

KUNSTRAUM

POTSDAM | WASCHHAUS

THIS IS AMERICA (on view at the Kunstraum Potsdam from August 8 - September 5, 2021) brings together 36 artists, US and foreign-born, who have chosen to call the United States their home. Primarily featuring works created in 2020 and 2021, this exhibition reflects a global sense of precarity and provides a kaleidoscopic view into a country plagued by injustice and inequality. Representing a cross-section of experiences, the artworks included in *THIS IS AMERICA* contend with a range of issues from housing insecurity and the opioid epidemic to domestic violence and police brutality.



Illustrating the chaos she experienced at a Black Lives Matter protest when police officers began using excessive force to disperse the crowd, Brooklyn-based artist Cristina BanBan (b. 1987 Barcelona, Spain), a rising phenomenon known for her exaggerated figures and emotive compositions, contributes her largest canvas to date. BanBan's monumental *US Summer 2020* communicates the anger and confusion that flooded the streets of cities throughout the United States following the murders of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor, among countless other undocumented instances of police brutality.

Touching on themes of female experience and resistance, the British-American artist Zoë Buckman (b. 1985 London, UK) will exhibit two sculptures that suspend boxing gloves embellished with embroidery, domestic textiles, ribbons, and bows. Hanging from heavy industrial chains, these sculptures grapple with misogyny and domestic violence by juxtaposing coarse materials and forms traditionally associated with masculine aggression with delicate fabrics and handwork embroidery. *feather canyons* (2020), one of Buckman's largest groupings to date, proposes a vision of feminine strength that defies gender expectations.



Addressing social inequality amplified by the opioid epidemic, Timothy Curtis (b. 1982 Philadelphia, US) will present *"Aw Man, You wouldn't believe me if I told you"* (A short story based in Philadelphia) (2021). Structured in two parts, the composition illustrates how drug addiction, and its consequent deaths and incarcerations, has cut short millions of lives in the United States.



On the right side of the composition, an orange prescription bottle spills pills marked poison onto the foreground. Two eyes peer out from behind the orange grid covering the bottle's opening, suggestive of an imprisoned person. On the left, a tombstone with tally marks overflowing its surface is a grim monument to mounting overdoses.

The issues tackled by these three artists are seemingly disparate, yet all represent aspects of the American experience. Bringing together a multiplicity of perspectives, *THIS IS AMERICA* offers a variegated view into the political and cultural melting pot that is the United States today.

The exhibition will be accompanied by a catalogue published by DISTANZ, Berlin including more than thirty statements written by the contributing artists as well as thematic essays by Kathy Battista and New York Times best-selling author Roxane Gay.

Participating Artists

Farley Aguilar, Daniel Arsham, Cristina BanBan, Alex Becerra, Sharif Bey, Coady Brown, Zoe Buckman, Chloe Chiasson, Will Cotton, Timothy Curtis, Christina Forrer, Genevieve Gaignard, Mark Thomas Gibson, Alfonso Gonzalez Jr., Jameson Green, Caleb Hahne, Asif Hoque, Jarrett Key, David Leggett, Tony Marsh, Shona McAndrew, Louis Osmosis, Alina Perez, Cleon Peterson, Pat Phillips, Patrick Quarm, Kelly Reemtsen, Brie Ruais, Ilana Savdie, Mira Schor, Sojourner Truth Parson, Raelis Vasquez, Charles Edward Williams, Peter Williams, Cosmo Whyte, Hiejun Yoo

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