

WHITNEY

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PRESS RELEASE

WHITNEY MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART AND HYUNDAI MOTOR PRESENT *HYUNDAI TERRACE COMMISSION: KELLY AKASHI* AS PART OF WHITNEY BIENNIAL 2026



New York, NY, March 4, 2026 — The Whitney Museum of American Art and Hyundai Motor Company present *Hyundai Terrace Commission: Kelly Akashi*, a site-specific presentation by Los Angeles based artist Kelly Akashi on the Museum's fifth-floor outdoor gallery. This marks the third Hyundai Terrace Commission since the 10-year partnership between the Whitney and Hyundai Motor was established in 2024. Part of *Whitney Biennial 2026*, on view March 8–August 23, 2026, the commission brings together a new sculptural installation, steel relief, works on paper, and an outdoor-screen animation across the Whitney's terrace and adjacent spaces.

Anchoring the presentation is *Monument (Altadena)* (2026), a chimney and walkway installation that takes shape as both reconstruction and memorial. After Akashi's home and studio burned in the Eaton Fire in January 2025, the chimney was the only structure left standing. For the Hyundai Terrace Commission, the artist has worked with a mason to reconstruct the chimney piece by piece alongside a reconstruction of her home's pathway, rendered in luminous cast glass brick. Installed on the terrace, the work transforms the Whitney's outdoor gallery into a

charged site of witness and a meditation on survival, rupture, and the fragile permanence of what remains.

Also on the terrace, *Inheritance (Distressed)* (2026) is installed on the bulkhead south of *Monument (Altadena)*. The work draws from a personal archive, Akashi's grandmother's doilies, which the artist rescued from a family garage sale and later lost in the same fire. Combining images generated from pre-fire scans with weathering steel (Cor-Ten), a material historically associated with Minimalist sculpture and coded masculinity, the work brings two histories into contact: one intimate and one cultural which reflects on the struggle to know what to do with what we inherit.

Inside the Museum, *Imprints* (2026) comprises five framed works on paper. On the terrace's outdoor screen, *Remnants (Constellations)* (2026) extends the presentation into moving image, offering an animated counterpart to the exhibition's material investigations of trace, memory, and aftermath.

"The act of rebuilding is not simply about material endurance; it is a deliberate labor of care, an engagement with history, and an act of reclamation," said artist Kelly Akashi. "In laying each brick, my sculpture mirrors the gestures of memory itself, emphasizing that remembrance is not given, it is constructed through care and persistence. Each brick carries the record of labor and material transformation; together, they compose a new body that holds the traces of its past."

"For the *Hyundai Terrace Commission: Kelly Akashi*, we were drawn to Kelly for her command of multiple mediums, and in particular for her skillful use of glass and steel," said Marcela Guerrero, DeMartini Family Curator. "She has met the technical and conceptual demands of large-scale outdoor sculpture with aplomb, producing a monumental work that stands as a resolute testament to remembrance and the legacies that shape our collective and individual histories."

"Weaving together intimate personal histories with broader collective narratives, *Hyundai Terrace Commission: Kelly Akashi* offers a moment to reflect on memory and resilience," said DooEun Choi, Art Director of Hyundai Motor Company. "It challenges us to consider the potential for a solidarity that transcends the individual to embrace the communal, aligning with the Hyundai Terrace Commission's commitment to sharing transformative artistic experiences with a wider audience."



A Bloomberg Connects audio guide will accompany the installation; visitors can hear Akashi describe her decision to build *Monument (Altadena)* using glass bricks via an on-site QR code.

Hyundai Terrace Commission: Kelly Akashi is organized by Marcela Guerrero, DeMartini Family Curator, and Drew Sawyer, Sondra Gilman Curator of Photography, with Beatriz Cifuentes, Biennial Curatorial Assistant, and Carina Martinez, Rubio Butterfield Family Fellow.

The Whitney Biennial and the Hyundai Terrace Commission are a multiyear partnership with Hyundai Motor.

ABOUT WHITNEY BIENNIAL 2026

Opening March 8, 2026, *Whitney Biennial 2026* is the 82nd edition of the Museum's landmark exhibition series and the longest-running survey of American art. Featuring 56 artists, duos, and collectives, the Biennial presents work across most of the Museum's gallery space, alongside a robust series of performance and public programs available at the Museum and online. Co-organized by Whitney curators Marcela Guerrero and Drew Sawyer, the exhibition brings together contemporary artists working across media and disciplines, representing evolving notions of American art.

Whitney Biennial 2026 offers a vivid, atmospheric survey shaped by a moment of profound transition, examining forms of relationality—including interspecies kinships, familial relations, geopolitical entanglements, technological affinities, shared mythologies, and infrastructural supports—while foregrounding mood and texture and inviting visitors into environments that evoke tension, tenderness, humor, and unease.

