publisher and founder of both the exhibition space 356 South Mission Road and Ooga Booga, a shop with two Los Angeles locations that specializes in independent books, music, art, and clothing. Nash, together with the curators, is co-organizing the Biennial film program, which will screen in the Whitney’s third-floor Susan and John Hess Family Theater.

The 2017 Biennial will be accompanied by an exhibition catalogue, designed by Olga Casellas Badillo of San Juan-based Tigere Corp., which includes essays by the curators as well as Biennial advisors Negar Azimi and Gean Moreno, a conversation between the curators and Scott Rothkopf, and a roundtable with filmmakers moderated by Aily Nash. The book will also feature individual entries on each of the sixty-three participants in the exhibition along with reproductions of their work. It will be published by the Whitney Museum of American Art and distributed by Yale University Press.

The full list of artists follows:

- **Zarouhie Abdalian**  
  Born 1982 in New Orleans, LA  
  Lives in New Orleans, LA

- **Basma Alsharif**  
  Born 1983 in Kuwait City, Kuwait  
  Lives in Los Angeles, CA

- **Jo Baer**  
  Born 1929 in Seattle, WA  
  Lives in Amsterdam, Netherlands

- **Eric Baudelaire**  
  Born 1973 in Salt Lake City, UT  
  Lives in Paris, France

- **Robert Beavers**  
  Born 1949 in Brookline, MA  
  Lives in Berlin, Germany and Falmouth, MA

- **Larry Bell**  
  Born 1939 in Chicago, IL  
  Lives in Taos, NM and Los Angeles, CA

- **Matt Browning**  
  Born 1984 in Redmond, WA  
  Lives in Seattle, WA

- **Susan Cianciolo**  
  Born 1969 in Providence, RI  
  Lives in Brooklyn, NY

- **Mary Helena Clark**  
  Born 1983 inantee, SC  
  Lives in Hamilton, NY

- **John Divola**  
  Born 1949 in Santa Monica, CA  
  Lives in Riverside, CA

- **Celeste Dupuy-Spencer**  
  Born 1979 in New York, NY  
  Lives in Los Angeles, CA

- **Rafa Esparza**  
  Born 1981 in Los Angeles, CA  
  Lives in Los Angeles, CA

- **Kevin Jerome Everson**  
  Born 1965 in Mansfield, OH  
  Lives in Charlottesville, VA

- **GCC**  
  (Nanù Al-Hamad, Abdullah Al-Mutairi, Aziz Alqatami, Barrak Alzaid, Khalid al Gharaballi, Amal Khalaf, Fatima Al Qadiri, Monira Al Qadiri)  
  Founded 2013

- **Oto Gillen**  
  Born 1984 in New York, NY  
  Lives in New York, NY

- **Samara Golden**  
  Born 1973 in Ann Arbor, MI  
  Lives in Los Angeles, CA

- **Casey Gollan and Victoria Sobel**  
  Born 1991 in Los Angeles, CA; born 1990 in Washington, DC  
  Lives in New York, NY; lives in New York, NY

- **Irena Haiduk**  
  Biographical information not given

- **Lyle Ashton Harris**  
  Born 1965 in Bronx, NY  
  Lives in New York, NY

- **Tommy Hartung**  
  Born 1979 in Akron, OH  
  Lives in Queens, NY

- **Porpentine Charity Heartscape**  
  Born 1987, location not given  
  Lives in Oakland, CA

- **Sky Hopinka**  
  Born 1984 in Bellingham, WA  
  Lives in Milwaukee, WI

- **Shara Hughes**
Born 1981 in Atlanta, GA  
Lives in Brooklyn, NY

Aaron Flint Jamison  
Born 1979 in Billings, MT  
Lives in Portland, OR and Seattle, WA

KAYA  
(Kerstin Brätsch and Debo Eilers)  
Founded 2010

Jon Kessler  
Born 1957 in Yonkers, NY  
Lives in New York, NY

James N. Kienitz Wilkins  
Born in 1983 in Boston, MA  
Lives in Brooklyn, NY

Ajay Kurian  
Born 1984 in Baltimore, MD  
Lives in Brooklyn, NY

Deana Lawson  
Born 1979 in Rochester, NY  
Lives Brooklyn, NY

An-My Lê  
Born 1960 in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam  
Lives in Brooklyn, NY

Leigh Ledare  
Born 1976 in Seattle, WA  
Lives in New York, NY

Dani Leventhal  
Born 1972 in Columbus, OH  
Lives in Columbus, OH

Tala Madani  
Born 1981 in Tehran, Iran  
Lives in Los Angeles, CA

Park McArthur  
Born 1984 in Raleigh, NC  
Lives in New York, NY

Harold Mendez  
Born 1977 in Chicago, IL  
Lives in Chicago, IL and Los Angeles, CA

Carrie Moyer  
Born 1960 in Detroit, MI  
Lives in New York, NY

Ulrike Müller  
Born 1971 in Brixlegg, Austria  
Lives in Brooklyn, NY

Julien Nguyen  
Born 1990 in Washington, DC  
Lives in Los Angeles, CA

Tuan Andrew Nguyen  
Born 1976 in Saigon, Vietnam  
Lives in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam

Raúl de Nieves  
Born 1983 in Morelia, Mexico  
Lives in Brooklyn, NY

Aliza Nisenbaum  
Born 1977 in Mexico City, Mexico  
Lives in New York, NY

Occupy Museums  
(Arthur Polendo, Imani Jacqueline Brown, Kenneth Pietrobono, Noah Fischer, and Tal Beery)  
Founded 2011

Pope.L aka William Pope.L  
Born 1955 in Newark, NJ  
Lives in Chicago, IL

Postcommodity  
(Raven Chacon, Cristóbal Martínez, Kade L. Twist)  
Founded 2007

Puppies Puppies  
Born 1989 in Dallas, TX  
Lives in Roswell, NM

Asad Raza  
Born 1974 in Buffalo, NY  
Lives in New York, NY

Jessi Reaves  
Born 1986 in Portland, OR  
Lives in Brooklyn, NY

John Riepenhoff  
Born 1982 in Milwaukee, WI  
Lives in Milwaukee, WI

Chemi Rosado-Seijo  
Born 1973 in Vega Alta, PR  
Lives in San Juan and Naranjito, PR

Cameron Rowland  
Born 1988 in Philadelphia, PA  
Lives in Queens, NY

Beatriz Santiago Muñoz  
Born 1972 in San Juan, PR  
Lives in San Juan, PR

Dana Schutz  
Born 1976 in Livonia, MI  
Lives in Brooklyn, NY

Cauleen Smith  
Born 1967 in Riverside, CA  
Lives in Chicago, IL

Frances Stark  
Born 1967 in Newport Beach, CA  
Lives in Los Angeles, CA

Maya Stovall  
Born 1982 in Detroit, MI  
Lives in Detroit, MI
Henry Taylor
Born 1958 in Oxnard, CA
Lives in Los Angeles, CA

Torey Thornton
Born 1990 in Macon, GA
Lives in Brooklyn, NY

Leslie Thornton and James Richards
Born 1951 in Knoxville, TN; born 1983 in Cardiff, United Kingdom
Lives in Brooklyn, NY; lives in Berlin, Germany and London, United Kingdom

Kaari Upson

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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.