Museum Previews

A.i.A.'s editors highlight the most significant museum exhibitions of the 2022 season, while newly appointed institution directors reveal organizational plans for the future.

WINTER

Supernatural America

"Supernatural America: The Paranormal in American Art" highlights the relationship that American practitioners have had with the occult—especially underrepresented artists who in the 19th and 20th centuries made art by serving as mediums, allegedly following instructions from spirits. Featuring more than 150 works made between the early 1800s and today, the exhibition is divided into four parts: haunting as it relates to US history and landscape; the visualization and iconography of spirits in literature and personal experience; rituals and the channeling of spirits; and the evocation of other dimensions, including UFO sightings and other extraterrestrial phenomena.

Highlights include works by Whitfield Lovell, Tony Oursler, Betye Saar, Dorothea Tanning, and Andrew Wyeth, as well as canonical pieces such as John Quidor's painting of Ichabod Crane, based on Washington Irving's 1820 short story "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow." The show travels from the Toledo Museum of Art in Ohio, where it opened in June 2021.

Feminist Video Art

"No Master Territories: Feminist Worldmaking and the Moving Image" is a landmark global survey of documentaries and art films made by and about women. The show – curated by Berlin-based curator Hila Peleg and Erika Balsom, a scholar and A.I.A. contributor – takes its main title from a 1991 essay by filmmaker Trinh T. Minh-ha. Paraphrasing writer Audre Lorde, Trinh argues against using “the master’s tools” to alter existing power structures. Rather than attempting to repurpose existing forms and structures to new ends, works in this show endeavor to imagine new worlds while also charting the feminist struggle across time and place.


“52 Artists: A Feminist Milestone”

Critic and activist Lucy Lippard’s landmark 1971 exhibition of twenty-six women artists at the Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum was among the first institutional responses to the underrepresentation of women in art history. To celebrate its fiftieth anniversary, the museum has reassembled the show’s original cast – including Howardena Pindell, Carol Kinne, and Adrian Piper – and positioned them in dialogue with emerging female-identifying or nonbinary artists. Leilah Babirye, Tourmaline, and Hannah Levy are among the twenty-six additions, all of whom live in New York and have yet to have a major solo museum show, in keeping with Lippard’s original criteria.


Auguste Rodin

Revered for such iconic figurative sculptures as The Gates of Hell (1880–1917), The Burghers of Calais (1884–95), and The Thinker (1904), Auguste Rodin had a massive and well-documented impact in Europe; but his influence on American artists and audiences is not as well known. This presentation of more than fifty sculptures and twenty-five drawings explores Rodin’s popularity in the United States in the early twentieth century, the decline of his reputation in the 1940s, and the popular rebound that made the French master a household name by the dawn of the twenty-first century.