

# Future Fossils



Jean-Luc Moulène; *Iron Mask (Mexico City)*, 2017, synthetic concrete (Rokam)

## Exhibition Description

The 19 artists whose work comprise this exhibition, living in the Anthropocene, make resonant objects that appear as if glimpsed in a review mirror, from some time in the future. These artists are creating a physical presence of a view of what will be a disappeared past. "Fossils are the preserved remains, or traces of remains, of ancient organisms. Fossils are not the remains of the organism itself!" according to [National Geographic](#)--the exclamation point is theirs. The works the artists create are conduits for assessment and critique of today's culture.

These retrospective views of our present from an imagined future can be seen as effigies, and like Paleolithic relics, are cast—in glass, metal, plaster and resins. And some are reenactments of their sources, constructed in fabric and cardboard. The works in the exhibition can be organized into two divisions with some artists working in both, and some creating hybrid works: Corporal/Effigies and Cultural/Fossils.

## Invited Artists

Ai Weiwei (China/Portugal)  
Sanford Biggers (United States)  
Izaak Brandt (United Kingdom)  
Jedediah Caesar (United States/United Kingdom/Germany)  
Julian Charrière (France/Switzerland/Germany)  
Tania Pérez Córdova (Mexico)  
Liz Glynn (United States)  
Maureen Gruben (Canada)  
Matthew Angelo Harrison (United States)  
William Larson (United States)  
James Lewis (United Kingdom/Austria)  
Jean-Luc Moulène (France)  
Reynier Leyva Novo (Cuba)  
Studio Drift (Netherlands)  
Do Ho Suh (Korea/United Kingdom)  
Clarissa Tossin (Brazil/United States)  
Marion Verboom (France)  
Nari Ward (Jamaica/United States)  
Rachel Whiteread (United Kingdom)

## Curators

c<sup>2</sup>, a curatorial partnership between Ginger Gregg Duggan and Judith Hoos Fox, develops exhibitions of international, cross-media contemporary art and design that explore current issues in culture.

## Schedule

January 23- April 13, 2025 MassArt Art Museum, Boston, Massachusetts  
May 24-Sept 7, 2025 Susquehanna Museum of Art, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania  
Spring 2026 Torggler Fine Arts Center, Christopher University, Newport News, Virginia

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Judy Fox, curator [judy@curatorsquared.com](mailto:judy@curatorsquared.com), 617.640.4037

## Ai Weiwei

born in Beijing, China, 1957; lives in Berlin, Germany



*Study of Perspective in Glass, 2018*

Glass

4 3/4 x 3 7/8 x 4 1/8 inches; 12.1 x 9.8 x 10.5 cm

Ed. 5 of 100

Courtesy Lisson Gallery

Ai Weiwei's signature gesture, a raised finger, which he has photographed in front of many of the world's most iconic monuments, is his emphatic expression of opposition to politics. Here, in three dimensions, the gesture proliferates, and cast in glass, indicates endurance.

## Sanford Biggers

born in 1970, Los Angeles, California; lives in New York, New York



*BAM (for Michael)*, 2016  
bronze  
19 x 5 x 5 inches

*For his BAM! series Biggers draws from his varied collection of wooden African sculptures. He coats each figure with a layer of wax to obscure its individual identity before "sculpting" it at a firing range with gunshots. The figures are then cast anew in bronze and he renames each after a victim of brutality, imparting idiosyncrasy into the newly revitalized figures.*

<https://chazen.wisc.edu/exhibitions/sanford-biggers/>

## Isaak Brandt

born in Bristol, United Kingdom, xxxx; lives in London



*'Deadstock Archive: The Classics*

The piece takes six of the most famous and recognizable classic sneakers: the Air Jordan 1, BAPESTA, adidas Superstar, Nike Air Force 1, Converse Chuck Taylor and the Reebok Classic. But each of them has been transformed into a semi-transparent, skeletal sculpture, which now exists only as a decorative object. What remains are a kind of 'ghost' of the sneaker that was there before, preserved in a powder-coated steel frame.

