

New York Lowdown: 7 Exhibitions to See Over Spring, 2024

By [Elaine YJ Zheng](#) | New York, 2 May 2024



Exhibition view: Joan Jonas, *Good Night Good Morning*, Museum of Modern Art, New York (17 March–6 July 2024). Photo: Jonathan Dorado.

As [Frieze New York](#) returns to The Shed (1–5 May 2024), we look to the abundance of collateral events, openings, and one-off performances taking place this week. Exhibitions to see at local galleries and institutions include a survey of the Harlem Renaissance at The Met, Pacita Abad at MoMA PS1, and Eva Hesse at Hauser & Wirth.



Exhibition view: *The Harlem Renaissance and Transatlantic Modernism*, The Met Fifth Avenue, New York (25 February–28 July 2024). Courtesy The Met. Photo: Anna-Marie Kellen.

The Harlem Renaissance and Transatlantic Modernism
The Met Fifth Avenue, 1000 Fifth Avenue
25 February–28 July 2024

Expect: the first museum survey of the Harlem Renaissance in New York since 1987, with some 160 works, including paintings, sculptures, photographs, and films.

Offering an illuminating overview of the evolution of Black depictions of modern life, *The Harlem Renaissance and Transatlantic Modernism* focuses on the Black cities that took shape across the northern United States between the 1920s and 1940s, as African Americans migrated from the rural south.

In New York, the Harlem Renaissance—a Black intellectual and cultural movement—led to the conception of a new Black subject, as posited in the writings of philosopher Alain Locke, among others.

The exhibition also investigates the cultural exchange that occurred between the Harlem Renaissance and the international art world with works by American artists such as Charles Alston, Aaron Douglas, and Meta Vaux Warrick Fuller shown alongside portrayals of people from the African diaspora by European painters such as Henri Matisse, Edvard Munch, and Pablo Picasso.



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Exhibition view: Pacita Abad, MoMA PS1, New York (4 April–2 September 2024). Courtesy MoMA PS1. Photo: Kris Graves.

Pacita Abad

MoMA PS1, 22–25 Jackson Avenue

4 April–2 September 2024

Expect: more than 50 works spanning the artist's over-three-decade career, many of which have never previously been exhibited in New York.

Relatively unknown during her lifetime, the late Filipina American artist Pacita Abad—whose work is also featured in this year's Venice Biennale exhibition, *Foreigners Everywhere*—developed a practice during the 1980s and 1990s that merged traditional folk elements with a global conscience. The resulting body of work presents a unified vision of humanity that speaks with continuing relevance to marginalised voices in America and beyond.

On view last year at Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, and San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, Abad's touring retrospective arrived in New York last month. Over her 32-year career, the artist travelled to some 60 countries, assembling materials, techniques, and styles. Highlights include her signature *trapuntos*, brightly-coloured quilted paintings, the surfaces of which are embroidered myriad materials, including beads, shells, buttons, padded cloth, and gold thread.



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Pacita Abad: World Citizen

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Take the evocative 'Mask and Spirits' series (1981–2000), which depicts

global mask traditions on monumental quilts, or the demonic faces of *Marcos and His Cronies* (1985–1995), a work Abad created in protest at the martial law under which Ferdinand Marcos governed the Philippines. The artist's participation in student demonstrations against his dictatorship in Manila during the late 1960s led her to emigrate to the U.S.

Other works convey the American immigrant experience. *L.A. Liberty* (1992), for instance, shows a young woman embodying the Statue of Liberty against a rainbow backdrop, simultaneously evoking both political liberation and racial and economic oppression within an increasingly-divided country, where the American dream of the white-picket fence seem to slip ever-further out of reach.



Exhibition view: Joan Jonas, *Good Night Good Morning*, Museum of Modern Art, New York (17 March–6 July 2024). Photo: Jonathan Dorado.

Joan Jonas: Good Night Good Morning
Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53rd Street
17 March–6 July 2024

Expect: the most comprehensive U.S. retrospective to date of the performance and video pioneer, including live performances by the artist.

Now 87, Joan Jonas started as a sculptor in New York in the 1960s, working in proximity to artists such as Nancy Holt, Claes Oldenburg, and Richard Serra. Her exposure to the city's avant garde—including the Judson Dance Theater choreographers, with whom she trained, and composer John Cage—shaped an expansive understanding of art's possibilities.



ARTIST PROFILE
Joan Jonas
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Jonas draws on myriad influences, from mythology to literature to Noh and Kabuki theatre, often staging choreographed performances to atmospheric soundtracks within sculptural landscapes. Using props such as mirrors, costumes, and masks, she reflected on authenticity, social determinism, and her experience as a woman.

