

# WHITNEY

Whitney Museum  
of American Art  
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## PRESS RELEASE

### WHITNEY MUSEUM DEBUTS PERFORMANCE BY GABRIELA RUIZ AS PART OF WHITNEY BIENNIAL 2026



**New York, NY, June 9, 2026** — The Whitney Museum of American Art will debut [Exive II](#), a new performance by Gabriela Ruiz, commissioned by the Whitney for the 2026 Biennial. For this performance, Ruiz activates Gansevoort Street in front of the Museum’s main entrance, engaging a forklift as her partner and recasting an industrial machine as an instrument of power, visibility, and grace. *Exive II* will take place outside the Whitney on Friday, July 10.

For *Exive II*, a forklift, built for cargo, for weight, for work, becomes Ruiz’s partner, lifting her into the air with a slow, deliberate tenderness that feels both perilous and reverent. Her body rises, not as a spectacle of fragility, but as a figure of power, suspended, carried, guided through space by a dance of steel, air, and breath. The performance shifts between sharp mechanical precision and moments of ecstatic release, where menial labor turns luminous and gravity becomes negotiable. There is an echo of the quinceañera, of ceremonial elevation, of being lifted into visibility, yet here the ritual is rewritten.

*Exive II* coincides with [West Side Fest](#), a free, multi-site celebration bringing the best of arts and culture on Manhattan’s West Side, returning July 10–12, 2026.

## PERFORMANCE LISTING

*Exive II*

**Gabriela Ruiz**

July 10

**Location:** Gansevoort Street

**Tickets:** Ticket information will be released closer to the date of the event.

**Event Link:** [whitney.org/events/gabriela-ruiz](https://whitney.org/events/gabriela-ruiz)

### **About the Artist**

**Gabriela Ruiz** (b. San Fernando Valley, CA; lives and works in Los Angeles) is a multimedia artist working across performance, sculpture, video, and digital media. Ruiz has presented solo exhibitions at the Institute for the Humanities Gallery, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor (2023); Palm Springs Art Museum, Palm Springs (2022); Vincent Price Art Museum, Los Angeles (2019). Selected group exhibitions have been held at the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York (2026); Museo del Palacio de Bellas Artes, Mexico City (2026); Hammer Museum, Los Angeles (2025); Jeffrey Deitch Gallery, Los Angeles (2025, 2024, 2021); Pérez Art Museum Miami (2024); The Cheech Marin Center for Chicano Art & Culture, Riverside Art Museum (2023); Museo de Arte Carrillo Gil, Mexico City (2018); ICA LA, Los Angeles (2018); Commonwealth and Council, Los Angeles (2018); Museum of Contemporary Art Santa Barbara (2022); and CASTTL and Museum aan de Stroom, Antwerp (2019).

Ruiz has performed at the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York (2026); REDCAT, Los Angeles (2019); ICA LA, Los Angeles (2018); Centro Cultural Clavijero, Morelia (2018); and USC Roski School of Art and Design as part of Pacific Standard Time: Live Art LA/LA (2018). She has delivered lectures and participated in panels at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor (2023); The Cheech Marin Center for Chicano Art & Culture, Riverside (2023); University of California, Santa Barbara (2022); California Institute of the Arts, Valencia (2022); University of Southern California, Los Angeles (2019); and California State University, Northridge (2018). Ruiz has participated in residencies at Pioneer Works, New York (2026); Fountainhead Residency, Miami (2025); the Institute for the Humanities, University of Michigan (2023); and the Outburst Program at Palm Springs Art Museum (2022). She is a recipient of the Fountainhead Arts Forum Award (2025) and the California Community Foundation Fellowship for Visual Artists (2024).

Ruiz's work is in the collections of the Detroit Institute of Arts, Hammer Museum, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, and Palm Springs Art Museum.

### **About Whitney Biennial 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 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 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.

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## PRESS 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.

Major support is provided by the Adam D. Weinberg Artists First Fund; Marcia Dunn and Jonathan Sobel; The Holly Peterson Foundation; the Kapadia Equity Fund; The KHR McNeely Family Foundation | Kevin, Rosemary, and Hannah Rose McNeely; and the Whitney's National Committee.

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.

2026 Biennial Committee: Shelley Fox Aarons and Philip Aarons; Susan and Matthew Blank; Estrellita and Daniel Brodsky; James Keith Brown and Eric Diefenbach; Yolanda Colón-Greenberg and Craig Greenberg; Stephen Dull; Charlotte Feng Ford; Christy and Bill Gautreaux; Elaine Goldman and John Benis; Grace Gould and Jonathan Goldberg; Marielise Hessel; Judelson Family Foundation; Michèle Gerber Klein; Gina Feldman Love and Steven Feldman; Joel Lubin; Bernard I. Lumpkin and Carmine D. Boccuzzi; Marc S. Solomon, Cindy Levine & Interlaken LLC; The Robert Mapplethorpe Foundation; Jamie Watson in memory of Emmett Watson; George Wells and Manfred Rantner; Casey and Lauren Weyand; and an anonymous donor.

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.

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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 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](#).

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## **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:**

Photo by Jade Mainade

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