<https://hypebeast.com/2021/8/izaak-brandt-deadstock-archive-exhibition>

## Jedediah Caesar

born in Oakland, California, 1973; lives in London, UK and Berlin, Germany

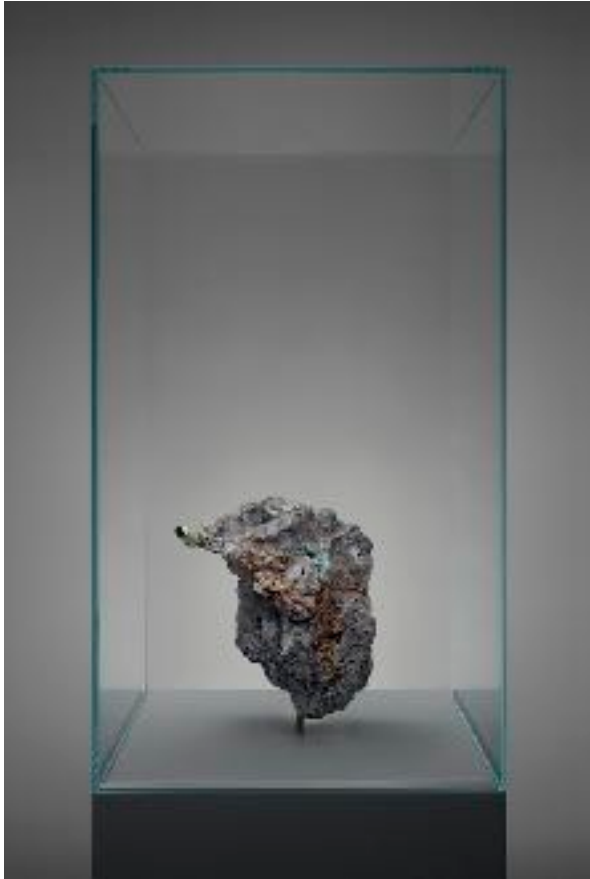


*Roman Kitchen*, 2005, 6 parts  
Polystyrene, Detritus, resin

The detritus that the artist collected from one year of living, cast into resin, and sliced and broken becomes a diary of daily life, just as organisms and found items get captured in geological events, keys to de-coding a past.

## Julian Charrière

born in 1987 in Morges, Switzerland; lives in Berlin, Germany



*Metamorphism, III, 2016*

Artificial lava, molten computer waste (main boards, CPUs, RAMs, hard drives, cables, etc.) corian pedestal, steel, white glass

64 3/4 x 17 3/4 x 17 3/4 inches; 164.5 x 45 x 45 cm

Private collection

*Displayed in vitrines like topological fragments from a futuristic natural history museum, Metamorphism is an amalgam of cultural memories incorporated into a geological matrix. For this piece internal elements from various technological devices (main boards, hard drives, CPUs, RAMs, etc. from laptop computers and smartphones) have been molten in an artificial lava, returning them to their geological origins. Beautiful aesthetic objects in their own right, these magnificent polychromatic sculptures reflect upon the mining and use of raw materials and the future of our civilization's artificial by-products. Berlin, Germany, 2016*

<https://www.julian-charriere.net/projects/metamorphism>

## Tania Pérez Córdova

born in Mexico City, Mexico in 1979 ; lives in Mexico City



*A Chandelier into a Chandelier (Un candelabro en un candelabro), 2023,*  
brass chandelier that was cast, melted, and recast into its own mold  
33 x 34 x 34 inches

*Some years ago a man passed by my street in Mexico City playing a trumpet asking for spare change. Instead, I bought his trumpet, then made a mould of the trumpet and melted it in a foundry only to pour the liquid metal back into the original mould. The result was an echo of the original trumpet, using the same material, another trumpet only that the second one is a fossil of the original. A shadow of the original trumpet, the new one being obsolete, having lost its function. The resulting recast turned imprecise, with some of its parts missing as the metal is lost in the process of remaking it.*

*Over the years I have continued the series whenever I come across an object that materially can be redone. A pot, a fence, a piece of roof.*

The source of the original chandelier from which this was cast was a light fixture, left behind by the tenant who preceded the artist when she moved into her new apartment.



## Liz Glynn

born in Boston, Massachusetts, 1981; lives in Los Angeles, California



detail

### *Unfinished Business*, 2019

Tee shirts with resin and steel armature

42 x 42 x 68 inches; 106.68 x 106.68 x 172.72 cm overall dimensions

Inventory #GLY150

Courtesy of the artist and Vielmetter Los Angeles

Photo credit: Robert Wedemeyer

Glynn has conjured a garment made entirely of t-shirts, some emblazoned with sayings and logos, that she casts over a steel armature. The artist has transmuted the ubiquitous uniform of today into a statuesque effigy. Just as the everyday implements used in Pompeii now hold revered places in museums, this casual garment has accrued importance beyond its origin.

