

WHITNEY

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PRESS RELEASE

WHITNEY BIENNIAL 2026 OFFERS A VIVID SURVEY OF CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN ART



Opening March 8, the 82nd edition of this landmark exhibition series offers a constellation of moods and relations through the work of 56 artists, duos, and collectives.

New York, NY, March 5, 2026 — Opening March 8, the Whitney Museum of American Art presents [Whitney Biennial 2026](#), the 82nd edition of the Museum’s landmark exhibition series and the longest-running survey of American art. Featuring [fifty-six artists, duos, and collectives](#) across most of the Museum’s galleries, the Biennial is accompanied by a robust schedule of performance and public programs at the Museum and online. Co-organized by Marcela Guerrero and Drew Sawyer, the exhibition brings together artists working across media and disciplines, reflecting evolving notions of American art.

Whitney Biennial 2026 offers a vivid, atmospheric survey shaped by a moment of profound complexity. The work on view examines varied forms of relationality, from interspecies and familial kinships to geopolitical entanglements, technological affinities, shared mythologies, and the infrastructures that support and constrain contemporary life. Rather than offering a definitive answer to life today, the exhibition foregrounds mood and texture, inviting visitors into environments that evoke tension, tenderness, humor, and unease, while proposing imaginative, unruly, and unexpected forms of coexistence.

Whitney Biennial 2026 is co-organized by Whitney curators 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.



EXHIBITION OVERVIEW AND SELECT WORKS

Rather than approaching the exhibition as a set of themes or issues to be illustrated through each artist's work, *Whitney Biennial 2026* is composed as a constellation of resonant moods, encapsulating the turbulent existential weather of the United States today. Angst, amusement, ecstasy, nonchalance, and ambivalence ripple across the galleries through works that engage senses beyond the visual, incorporating sound, scent, and touch. The result is a series of deliberately discordant environments that invite visitors to register meaning through atmosphere as much as through image.

Over eighteen months, Guerrero and Sawyer considered more than 460 artists and conducted more than 300 studio visits, traveling widely, visiting exhibitions around the world, meeting artists in studios and galleries, and continuing conversations in person and remotely. The resulting list is distinctly intergenerational, spanning ages twenty-eight to ninety-two, and includes artists from across twenty-five states as well as some who live outside of the United States. This expanded field is shaped by the realities of U.S. intervention, occupation, and colonial histories beyond national borders.

A central thread throughout *Whitney Biennial 2026* is the question of what it means to be "in relation." From familial and societal ties to geopolitical and interspecies relationships, the exhibition considers how connection is shaped, constrained, or enabled by the systems we move within. The works on view explore how intimacy and power are braided together through

forms of care, contestation, and improvisation, and through the social, institutional, technological, and ecological infrastructures that shape society.

Within this expanded field of kinship, *Whitney Biennial 2026* turns to unconventional affiliations, especially those that cross species, category, and norm. The exhibition foregrounds entanglements with animal and non-human life not as allegory or moral lessons, but to imagine coexistence without exceptionalism. Rejecting individualism in favor of messy collaborations, irreverent associations, and new forms of mutuality, the works on view move less toward tidy resolution than toward coexistence and a willingness to “misfit together” and remain in tension rather than force closure. This attention to kinship also appears through generational and familial connections, including the presentation of **Carmen de Monteflores** alongside her daughter, **Andrea Fraser**, tracing how artistic ambition, recognition, grief, and care can reverberate across a family and across time.