After a visit to Japan in 1970, Jonas purchased her first portable video camera. Among her early filmed performances, *Organic Honey's Visual Telepathy* (1972), saw the artist enacting an alter ego named Organic Honey—an embodiment of the female archetype.

Joan Jonas: Good Night Good Morning traces the full breadth of the artist's career, from her early performances to her more recent installations about ecology. The exhibition further includes drawings, photographs, notebooks, oral histories, and film screenings.



Shuang Li, *Lord of the Flies* (2021/2022). Producer Naomi Yu; Wardrobe Direction Dre Romero. Performance view: *Where Jellyfish Come From*, Antenna Space, Shanghai (8 January–20 March 2022). Courtesy the artist and Peres Projects.

Shuang Li: I'm Not
Swiss Institute, 38 St Marks Place
1 May–25 August 2024

Expect: a rewind into the 1990s, with American punk rock band My Chemical Romance setting the stage for an inquiry into distant bodies and displaced desire.

For the artist Shuang Li who grew up in a small town in Fujian, China, the angst-filled lyrics of My Chemical Romance introduced the possibility of subcultural belonging and a view into the English language, the elusiveness of which her latest work explores.

At Swiss Institute, Li presents new sculptures and video installations that look at her own involvement with fandom to explore how language,

identity, and relationships can be mediated through screens and the internet. On the ground floor, an architectural model resembling those sighted in real estate showrooms Li visited with her parents as a child nods to the country's current economic challenges, with businesses forced to shut down and soaring youth unemployment contrasting the optimism brought about by market reform in the 1990s.

In the music video *I'm Not* (2024), Li re-writes the lyrics to the band's song 'I'm Not Okay (I Promise)' (2004) in Mandarin and English. An army choir conducted by a young girl sings along to the artist's rendition, paying tribute to the voices that articulated feelings shared by millions. Projected above the rippling surface of the heart-shaped fountain *Heart is a Broken Record* (2023) are stock images of blood drips and pumping veins. Footage of crowds awaiting the band to take stage is intercepted within the montage, cut right before they come into view.



Eva Hesse, *Expanded Expansion* (1969). Exhibition view: *Eva Hesse: Expanded Expansion*, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York (8 July–16 October 2022). © Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation, New York. All Rights Reserved. © The Estate of Eva Hesse. Courtesy Hauser & Wirth. Photo: Midge Wattles & Ariel Ione Williams.

Eva Hesse: Five Sculptures

Hauser & Wirth, 542 West 22nd Street

2 May–26 July 2024

Expect: a rare opportunity to view five of the artist's legendary large-scale works from her later years.

To mark 25 years of representing the estate of Eva Hesse, Hauser & Wirth presents five of the artist's most celebrated works, attesting to the breath, scope, and impact of her practice, in an exhibition organised with advisor Barry Rosen and art historian and critic Briony Fer.

Among those postwar artists in search of alternatives to abstract painting, Hesse employed industrial materials—such as latex, rope,

rubber, and fibreglass—in line with the minimalist tendencies of her time while imbuing these simple materials and forms with a distinct psychological charge.

During her lifetime, Hesse only held one exhibition of her sculptures, in 1968. To coincide with this show, the gallery is publishing a volume that documents the artist's exhibition history, from 1972 to 2022, and traces Hesse's posthumous trajectory to international acclaim.



Jan Wade, *Epiphany* (1994–ongoing). Exhibition View: 1-54 London with Richard Saltoun (13–16 October 2022). Courtesy Richard Saltoun Gallery, London/Rome/New York.

Jan Wade: *Colored Entrance*
Richard Saltoun Gallery, 19 East 66th Street
2 May–22 June 2024

Expect: paintings and assemblages that pay homage to the artist's roots

in the American South and African diasporic spiritual practices.

Reminiscent of the assemblages of American Black Arts Movement pioneer [Betye Saar](#), African-Canadian artist Jan Wade's mixed-media works engage with hegemonic histories through ritualistic commemoration—owing, perhaps, to the artist's upbringing in the African Methodist Episcopal Church.

Seeking to understand her ancestors' trauma, Wade contends with identity and mysticism in her practice, using thrifted and found objects to create totems that symbolise lived experience. The resulting works are heirloom-like objects that reflect universal themes of death and grief while tying into specific events surrounding present-day racial politics. *Breathe* (2004–2022), for instance, is a series of 70 embroidered canvases informed by the traditional quilting techniques of Gee's Bend, and dedicated to the Black Lives Matter movement.

In 2021, Wade became the first Black woman artist in the 90-year history of Vancouver Art Gallery to be the subject of a solo exhibition. This year, with *Colored Entrance*, the artist inaugurates her first U.S. solo show. Highlights include *Epiphany* (1994–ongoing), a wall-spanning installation of crosses decorated with found wood and thrift-shop objects connected to African American culture, serving as a monument to survival and persistence.