ABOUT HYUNDAI TERRACE COMMISSION

Hyundai Terrace Commission is an annual, site-specific project on the Whitney Museum's fifth-floor outdoor gallery. The commission offers an expansive platform for artists to experiment at scale and to engage the Museum's terrace as an interface between art, the built environment, and the surrounding city.

ABOUT KELLY AKASHI

Kelly Akashi (b. 1983, Los Angeles) is a sculptor whose practice examines impermanence, temporality, and the material traces of human experience. Executed with rigorous conceptual intent and a deep reverence for process, her work spans glass, bronze, stone, and cast materials, and often uses the hand as a recurring motif. Akashi's sculptures, which range from glass-blown flowers and towering weeds to cast hands, bodies, and extinct shells, offer a poetic yet unsentimental reflection on mortality and transience. She holds a BFA from Otis College of Art & Design and an MFA from the University of Southern California, studied at the Städelschule in Frankfurt, and recently completed an artist residency at Pilchuck Glass School in 2025.

Exhibition Tickets on Sale

Visitors can purchase timed tickets for *Whitney Biennial 2026*, which opens March 8, 2026. The opening day coincides with one of the Whitney's Free Second Sundays, offering free admission to visitors of all ages. [More ticketing information is available on the Museum's website.](#)

Catalogue

The 2026 Whitney Biennial is accompanied by a 500-page catalogue with more than 400 images designed by Mỹ Linh Triệu Nguyễn of Studio LHOQQ, published by the Whitney, and distributed by Yale University Press. Edited by Marcela Guerrero and Drew Sawyer, the book features insightful conversations between each Biennial artist and someone intimately familiar with their work, including fellow artists, critics, writers, curators, mentors, and family members. Copies will be available for purchase in the Whitney Shop, [online](#), and at bookstores (\$50).

Free Public Programs

A series of free virtual and in-person programs is offered in conjunction with *Whitney Biennial 2026*. More information about these programs and how to register will be [available on the Museum's website](#) as details are confirmed.

PRESS CONTACT

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

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EXHIBITION SUPPORT

Whitney Biennial 2026 is presented by



The exhibition is also sponsored by



Leadership support for the 2026 Whitney Biennial is provided by David Cancel, and Stephanie March and Dan Benton.

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Significant support is provided by Sotheby's.

2026 Biennial Committee Co-Chairs: Sarah Arison, Paul Arnhold and Wes Gordon, Suzanne and Bob Cochran, Salvador Espinoza and Jonathan Rozoff, Amanda and Glenn Fuhrman, Further Forward Foundation, Becky Gochman, Christina Hribar, Stephanie and Tim Ingrassia, Peter H. Kahng, Deepa Kumaraiah and Sean Dempsey, Miyoung Lee and Neil Simpkins, Dawn and David Lenhardt, Sueyun and Gene Locks, George Petrocheilos and Diamantis Xylas, Nancy and Fred Poses, Dr. Jan Siegmund and Dr. Benjamin Maddox, Ron and Ann Pizzuti, Jackson Tang, Teresa Tsai, and Todd White and Cameron Carani.

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Generous support is provided by The James Howell Foundation, The Keith Haring Foundation Exhibition Fund, and the Trellis Art Fund.

Biennial funding is also provided by endowments created by Emily Fisher Landau, Leonard A. Lauder, and Fern and Lenard Tessler.

Curatorial research and travel for this exhibition were funded by an endowment established by Rosina Lee Yue and Bert A. Lies, Jr., MD.

Support is also provided by the Marshall Weinberg Fund for Performance, endowed in honor of his parents Anna and Harold Weinberg who taught him the meaning of giving.

The Whitney Biennial and Hyundai Terrace Commission are a multiyear partnership with Hyundai Motor. The Hyundai Terrace Commission is 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 worldwide, including Tate, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA), the Whitney Museum of American Art, and the Korean Pavilion at the

Venice Biennale. Hyundai Translocal Series is 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, the 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.

For more information, visit <https://artlab.hyundai.com> or follow [@hyundai_artlab](https://twitter.com/hyundai_artlab) [#HyundaiArtlab](https://hashtag.hyundai.com/hashtag/HyundaiArtlab)

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 *Whitney Biennial 2026* (Whitney Museum of American Art, March 8–August 2026). Hyundai Terrace Commission Kelly Akashi 2026. *Monument (Altadena)*. Photograph by Timothy Schenck

Installation view of *Whitney Biennial 2026* (Whitney Museum of American Art, March 8–August 2026). Hyundai Terrace Commission Kelly Akashi 2026. From left to right: *Monument (Altadena)*, 2026; *Inheritance (Distressed)*, 2026; *Remnants (Constellations)*, 2026. Photograph by Timothy Schenck

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