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## Must-See Museum Shows Opening This Spring

*By AiA Staff*

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Wangechi Mutu: *In Two Canoe*, 2022, bronze, 180 by 68 by 72 inches.  
COURTESY GLADSTONE GALLERY

For the annual *Art in America Guide*, published in print in January, the editors of *A.i.A.* highlight significant and intriguing museum exhibitions throughout the year. Below is a list of noteworthy shows opening this Spring.

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## Wangechi Mutu



Photo : Collection Jeanne Greenberg Rohatyn and Nicolas Rohatyn

Wangechi Mutu is known for her otherworldly works that combine mythical and folkloric narratives with sociohistorical references. Her early collage-based works of beguiling chimeric creatures often contained subtle feminist and colonialist critiques. Her recent sculptural practice, including the large bronze “aliens” installed on the facade of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in 2019, explores themes of migrancy, globalization, and African and diasporic cultural traditions. This major exhibition, featuring more than 100 works from Mutu’s 25-year career, will allow viewers to trace the evolution of her work and her vivid imagination.

*New Museum, New York, Mar. 2–June 4, 2023*

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Celia Álvarez Muñoz



Photo : ©Celia Álvarez Muñoz

Born and raised in El Paso and now living in Arlington, Texas, Chicana artist Celia Álvarez Muñoz has long dealt with the lived experience of those residing in the borderlands of the US and Mexico. Key to her practice is her mission to be an “artivist,” both an artist and activist at once. Her multifaceted conceptual practice comprises installation, photography, painting, and artist books. Some 35 major works are gathered here for her first career retrospective, including examples from her “Enlightenment” series that directly, and subversively, puns on mistranslations and double meanings between Spanish and English as a way to analyze language barriers and language acquisition.

*Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego, La Jolla, Mar. 11–July 30, 2023*

## **Evelyn Hofer**



Dubbed “the most famous unknown photographer in America” by *New York Times* art critic Hilton Kramer in the 1980s, German-born Evelyn Hofer was a prolific photographer who captured urban scenes at the height of social and economic transformations after WWII. The artist’s first museum exhibition in the United States in more than 50 years centers around photobooks she produced in the 1960s of European and American cities—primarily Florence, Dublin, London, New York, and Washington, D.C.—as well as Spain. Hofer captured each place’s character by combining portraiture with landscapes and architectural vistas. More than 100 black-and-white and color prints will be on view.

*High Museum of Art, Atlanta, Mar. 24–Aug. 13, 2023; Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, MO, Sept. 16, 2023–Feb. 11, 2024*

## Christina Quarles





Photo : Courtesy Pilar Corrias, London, and Hauser and Wirth

Fantastically colored appendages intertwine in a dance (or duel) in the dizzying paintings of Christina Quarles. Her luscious figures are the star of a major show at Hamburger Bahnhof, where they will be paired with works from the museum's collection, including those by American performance artist Vito Acconci, German conceptual photographer Annette Kelm, and German sculptor Charlotte Posenenske, whose minimalist creations will be a curious counterpoint to Quarles's excess.

*Hamburger Bahnhof, Berlin, Mar. 31, 2023–Sept. 17, 2023*

## Juan de Pareja



Photo : Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid

Juan de Pareja is most famous not as an artist in his own right but as the sitter for a 1650 portrait by Diego Velázquez. In whose studio he was an enslaved artisanal laborer for two decades. A major exhibition at the

Velázquez, in whose studio he was an enslaved African laborer for two decades. A major exhibition at the Met, “Juan de Pareja, Afro-Hispanic Painter,” seeks to change the existing narrative by telling the story of de Pareja as an Afro-Hispanic artist navigating Spain’s Golden Age. In addition to rarely seen works by de Pareja, the show will include portraits of Black and Morisco (Muslims forced to convert to Catholicism) sitters by Velázquez, Zurbarán, and Murillo, charting the prevalence of enslaved labor in the country and highlighting how multiracial a society Spain was at the time. Accompanying the Met exhibition is a dossier show at the Hispanic Society, “Investigating Juan de Paraja (ca. 1608–1670),” featuring works from the collection by the artist or attributed to him.

*Metropolitan Museum of Art and Hispanic Society Museum & Library, New York, Apr. 3–July 16, 2023*

## Hip Hop and Contemporary Art



Photo : Collection Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art, Kansas City/Courtesy L.A. Louver Gallery, Los Angeles

More than just music, “hip-hop” has worked its way into different strains of culture going back to the four foundational elements established around its beginnings in the 1970s: emceeing, deejaying, breakdancing,

and graffiti. Decades later, the culture of hip-hop has expanded so fully that it shapes dialogue around structures of power; challenges dominant cultural narratives; and sheds light on political and social systems of oppression. Focused on the movement's evolution from 2000 to the present, "The Culture: Hip Hop and Contemporary Art in the 21st Century" will feature around 70 artworks by such artists as Nina Chanel Abney, Jordan Casteel, Lauren Halsey, and Arthur Jafa, along with objects from design houses, streetwear stars, and musicians working in and around hip-hop in different media.

*Baltimore Museum of Art, Apr. 5–July 16, 2023; St. Louis Art Museum, Aug. 26, 2023–Jan. 1, 2024*

## Jesús Rafael Soto



Photo : Raphael GAILLARDE/Gamma-Rapho via Getty Images

The late Venezuelan artist Jesús Rafael Soto was a master of illusion, creating Op art and kinetic paintings and sculptures that became increasingly layered and complex over the course of his career. In 1967 he made the first of several installations that immersed visitors in giddy streams of color. These environments, which he called *Penetrables*, were thin painted metal rods of varying lengths suspended from the ceiling, which together destabilize one's sense of space while moving through them. As part of the Hispanic Society's centennial celebration—and coinciding with Soto's own 100-year anniversary—the museum is mounting the first-ever *Penetrable* installation in New York. Expect selfies shot from inside the mesmerizing work to grace your social media feeds.