Glynn has a continuing interest in archaeology. The Corbu Cab chairs that she reimagined made from the rubble from the renovation of Harvard's Fogg Museum, and then presented in Carpenter Center, Corbusier's only project in the US, took on the complex issues surrounding modernism's place in history, for example.

[The artist's monumental multi-part *Terra-Techné*, a musing on the Anthropocene, is mounted on the ceiling of the Harvey Milk Terminal in the San Francisco Airport.]

## Maureen Gruben

born in Tuktoyaktuk, Northwest Territories, Canada in 1963; lives in Tuktoyaktuk, Northwest Territories, Canada



*Fresh Artifacts*, 2017

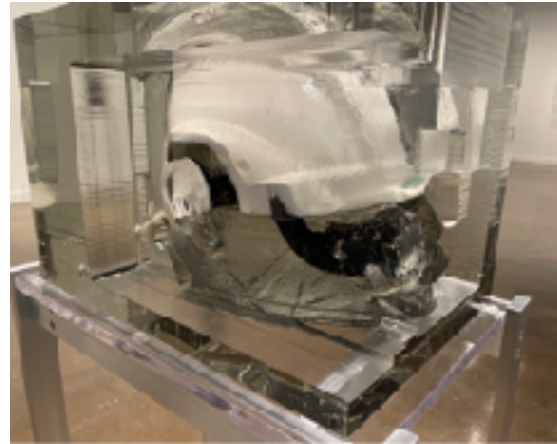
cast resin, steel, copper nails, reflective tape, wax  
each of 3 5/2 X 12 inches; 132.08 X 30.48 cm

*Fresh Artifacts* consists of three resin casts taken from a wooden fox stretcher used by Maureen's father. Eddie was renowned as a hunter and trapper and is remembered as a generous supporter of his community. Orphaned as a young child by famine and the 1920's pandemic, his skill and efforts in trapping with a dog team over vast distances enabled him to eventually build the largest transportation company in the Northwest Territories. As a youth, Eddie attended residential school and was assigned the number four as a "student number." Throughout his life, he inscribed many of his important possessions with the Roman numeral "IV." This marking has been transferred from his fox stretcher to two of the casts. The translucence of their rounded forms suggests vessels capable of both holding and sharing, generously revealing layers of textures, materials and process. The active play with light emphasizes that memory is a living phenomenon, bound as closely to the present as to the past. Likewise, in its deep familial connection to a life spent immersed in the tundra, the *Fresh Artifacts* refers to a spirituality based on experiences of a present, living land and family lineage, rather than on opaque ancient texts or transcendent but endlessly deferred futures.

-the artist

## Matthew Angelo Harrison

born in Detroit, Michigan, 1989; lives in Detroit, Michigan



*Seer: Peering through Aurora, 2020*

Headlight, tinted polyurethane resin, anodized aluminum, acrylic  
20 5/8 x 10 3/8 6 1/2 inches; 52.4 x 26.4 x 16.5 cm

*Helmet, 2021*

Polyurethane resin, plastic hardhat, anodized aluminum, acrylic

A graduate of the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, Harrison worked as a model builder for Ford Motor Company, making prototypes of cars models and parts in clay. In his artistic practice he brings these disparate experiences together in conjoining "auto industry ephemera encased in resin blocks. Frozen and entombed, these sculptures appear as strangely haunted minimalist objects, both ancient and futuristic," as noted in the [monograph](#) by Natalie Bell et al. The car as we now know it will be a relic, like a horse drawn buggy, in a not so distant future. His objects will hold the histories of industry and environmental concerns.

## William Lamson

born in Arlington, Virginia in 1977; lives in Brooklyn, New York



*Thermal Fountain*, 2024  
refrigerator compressor

In *Thermal Fountain* the inner parts of a refrigerator are exposed directly to the air within the gallery. As the compressor pushes refrigerant through the copper lines, moisture in the air condenses on the super cooled metal surface and immediately forms a thin layer of frost. When the timer controlling the compressor turns off, the frost melts in matter of seconds producing droplets of water that drip down the copper lines. This accelerated process of freezing and thawing produces a slow fountain, a stream of water collected in part by every viewer that enters the room and breathes the air.

Though not a fossil, strictly, this mesmerizing sculpture speaks to the remnants of a culture where controlled climate is considered a necessity, and is contributing to the demise of the environment.

## James Lewis

born in London, 1986; lives in Vienna and London



*Dusk Slug IV*, 2021

wood, plaster bandage, concrete, glass, whiskey, strip light, clay, acrylic paint  
35 1/2 x 33 1/2 x 33 1/2 inches; 90 x 85 x 85 cm

The day-after-the-night-before — not the best moment for our culture to be summed up by future generations.

