

WHITNEY

Whitney Museum
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PRESS RELEASE

WHITNEY MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART PRESENTS THE FIRST MAJOR SOLO MUSEUM EXHIBITION OF MINNIE EVANS IN MORE THAN FIVE DECADES



Marking fifty years since the Whitney debuted the artist's first museum solo exhibition, this landmark survey celebrates the visionary work of one of America's most revered self-taught artists.

New York, NY, August 6, 2026 — The Whitney Museum of American Art presents [*The Lost World: The Art of Minnie Evans*](#), opening August 22, 2026, just over fifty years after the Whitney organized Evans's groundbreaking first solo museum exhibition in 1975. The exhibition reintroduces audiences to one of the most extraordinary and original artistic voices in twentieth-century America.

Minnie Evans began making art in her early forties and spent the following four decades creating radiant drawings, paintings, and collages inspired by dreams, visions, spiritual revelation, mythology, popular culture, and the natural world. Guided by a profound religious faith and a vivid inner life, Evans transformed flowers, birds, angels, and human faces into intricate compositions that blur the boundaries between the earthly and the divine. She

described these visionary works as portals into a Biblical Eden she called the "lost world."

Bringing together works created between 1935 and 1981 in Wilmington, North Carolina during the Jim Crow era, the exhibition reveals the artist's remarkable ability to envision harmony and transcendence amid a world of social and racial tensions. Through densely layered imagery, luminous color, and recurring spiritual motifs, Evans created a body of work that remains as relevant and resonant today as when it was first made.



The exhibition arrives at a moment of renewed interest in Evans's work. While her drawings and paintings have appeared in influential exhibitions such as *The Milk of Dreams* at the 2022 Venice Biennale, *Supernatural America: The Paranormal in American Art* (2022) at the Minneapolis Institute of Art, and *Surrealism and Us: Caribbean and African Diasporic Artists Since 1940* (2024) at the Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth, Evans has not been the subject of a major solo museum presentation since the 1990s. This landmark exhibition offers an unprecedented opportunity to experience the full breadth of her artistic vision and legacy.

"Evans is part of a long tradition of American artists who found sacred meaning in the natural world," said Barbara Haskell, Curator at the Whitney Museum of American Art. "Her decades of working at the Airlie Gardens gave her a profoundly personal relationship to nature. In filtering her experience of the gardens through dreams and visions that resonated with her inner life, fears, and religious faith, she created images of a lost paradise whose abundance can feel simultaneously ecstatic and claustrophobic."

"The Whitney's 1975 exhibition played a transformative role in introducing Evans's work to museum audiences in New York and beyond," said Kim Conaty, the Nancy and Steve Crown Family Chief Curator at the Whitney. "Fifty years later, we're thrilled to train our focus once again on this exceptional artist, whose exquisite works offer a powerful lens through which to examine American history, spirituality, creativity, and resilience."

The Lost World: The Art of Minnie Evans returns the artist to the institution where a historic milestone began and reflects the Whitney's ongoing commitment to expanding the story of American art by highlighting artists whose contributions have historically been overlooked. The exhibition showcases an extraordinary range of creative expression, foregrounding the

achievements of a Black woman artist working independently in the American South during much of the twentieth century.

The Lost World: The Art of Minnie Evans is organized by the High Museum of Art, Atlanta, and curated by Katherine Jentleson, the High Museum's Senior Curator of American Art and Merrie and Dan Boone Curator of Folk and Self-Taught Art. The presentation at the Whitney Museum of American Art is organized by Barbara Haskell, Curator, with Caroline Webb, Curatorial Assistant.

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EXHIBITION SUPPORT

Major support for *The Lost World: The Art of Minnie Evans* is provided by the Barbara Haskell American Fellows Legacy Fund and the Kapadia Equity Fund.

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:

Minnie Evans, *Untitled (Three Figures and Angels Collage)*, 1961–1967. Oil, crayon, and pencil on paper and canvas, 14 × 19 in. (35.56 × 48.26 cm). Collection of John Jerit. © The Estate of Minnie Evans

Minnie Evans, *Untitled (The Lions of Judah Collage)*, 1968. Oil and crayon on paper and board, 19 1/2 × 23 1/2 in. (49.53 × 59.69 cm). Collection of Christian Daniel. © The Estate of Minnie Evans

Minnie Evans, *Untitled (Four Figures Collage)*, 1961–1967. Oil, crayon, and pencil on paper and canvas. Collection of John Jerit. © The Estate of Minnie Evans

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