

PRESS RELEASE

State of the Art: Discovering American Art Now

New exhibition offers an unusually diverse look at contemporary American art

Minneapolis Institute of Art
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artsmia.org



Delita Martin, born 1972; *Sisters* (detail), 2014; mixed media on paper; 47 ½ x 74 ½ in.; Courtesy Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, Bentonville, Arkansas. Photo: Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, Edward C. Robison III

Minneapolis, MN, January 21, 2016—The Minneapolis Institute of Art (Mia) presents “State of the Art: Discovering American Art Now,” a one-of-a-kind exhibition offering a snapshot of what contemporary American art looks like today. Showcasing 134 works—including paintings, photographs, videos, sculptures, works on paper, installations and performances—by 52 under-recognized artists from nearly every U.S. region, the exhibition examines how today’s artists are informed by the past, innovate with materials old and new, and engage deeply with issues relevant to their communities. On view February 18 to May 22, 2016, “State of the Art” was organized by Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, Bentonville, Arkansas, where it debuted to critical and popular acclaim.

Mia



Jimmy Baker, born 1980, *Arrangement I*, 2013, Oil and UV ink on canvas over panel. Courtesy Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, Bentonville, Arkansas. Photo: Courtesy of the artist.



Laurel Roth Hope, born 1973, *Flight of the Dodo*, 2013 Walnut, gold leaf, and silver leaf. Courtesy Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, Bentonville, Arkansas Photo: Andy Hope

The “State of the Art” exhibition culminated a year-long process in which Crystal Bridges’ curatorial team crossed the country, logging over 100,000 miles, to visit nearly 1,000 artists in rural communities and urban centers—many of them unknown outside of their region. The artists selected for the exhibition had to fill three criteria: virtuosity, engagement, and appeal. The exhibition not only reflects what is happening in studios and creative communities across the nation, it introduces these artists to a broader audience.

In addition to Mia’s presentation, additional versions of “State of the Art” are traveling to Telfair Museums, Savannah, Georgia, February 19 through September 4, 2016, and Dixon Gallery and Gardens, Memphis, Tennessee, January 29 through March 26, 2017.

As with the original version, the artists included in “State of the Art” at Mia offer different world views, styles, mediums, and narratives reflecting the diversity and talent currently in America. Of the 52 artists in Mia’s installation, 27 are female and 25 are male and their ages range from 24 to 87. The regional split is also balanced.

Three Minnesota artists are featured in the exhibition: Chris Larson, Andy Ducett, and Cameron Gainer. Larson’s video *Heavy Rotation* (2011), explores the creation, destruction, and process in an artist’s studio and was screened as part of the 2014 Whitney Biennial in New York City. Ducett’s interactive installation *Mom Booth* (2013) is a take on the museum information desk and is staffed by volunteers. It premiered at Mia’s “More Real” opening in 2013. Gainer’s video *Eternal Hour* (2014) is a one-second loop from the opening credits of the *Days of Our Lives* TV program that plays with the idea of time and how we experience it. Other artists include:

- Mequitta Ahuja, from Baltimore, MD, casts herself in the guise of mythic warriors and epic heroes descending from traditions across cultures in her multi-layered works.
- Joel S. Allen, a mixed media artist from Steamboat Springs, CO creates objects that look to both the past and future.

- Jimmy Baker, from Cincinnati, OH, whose series *Arrangements* blends textile patterns, floral still lifes, and news images of the death of Muammar al-Gaddafi.
- Mary Ann Currier, Louisville, KY, renders still-life objects meticulously in colored pencil.
- Kirk Crippens, a photographer from Emeryville, CA, who documents the physical manifestation of the financial crisis—the loss of homes and businesses—in Stockton, CA.
- Laurel Roth Hope, from San Francisco, CA, whose works transform ordinary objects into elaborate animal sculptures.
- Nathalie Miebach, a Boston-based artist, translates weather data into complex sculptures and musical scores.
- Fahamu Pecou, from Atlanta, GA, whose drawings address concerns around contemporary representations of Black masculinity.

"We're excited to offer Mia visitors the opportunity to explore the breadth of American contemporary art, beyond what is typically presented in the art world," said Dennis Jon, Associate Curator of Prints and Drawings at Mia, "The engaging nature of these diverse works are bound to connect with our audiences in new ways."

The journey to discover artists across the U.S. and the resulting exhibition are highlighted in a short [video](#), a precursor to a documentary film debuting in 2016.

"State of the Art: Discovering American Art Now" is on view February 18 through May 29, 2016. General admission is \$20/Mia members, \$16. Tickets information can be found [here](#). The exhibition is accompanied by a hardcover, boxed book retailing for \$49. It is available at The Store at Mia and can be ordered [online](#) or by calling (612) 870-3100.

Opening Night Events:

Third Thursday: State of the Art

Thursday, February 18; 6 to 9 p.m.

Celebrate the opening night of "[State of the Art: Discovering American Art Now](#)" at Mia's Third Thursday. Guests of the event can join Mia as a [free member](#) and get free admission to the exhibition, experience live artist activations, make their own artist statement, create an artwork inspired by the show, and take in live music presented by Local Current from 89.3 The Current.

Artist Talk: Sonya Clark

Thursday, February 18; 7 p.m.

Virginia-based fiber artist [Sonya Clark](#) will discuss how her work weaves together histories of textiles and cultural identity. The varied objects she crafts reflect the rich textile and hair traditions of Africa, black America, and the Caribbean. Clark will tie in her "State of the Art" piece, *Albers Interaction Series*, with her overall artistic process, as well as her new work *Unravelling*, in which she dismantles the Confederate flag by hand to evoke the slow, patient work of dismantling racism.

Clark currently serves as Chair and Professor in the Department of Craft/Material Studies at the School of the Arts, Virginia Commonwealth University. Free (ticket required).

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About The Minneapolis Institute of Art

Home to more than 89,000 works of art representing 5,000 years of world history, the Minneapolis Institute of Art (Mia) inspires wonder, spurs creativity, and nourishes the imagination. With extraordinary exhibitions and one of the finest wide-ranging art collections in the country—Rembrandt to van Gogh, Monet to Matisse, Asian to African—Mia links the past to the present, enables global conversations, and offers an exceptional setting for inspiration.

General admission to Mia is always free. Some special exhibitions have a nominal admission fee.

Museum Hours

Tuesday, Wednesday, Saturday	10am–5pm
Thursday, Friday	10am–9pm
Sunday	11am–5pm
Monday	Closed

For more information, call + 1 612 870 3000 or visit artsmia.org

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