**Simone Leigh**



Photo : Photo Timothy Schenck/Courtesy Matthew Marks Gallery

After a momentous year during which she represented the US at the Venice Biennale—and won a Golden Lion for her efforts—Simone Leigh will be the subject of a major traveling exhibition organized by the Boston ICA, which commissioned the US pavilion. The show will feature the Venice works along with ceramics, bronzes, videos, and installations from the past two decades that explore ideas of race, beauty, and community through vernacular and handmade processes that reference African art, architecture, and diasporic traditions.

*Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston, Apr. 6–Sept. 4, 2023; Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, D.C., Nov. 2023–Mar. 2024; L.A. County Museum of Art and the California African American Museum, Los Angeles, June 2024–Jan. 2025*

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## Bruce Onobrakpeya



Photo : Collection of Bruce Onobrakpeya

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As one of the founders of Nigerian modernism and the Zaria Art Society, Bruce Onobrakpeya (b. 1932) was instrumental in developing the “natural synthesis” aesthetic that came to define early postcolonial Nigerian art, and he pioneered printing techniques to create his bold compositions. The upcoming exhibition “The Mask and the Cross” focuses on works Onobrakpeya made from 1967 through 1978, when he combined traditional Benin forms, folklore, and cosmology with Catholic motifs and stories from the Bible, reimagining Biblical characters and settings as Nigerian. Centered around the High Museum’s own edition of Onobrakpeya’s “Fourteen Stations of the Cross” prints, the show—the artist’s first at an American museum—will also include other works from this and later periods.

*High Museum of Art, Atlanta, Apr. 7–July 30, 2023*

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## Pacita Abad



Photo : Photo Pioneer Studios/Courtesy Pacita Abad Art Estate

American artist Faith Ringgold once remarked that Pacita Abad made her work “from the point of view of an international woman of color”—a perspective, Ringgold believed, that afforded Abad sympathy toward communities who were long kept out of Western narratives. Born in the Philippines and based in the US for much of her career, Abad created stuffed canvases using a technique called trapunto, a play on the Italian word for quilt. She used these brilliantly colored works to depict refugees, sex workers, and immigrants, at times even contemplating her own Filipina identity in the process. Abad’s career ended prematurely when she died of lung cancer in 2004, at age 58. But this 80-work retrospective will mark at least one attempt to summon her exuberance anew for US audiences, who have had few opportunities to see her art.

*Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, Apr. 15–Sept. 15, 2023; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, Oct. 21, 2023–Feb. 11, 2024*

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## Jaune Quick-to-See Smith





Photo : Collection the artist/Courtesy Garth Greenan Gallery, New York

A member of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Nation, Jaune Quick-to-See Smith says that her “life’s work involves examining contemporary life in America and interpreting it through Native ideology.” Her first retrospective in New York and the most comprehensive to date, “Memory Map” brings together five decades’ worth of paintings, sculptures, drawings, and prints that share visual similarities to such styles as Pop and neo-expressionism. But Smith deploys cunning riffs on these movements, using them to illuminate absurdities in the formation of dominant culture. She has long addressed undercurrents running through American history—land use, racism, and cultural preservation—mining the historical privileges and violent events that often lie beneath them.

*Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, Apr. 19–Aug. 1, 2023; National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., Sept. 24, 2023–Jan. 15, 2024*

## Josh Kline





Photo : Photo Joerg Lohse/Courtesy 47 Canal, New York, and Modern Art, London.

Decapitated heads in shopping carts, a tearful computer-generated George W. Bush, and Teletubbies in SWAT gear are among the many horrifying oddities that have appeared in Josh Kline's sculptures, films, and installations over the past decade. Sleek and highly polished, these works take up the aesthetic of lifestyle brands and turn it dark and ugly, envisioning post-apocalyptic worlds riven by class strife and ecological disaster. Having earned plaudits in the early 2010s for his use of 3D-printing technology and deep-fake software, Kline now gets a survey that will include 100 works, among them recent pieces that imagine climate change's more extreme effects.

*Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, Apr. 19–Aug. 2023*

## Aliza Nisenbaum



Photo : Courtesy Queens Museum, New York

Passengers traveling through LaGuardia Airport's recently revamped Delta Terminal may have spotted a

vibrant mosaic of employees who make travel possible, including flight attendants, a security guard, and a janitor. The work by Aliza Nisenbaum exemplifies the Queens-based artist's longtime dedication to portraying historically marginalized or overlooked people in large-scale canvases with high-key palettes. Nisenbaum's original painting for the airport commission takes center stage at this solo exhibition, which also features art by volunteer leaders of English-Spanish art workshops that Nisenbaum organized. Additional bilingual workshops will be conducted in the gallery as part of the artist's onsite residency.

*Queens Museum, NY, Apr. 23–Sept. 10, 2023*

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### **Keith Haring**





Photo : Courtesy Broad Art Foundation/©Keith Haring Foundation

Though he died at age 31 at the height of the AIDS epidemic, Keith Haring created an iconic body of work in a variety of mediums, from his early subway drawings to public murals, sculptures, videos, and even a triptych altarpiece, all with his signature use of vibrant colors, energetic linework, and distinctive characters. Featuring more than 120 works and archival materials, “Art is for Everybody” will examine Haring’s life, artistic practice, and activism on issues ranging from nuclear proliferation to sexuality. Immersive elements will include a black-lit gallery soundtracked by Haring’s own playlists and a re-creation of the artist’s SoHo retail space, the Pop Shop.

*The Broad, Los Angeles, May 27–Oct. 8, 2023*

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