The Biennial also repeatedly stages forms of “disarming” that are anything but simple. Cuteness is employed across many works as a tactic for navigating contradictions of intimacy and menace, desire, and power. In these works, cuteness can function as camouflage, satire, lure, and critique all at once. Artist **Precious Okoyomon** presents an installation in two parts with a hybrid plush bunny with a black doll’s face on the Museum’s 5th floor and, starting on March 25, a large-scale installation of suspended stuffed animals outfitted with taxidermy bird wings that occupy the entirety of the Museum’s 8th floor gallery space. These works embody unbearable violence and unbearable cuteness in the same breath. That friction reverberates throughout the exhibition, including works by **CFGNY** and **Pat Oleszko**. Oleszko’s inflatables echo the language of toys and spectacles while turning grotesque, oversized, and anatomically absurd. If kinship is one axis shaping *Whitney Biennial 2026*, an examination of infrastructure is another. Often emerging as relational forms, infrastructure is inseparable from the technical and social systems that shape how people connect, organize, and make meaning. Several works probe the circulation of ideology and affect through digital life, including projects by **Joshua Citarella** and a major five-channel installation by **Zach Blas**, which draws on AI tools and tech-industry language to explore fantasies of domination and devotion in the contemporary technological landscapes. Infrastructure also registers through the material and geopolitical remnants of power. A photographic installation by **Aziz Hazara** uses military night-vision goggles left behind by U.S. forces to produce abstracted green landscapes, reframing tools of surveillance as instruments of looking and living after occupation.

Throughout the Biennial, these infrastructural questions also surface as lived experience, tracing how bodies and communities move through systems that condition access, language, belonging, surveillance, and visibility. They are felt as mood and texture as much as structure: tension and tenderness; humor and unease; environments that refuse resolution into a single argument or aesthetic. The exhibition’s attention to energy infrastructures, from extraction to electricity, appears on the Museum’s sixth-floor terrace through new sculptural works by **Nani Chacon**, which draw visual connections between Diné cosmologies and sand painting traditions, and the electrical towers that cut across Navajo land. On the Museum’s fifth-floor outdoor terrace, **Kelly Akashi** presents a Hyundai Terrace Commission that moves between personal history and collective aftermath. An exact replica of the artist’s chimney, the lone surviving remnant of her home after the Altadena fires, rendered in cast glass bricks, is presented alongside new sculptural and moving-image elements that translate inherited

domestic forms into monumental, luminous structure.

Sound, listening, and other nonvisual modes of address appear across the exhibition, reinforcing its insistence that relation is not only seen, but sensed, and that atmosphere can function as an ethical and political register as much as an aesthetic one.

Together, the works in *Whitney Biennial 2026* offer no single verdict on the present, but a charged field of encounters, between bodies and systems, intimacy and power, tenderness, and dread. Moving across the Museum's galleries and terraces, visitors are invited to experience contemporary American art as a set of improvised, contested, and deeply felt relations. By foregrounding mood and texture, the Biennial proposes new ways of living with contradiction and imagining forms of coexistence that remain open, unfinished, and resolutely of the moment.



Exhibition Tickets on Sale

Starting January 13, 2026, 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 will be 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.

ABOUT THE WHITNEY BIENNIAL

A constellation of the most relevant art and ideas of our time, the Whitney Biennial showcases contemporary artists working across media and disciplines, representing evolving notions of American art. Established by the Museum's founder, Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney, in 1932, the

Whitney Biennial is the longest-running survey of American art. More than 3,600 artists have participated to date, including Jean-Michel Basquiat, Lynda Benglis, Louise Bourgeois, Frank Bowling, Mark Bradford, Alexander Calder, Theresa Hak Kyung Cha, Raven Chacon, Ellen Gallagher, Nikita Gale, Jeffrey Gibson, Nan Goldin, Renee Green, Wade Guyton, Rachel Harrison, Jenny Holzer, Edward Hopper, Suzanne Jackson, Joan Jonas, Ellsworth Kelly, Mike Kelley, Willem de Kooning, Barbara Kruger, Pope. L, Jacob Lawrence, Carolyn Lazard, Zoe Leonard, Roy Lichtenstein, Glenn Ligon, Agnes Martin, Daniel Joseph Martinez, Julie Mehretu, Sarah Michelson, Joan Mitchell, Tiona Nekkia McClodden, Georgia O'Keeffe, Claes Oldenburg, Laura Owens, Jackson Pollock, Postcommodity, Yvonne Rainer, Robert Rauschenberg, Cindy Sherman, Lorna Simpson, Rose B. Simpson, Martine Syms, Tourmaline, Wu Tsang, Cy Twombly, Kara Walker, Andy Warhol, Kiyon Williams, and David Wojnarowicz.

