Record Number of SAIC Community Members Prepare for Whitney Biennial

Chicago, IL—The School of the Art Institute of Chicago (SAIC) recognizes its community members selected to participate in the 2014 Whitney Biennial in New York City, March 7–May 25, 2014. Nearly 20 of the 103 artists announced as participants in the next Whitney Biennial have ties to the school. SAIC alumni and faculty members preparing for the most influential US survey of the state of contemporary art include Elijah Burgher (MFA 2004), Gaylen Gerber, Jeffrey Gibson (BFA 1995), Joseph Grigely, Philip Hanson, Doug Ischar, Carol Jackson, Alex Jovanovich (BFA 2003), Stephen Lacy (MFA 2000), Diego Leclery (MFA 2007), Tony Lewis (MFA 2012), Rebecca Morris (MFA 1994), Joshua Mosley (BFA 1996 / MFA 1998), Sterling Ruby (BFA 2002), Tony Tasset (MFA 1985), Philip Vanderhyden, Pedro Vélez (MFA 1999), and Molly Zuckerman-Hartung (MFA 2007).

The 2014 Biennial, which will be the last one to take place in the Whitney Museum’s historic Marcel Breuer-designed building on Madison Avenue, has some notable ties to the Midwest. SAIC Professor Michelle Grabner is working with Stuart Comer (Museum of Modern Art, New York) and Anthony Elms (Institute of Contemporary Art, Philadelphia) to develop the exhibition. Grabner lives and works in Chicagoland and Wisconsin, and Elms served as Gallery 400’s assistant director at the University of Illinois at Chicago for six years. Grabner, a member of the SAIC faculty since 1996 who served as Chair of SAIC’s Painting and Drawing department from 2009 to 2013, is an artist, curator, and critic. The Museum of Contemporary Art Cleveland is currently hosting a traveling survey exhibition of her work, A Study in Midwestern Appropriation, a group show organized by Grabner showcasing 50 works by 40 Midwestern artists from Chicago, Milwaukee, and Minneapolis, is currently on view at the Hyde Park Art Center through January 12.

Upon her appointment as a curator of the 2014 Biennial, Grabner said, “Like most artists, I have been loving and hating the Whitney Biennial exhibitions for decades. Shows that don’t matter don’t elicit such strong responses. The Biennial matters. As the mother of all group exhibitions, it is critically contentious simply because of its history and charge.”

SAIC community members have a long history of participating in the Biennial. Recent alumni participants include Josh Brand (BFA 2002), William Cordova (BFA 1996), Cameron Crawford (BFA 2006), Jessica Jackson Hutchins (MFA 1999), Jim Lutes (MFA 1982), Corey McCorkle (BFA 1993), Rodney McMillian (Post-Bac 2000), Amanda Ross-Ho (BFA 1998), and Amie Siegel (MFA 1999).

About the Whitney and the Whitney Biennial
The Whitney Museum of American Art is the world’s leading museum of 20th-century and contemporary art of the United States. With a history of exhibiting the most promising and influential artists and provoking intense debate, the Whitney Biennial, the Museum’s signature exhibition, has become the most important survey of the state of contemporary art in the United States. In addition to its landmark exhibitions, the Museum is known internationally for events and educational programs of exceptional significance and as a center for research, scholarship, and conservation.

About the School of the Art Institute of Chicago
A leader in educating artists, designers, and scholars since 1866, the School of the Art Institute of Chicago (SAIC) offers nationally accredited undergraduate and graduate degrees and post-baccalaureate programs to nearly 3,200 students from around the globe. SAIC also enables adults, high school students, middle school students, and children to flourish in a variety of courses, workshops, certificate programs, and camps through its Continuing Studies program. Located in the heart of Chicago, SAIC has an educational philosophy built upon
an interdisciplinary approach to art and design, giving students unparalleled opportunities to develop their creative and critical abilities, while working with renowned faculty who include many of the leading practitioners in their fields. SAIC’s resources include the Art Institute of Chicago and its new Modern Wing; numerous special collections and programming venues provide students with exceptional exhibitions, screenings, lectures, and performances. For more information, please visit saic.edu.

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