## Jean-Luc Moulène

born 1955, Reims, France; lives in Normandy



*Iron Mask (Mexico City 2017), 2017*

Synthetic Concrete (Rokam)

7 1/2 x 11 x 6 5/16 inches; 19 x 28 x 16 cm

Moulène made a group of some 24 objects by pouring concrete into the cavities of silicone masks, his *Tronche (Face)* series. Filled to the point of testing the concrete's strength, the mask falls to the ground if the balance is broken, smashing the face. These ghostly heads run counter to the manipulations and seductions of artistic representation, recalling both archaic and robotic portraiture.

## Reynier Leyva Novo

born in La Habana, Cuba, 1983; lives in La Habana, Cuba



*The Desire to Die for Others*, 2012

cast in polyester resin from original objects

various sizes—8 fossils of weapons

In this 2012 series, the cavities within the blocks of polyester resin are the negative forms of the signature weapons used by Cuban leaders in the long struggles that define the history of Cuban: pistols, swords, machetes, for example. Rather than the cool mute resin blocks that we know from minimal sculpture, these hollowed cubes, fossils, are loaded with multiple readings: historical, politicalize, humanitarian.

Bala Francisco (Panchito) Gómez Toro

Revólver Carlos Manuel de Céspedes

Revólver Calixto García Iñiguez

Revólver José Martí

Machete Antonia Maceo

Machete Quintín Bandera

Machete Manuel Sanguily

Machete Máximo Gómez

**Studio Drift** founded 2007

Lonneke Gordijn

born in Netherlands, 1980; lives in Amsterdam

Ralph Nauta

born in Netherlands, 1978; lives in Amsterdam



*Materialism M16 + bullet*, 2019 (right)

aluminum, glass fiber, steel, stainless steel, carbon steel, anodize coating, phosphate coating, chrome bullet, smokeless powder, brass, lead, tracer compounds, cupronickel, nickel, leadstypate, paper

4-5/16 × 10-1/16 × 9-11/16 inches; 11 × 25.5 × 24.6 cm

Edition 1 of 5

*Materialism AK-47 + bullet*, 2019 (left)

birch wood, steel, paint, bakelite, carbon steel, oil and chrome; Bullet steel, smokeless powder, tracer compound, lacquer, lead, brass, leadstypate, copper and paper foil

10-13/16 × 10-9/16 × 5-1/8"; 27.5 × 26.8 × 13cm

Edition 1 of 5

In this series called *Materialism*, the Studio reduces everyday objects—from a Barbie doll to and Volkswagen Beetle—into the exact amount of the specific raw materials from which they had been fabricated, encouraging the viewer to consider the exact elements that are the building blocks of our culture. These elegant groups of minimal cubes belie their source, assault weapons, all too familiar to us from the mass shootings that recur, all too regularly. The M16 was adapted from US military weaponry (right) and the AK-47 (left) is gas operated developed in the Soviet Union. The violence in our current culture, domestically as well as internationally, is a dark piece of the legacy that defines our current culture.



## Do Ho Suh

born in Seoul, Korea, 1962; lives in London, United Kingdom



*Refrigerator, Apartment A, 348 West 22nd Street, New York, NY 10011, USA, 2013*

Polyester fabric, stainless steel wire, and glass display case with LED lighting

65.75 x 28.75 x 29.125 inches; 167 x 73 x 74 cm

(vitrine) 84 x 44.5 x 43.25 inches; 213.4 x 113 x 109.9 cm

Edition of 3

Do Ho Suh works across various media, creating drawings, film, and sculptural works that confront questions of home, physical space, displacement, memory, individuality and collectivity. Suh is best known for his fabric sculptures that reconstruct to scale his former homes in Korea, Rhode Island, Berlin, London, and New York. Suh is interested in the malleability of space in both its physical and metaphorical forms, and examines how the body relates to, inhabits, and interacts with that space. He is particularly interested in domestic space and the way the concept of home can be articulated through architecture that has a specific location, form, and history. For Suh, the spaces we inhabit also contain psychological energy, and in his work he makes visible those markers of memories, personal experiences, and a sense of security, regardless of geographic location.

