

WHITNEY

Whitney Museum of American Art

PRESS RELEASE

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Whitney Museum of American Art
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RELATED EVENTS EXPAND DIMENSIONS OF THE 2004 BIENNIAL

A key element of the 2004 Whitney Biennial is the exchange of ideas and encouragement of lively discourse about the state of American art today. An extensive slate of Biennial-related programming, designed to stimulate debate among artists, curators, students, critics, and the public, has been planned. These programs will examine emerging artistic treatments of history, fantasy, and the creative process, as evidenced by the works in the exhibition. Complete details are given in the Biennial program guide, available during the run of the exhibition in the Museum's Lobby.

This year's Biennial – the Whitney Museum of American Art's 72nd edition of its periodic look at the latest in contemporary American art – will present the work of 108 artists and collaborative groups, throughout most of the Museum, from March 11 to May 30, 2004. An occasion for passionate debate since its introduction in 1932, the Biennial has become the Whitney's signature show. This year's Biennial will feature a number of newly commissioned outdoor projects throughout Central Park, presented in collaboration with the Public Art Fund. In addition, the exhibition will include dozens of programs, events, screenings and performances.

As the Biennial curators note in their catalogue introduction, "The 2004 Whitney Biennial marks a complex moment of transition in our cultural landscape, catalyzed by the political and economic tumult of the last few years, which has triggered a profound response among artists of all ages. Diverse approaches to process, narrative, materiality, abstraction, conceptual strategies, technology, and history can be found across generations of artists, in a synergy that has provided the foundation for this exhibition."

Seminars with Artists

Initiated in 1973, the popular Seminars with Artists series is an ongoing Whitney program, featuring contemporary artists in conversation about their influences, developments, and achievements. This season's Seminars, held on select Tuesday evenings at 7 pm, all feature 2004 Biennial artists.

March 30: **Elizabeth Peyton**
April 13: **Fred Tomaselli**
April 20: **Richard Prince**
April 27: **Glenn Kaino**
May 4: **Laylah Ali**
May 11: **Spencer Finch**

Admission to each Seminars with Artists program, unless otherwise noted: \$8; members, senior citizens, and students with valid ID \$6. Advance sales are strongly recommended, as seating is limited. Tickets are available by visiting the Museum Admissions Desk or by calling 1-(877)-WHITNEY.

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On Wednesday, May 19, at 7 pm, Artistic Trends, Cultural Connections: Responses to the 2004 Biennial Exhibition, a roundtable discussion, will address various artistic tendencies highlighted by the Biennial. While some of the 2004 Biennial artists compose gothic nightmares, fantastic creatures, or fairy-tale worlds, others turn to the recent past, remembering and interpreting the examples of Minimalism, Pop art, and psychedelia. Still others paint and draw, eschewing slick technology for everyday materials. Led by Adam D. Weinberg, the Whitney's Alice Pratt Brown Director, the roundtable will explore and consider these and other themes in light of American art history, culture, and politics. Cultural critic Kurt Andersen, novelist Samuel R. Delany, exhibiting artist Mary Kelly, and exhibiting filmmaker Jonas Mekas will talk about why Biennial artists do what they do--and what their work tells us about both the past and the present.

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Beyond the Whitney: Curator's Close-Up, a series of panel discussions on three Wednesday evenings at 7 pm in April, will take a group of Biennial artists to three New York City schools – Barnard College, Hunter College, and The Graduate Center at CUNY – to engage in conversations with students and the general public. Each discussion will be led by one of the Biennial curators. These events are free and open to the public; seats are available on a first-come, first-served basis.

On the Adolescent Impulse
Wednesday, April 14 at 7 pm
Hunter College, Ida K. Lang Recital Hall, Room 424
North Building, East 69th Street (between Lexington and Park Avenues)

Shamim M. Momin investigates the prevalence of an "adolescent impulse" in contemporary art: a fluid, creative sensibility recognizing no distinction between a high cultural tradition and the proliferation of low or subcultural styles. With Sue de Beer, Dario Robleto, and Banks Violette, Ms. Momin will explore imagery and ideas drawn from horror movies, punk, sci-fi, and gothic worlds. Katy Siegel, of Hunter College and Artforum magazine, moderates.

On the Uses of Nostalgia
Wednesday, April 21 at 7 pm
Barnard College
Julius S. Held Lecture Hall (located inside Barnard Hall, Room 304)
3009 Broadway (enter on 117th Street)

Curator **Debra Singer** has invited Biennial artists Tom Burr, Christian Holstad, and Jim Hodges to discuss the critical and creative uses of nostalgia, a subject sometimes regarded with skepticism. As Ms. Singer suggests, "like DJs," contemporary artists "plunder history, sampling elements to create their own aesthetic statements that comment on present-day concerns and consider alternatives for the future." Sina Najafi of Cabinet magazine moderates.

On the Projected Image in the Age of Digital Reproduction
Monday, April 26 at 7 pm
The Graduate Center, City University of New York
365 Fifth Avenue (between 34th & 35th Streets)

Curator **Chrissie Iles**, exhibiting artists Craigie Horsfield and Catherine Sullivan, and George Baker, assistant professor of Art History at UCLA and co-editor of October magazine, discuss the role of the projected image in contemporary artmaking. Geoffrey Batchen, professor of photography, contemporary art and cyberculture at The Graduate Center, CUNY, moderates.

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About the Whitney

The Whitney Museum of American Art is the leading advocate of 20th and 21st-century American art. Founded in 1930, the Museum is widely regarded as the preeminent collection of 20th-century American art and includes the entire artistic estate of Edward Hopper, the largest public collection of works by Alexander Calder, Louise Nevelson, and Lucas Samaras, as well as significant works by Arshile Gorky, Jasper Johns, Donald Judd, Agnes Martin, Bruce Nauman, Georgia O'Keeffe, Claes Oldenburg, Kiki Smith, and Andy Warhol, among other artists. With its history of exhibiting the most promising and influential American artists and provoking intense critical and public debate, the Whitney's signature show, the Biennial, gauges the state of contemporary art in America today.

Current and Upcoming Exhibitions at the Whitney Museum of American Art:

New Additions: Prints Through April 2004
Inside Out: Portrait Photographs Through May 23, 2004
2004 Biennial March 11-May 30, 2004

The museum is located at 945 Madison Avenue, at 75th Street, New York City. Museum hours are: Wednesday, Thursday, Saturday, and Sunday from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m., Friday from 1 p.m. to 9 p.m., closed Monday and Tuesday. For information, please call 1-800 WHITNEY or visit www.whitney.org.

Current Exhibitions at the Whitney Museum of American Art at Altria:
Luis Gispert Through March 12, 2004
Architecture by Numbers March 25-July 2, 2004