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EXHIBITION SUPPORT

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The exhibition is also sponsored by



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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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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](#).

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:

Lead image: Installation view of *Whitney Biennial 2026* (Whitney Museum of American Art, March 8–August 2026). From left to right: Emilie Louise Gossiaux, *Kong Play*, 2026; Emilie Louise Gossiaux, *Becoming Part of the Forest 2*, 2025; Emilie Louise Gossiaux, *The Marriage of Hand and Paw*, 2025; Emilie Louise Gossiaux, *In Dreams We'll See Again*, 2025; Andrea Fraser, *Untitled (I-V)*, 2024; Carmen de Monteflores, *Four Women*, 1969. Photograph by Darian DiCanno/BFA.com. © BFA 2026

Clockwise from top left: Installation view of *Whitney Biennial 2026* (Whitney Museum of American Art, March 8–August 2026). From left to right: Akira Ikezoe, *Robot Stories Around Solar Panels*, 2025; Ash Arder, *Broadcast #4*, 2024; Akira Ikezoe, *Mole Stories Around Methane Gas*, 2025. Photograph by Jason Lowrie/BFA.com. © BFA 2026; Installation view of *Whitney Biennial 2026* (Whitney Museum of American Art, March 8–August 2026). From left to right: Pat Oleszko, *Blowhard*, 1995; Pat Oleszko, *Footsi*, 1979. Photograph by Darian DiCanno/BFA.com. © BFA 2026; Installation view of *Whitney Biennial 2026* (Whitney Museum of American Art, March 8–August 2026). From left to right: José Maceda and Aki Onda, *Ugnayan*, 1974/2026. Photograph by Darian DiCanno/BFA.com. © BFA 2026; Installation view of *Whitney Biennial 2026* (Whitney Museum of American Art, March 8–August 2026). From left to right: Carmen de Monteflores, *Via Crucis IV*, 1967; Carmen de Monteflores, *Man and Woman Sitting*, 1968; Carmen de Monteflores, *Four Women*, 1969; Andrea Fraser, *Untitled (I-V)*, 2024. Photograph by Jason Lowrie/BFA.com. © BFA 2026

From left to right: Installation view of *Whitney Biennial 2026* (Whitney Museum of American Art, March 8–August 2026). From left to right: Jacoby Cooper, *Estate (January 21, 2016)*, 2024; *Mutual Life (24.2 years)*, 2025; *Mutual Life (76.4 years)*, 2026; *Mutual Life (38.9 years)*, 2025; *Estate (July 10, 2022)*, 2026. Photograph by Jason Lowrie/BFA.com. © BFA 2026; Installation view of *Whitney Biennial 2026* (Whitney Museum of American Art, March 8–August 2026). From left to right: Samia Halaby, *Bread*, 1988; Samia Halaby, *Dark Weaver*, 1989; Samia Halaby, *Ebb Tide*, 1987; Samia Halaby, *Flower*, 1988; Samia Halaby, *Fold 2*, 1988; Samia Halaby, *For Olga Rozanova*, 1988; Samia Halaby, *Land*, 1988; Samia Halaby, *Lines 3*, 1986; Samia Halaby, *Weavings*, 1987; Samia Halaby, *Central Park 3*, 1987; Jacoby Cooper, *Mutual Life (38.9 years)*, 2025; *Estate (July 10, 2022)*, 2026; Aziz Hazara, *Moon Sightings*, 2024. Photograph by Jason Lowrie/BFA.com. © BFA 2026

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