<https://www.lehmannmaupin.com/artists/do-ho-suh/biography>

## Clarissa Tossin

born in Porto Alegre, Brazil, 1973; lives in Los Angeles, California



Nova gramática de formas #2 (New Grammar of Forms #2), 2018  
Terracotta, baskets woven from used [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com) delivery boxes and archival inkjet prints, thread, wood  
Seattle Art Museum

In casting iPhones, soda and water bottles, ink cartridges, routers, and the like—the stuff of industrialized, commercialized global living—in terracotta, the material out of which functioning vessels and utensils have been made through the centuries and across cultures, Clarissa Tossin sets up dialogues about the economy of Brazil, where rubber has had such a defining role in property and poverty, where free trade both has vitalized communities and polluted them. These terracotta shapes echo the lives we are living, holding complex contradictory narratives.

## Clarissa Tossin

born in Porto Alegre, Brazil, 1973; lives in Los Angeles, California



*Vulneravelmente Humano [Vulnerably Human] no. 2, 2022*

Silicone, meteorite powder, pigment

Bodysuit: 70 x 48 x 7 inches; Helmet: 12 x 17 x 15 inches; Gloves: 14 x 9 x 5 inches each; Boots: 13 x 12 x 8 inches, each

*Vulnerably Human*, a solo exhibition by Clarissa Tossin, proposes a dialogue between contemporary civilizational conflicts and the frontiers of extinction. The works signal the vulnerability of all living organisms as humanity continues to extract resources from the planet without adequate time for replacement.

<https://www.clarissatossin.com/vulnerably-human>

## Marion Verboom

born 1983, Nantes, France; lives in Paris



*Achronie 37*, 2017  
colored resin, cement, and plaster  
48 to 84 inches; 122 x 213 1/4 cm  
photo credit: Nicolas Brasseur

Verboom's colorful columns, pastiches from pre-Columbian artifacts, medieval Christian iconography, fifteenth-century Andalusian architectural details, and contemporary art, become a choral evocation of history itself. Cast and re-scaled to stack neatly, she homogenizes history, as it is often experienced—the Renaissance and the Enlightenment seeming concurrent instead of two centuries apart, for example. Webster's defines "anachronism," the title of this work, as "a chronological misplacing of persons, events, objects, or customs in regard to each other," and "temporal data," the title of the exhibition in which they were premiered, refers to the changing nature of the present, data at a specific moment that changes over time.

## Nari Ward

born in St. Andrew, Jamaica in 1963; lives in New York, New York



*Swing Low*, 2015  
bronze, rope

This edition is a cast version of his 2010 sculpture, in the collection of the Smithsonian American Art collection, in which the found tire is studded with parts of shoes: tips, soles, and tongues:

*The materials in *Swing*, a car tire riveted with the tips and tongues of shoes, suggest motor and foot travel, as well as the lives and labors of common people. This artwork powerfully oscillates between extremes, bringing to mind a child's tire swing in a makeshift playground, as well as a fatal violence introduced by its hangman's noose and echoed in its title, which summons the melancholy spiritual "Swing Low, Sweet Chariot."*

<https://americanart.si.edu/artwork/swing-113632>

In this iteration, it can be regarded as fossil rather than relic.

## Rachel Whiteread

born in Ilford, Essex, United Kingdom in 1963; lives in London, United Kingdom



*Black Box*, 2005 (FW-0213)  
hand-painted bronze, cast, ed. 3/3)  
11 3/4 x 9 1/2 x 12 1/4 inches  
Private Collection

In casting the space within a locked box, the artist, in a sense, presents the enigma and the allure of the fossil, a form that from its exterior reveals the intrigue of the hidden interior, so specifically rendered and yet entirely opaque.

## Rachel Whiteread [Boston venue only]

born in Ilford, Essex, United Kingdom in 1963; lives in London, United Kingdom



*Double - Doors II (A + B)*, 2006–07

plaster with interior aluminum framework, two panels

A (White) 78 11/16 32 11/16 x 7 1/2 inches (199.87 x 83.03 x 19.05 cm)

B (Light gray glazed) 78 x 30 11/16 x 4 11/16 (198.12 x 99.95 x 11.91 cm)

Accession Number: 2008.643.1-2

Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

*Whiteread made plaster casts of both sides of two doors, then assembled the casts back to back. The finished work combines the spaces on either side of a threshold—fusing entrance and exit into one solid form. The pale doors suggest the ambiguous emotions attached to coming and going and, in the way they resemble funerary slabs, maybe even the fleeting passage of life.*

<https://collections.mfa.org/objects/516136/double--doors-ii-a--b?ctx=84e38768-7bea-477f-bf0d-ebc10b379d4f&idx=0>

Rachel Whiteread captures negative space, making material the echoes, or shadows, of space itself.