2 MAY–22 JUN 2024

Jan Wade

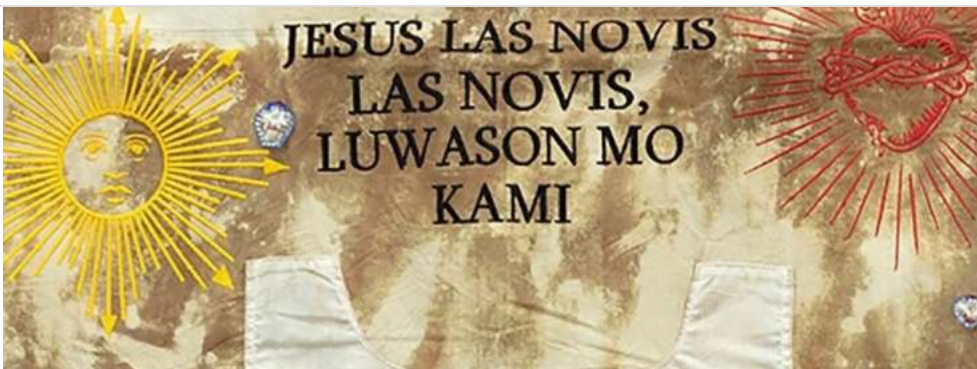
COLORED ENTRANCE

Richard Saltoun Gallery, New York

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Courtesy Silverlens.

Norberto Roldan: *How Not to Win a Revolution*
Silverlens, 505 West 24th Street

2 May–15 June 2024

Expect: artworks that attest to the enduring spirit of Filipino culture and society, and its persistence through war, colonial rule, and dictatorship.

Norberto Roldan describes his first U.S. solo exhibition as a 'post-colonial hang-up'. *How Not to Win a Revolution* traces the evolution of a revolutionary consciousness in Filipino history—a topic the artist has returned to throughout his four-decade career, informed by formative years spent in a seminary and his subsequent experience of living under the Marcos regime.

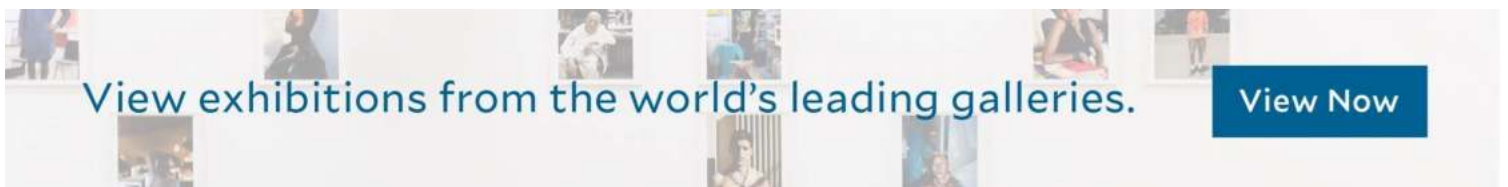
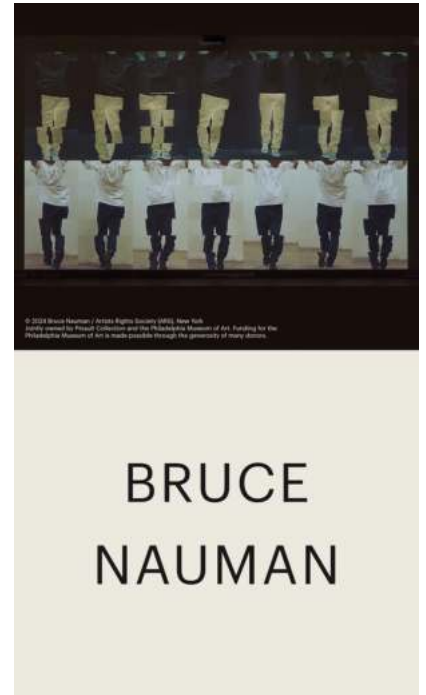


2 MAY–15 JUN 2024
Norberto Roldan
How Not to Win a Revolution
SILVERLENS, New York
[VIEW CURRENT EXHIBITION](#)

'While other formerly colonised countries in Southeast Asia and elsewhere have moved forward with better economies and remained culturally resilient, the Philippines is still waging revolutions and remains frozen,' the artist [explains](#).

Roldan was crucial to the development of art in the Philippines during the 1980s and 1990s, not only founding Black Artists in Asia, a collective that sought to unite progressive artists, but also the region's longest-running, artist-led biennale, VIVA EXCON.

Today, Roldan is known for his assemblages and installations that combine Christian and folk rituals, merging text with found objects—such as liturgical vestments, unearthed fabrics, and personal mementoes—to speak to the Philippines' evolving cultural and political reality. —[O]



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