



# The Whitney Announces Curators for 2017 Biennial

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by Hamptons Art Hub Staff

The Whitney Museum of American Art announced that the 2017 Whitney Biennial will be co-curated by Christopher Y. Lew and Mia Locks. It will be the first Biennial presented in the Whitney's new building in Manhattan's Meatpacking District.

"With the opening of the new building, we're rededicating ourselves to the Whitney's longstanding commitment to emerging artists," said Scott Rothkopf, the Whitney's Deputy Director for Programs and Nancy and Steve Crown Family Chief Curator. "Chris's keen eye has been critical to this renewed focus in our program, which just launched with his presentations of Jared Madere, Rachel Rose, and New Theater. Mia's interest in both historical figures and new tendencies, as well her years on the West Coast will add important perspective to the Biennial. The two of them have great intellectual chemistry, and it's exciting to see the first Biennial in our new home in the hands of such talented young curators."



Christopher Y. Lew and Mia Locks. Photograph courtesy Whitney Museum of American Art.

Rothkopf will lead a team of advisors who will work closely with the curators to help shape the exhibition.

They include **Negar Azimi**, writer and senior editor at [Bidoun](#), a publishing, curatorial, and educational initiative with a focus on the Middle East and its diasporas; **Gean Moreno**, artistic director of [Cannonball](#), a Miami-based nonprofit dedicated to the advancement of critical discourse and contemporary art through residencies, grants, commissions, and public programs; **Aily Nash**, co-curator of Projections, the [New York Film Festival](#)'s artists' film and video section, and Film and Media Curator at [Basilica Hudson](#); and **Wendy Yao**, a publisher and founder of the art gallery [356 South Mission Road](#) and [Ooga Booga](#), an art, book, music and clothing shop in Los Angeles.

## The 2017 Whitney Curators

**Christopher Y. Lew** is Associate Curator at the Whitney Museum of American Art, where he has organized the first US solo exhibitions for Rachel Rose and Jared Madere. He has also organized,

with Curator and Curator of Performance Jay Sanders, the first US theatrical presentation by New Theater.

His upcoming exhibitions at the Whitney include a solo show by Sophia Al-Maria (summer 2016). Prior to joining the Whitney in 2014, he held positions at MoMA PS1 since 2006 and organized numerous exhibitions including the group shows *New Pictures of Common Objects* (2012) and *Taster's Choice* (2014). His notable solo shows include *Clifford Owens: Anthology* (2011), *GCC: Achievements in Retrospective* (2014), *James Ferraro: 100%* (2014), and *Jack Smith: Normal Love* (2013), which received an award from the International Association of Art Critics. Lew has contributed to several publications including *Art AsiaPacific*, *Art Journal*, *Bomb*, *Huffington Post*, and *Mousse*.

**Mia Locks** was Assistant Curator at MoMA PS1 from 2013 until recently, where she organized exhibitions including *Math Bass: Off the Clock* (2015); *IM Heung-soon: Reincarnation* (2015); *Samara Golden: The Flat Side of the Knife* (2014); and *The Little Things Could Be Dearer* (2014). Locks was part of the curatorial team for the [Greater New York](#) exhibition now on view at MoMA PS1.

Prior to MoMA PS1, Locks organized *Cruising the Archive: Queer Art and Culture in Los Angeles, 1945–1980* (2012), with David Frantz, at ONE National Gay & Lesbian Archives as part of the Getty's Pacific Standard Time initiative. From 2010 to 2013, she worked at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles (MOCA), where she helped to organize *Blues for Smoke* (2012), which traveled to the Whitney, and *Bob Mizer and Tom of Finland* (2013), both with Bennett Simpson. She is currently publishing a book on the work of Samara Golden, forthcoming in December 2015.

## **The Whitney Biennial**

[The Whitney Biennial](#) is the contemporary art museum's signature exhibition, presenting a survey of the state of contemporary art in the United States. The Biennial, an invitational show of work produced in the preceding two years, was introduced by Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney in 1932, and it is the longest continuous series of exhibitions in the country to survey recent developments in American art.

The Whitney's Alice Pratt Brown Director Adam D. Weinberg noted: "Every Whitney Biennial is a galvanizing process for the Museum, a tradition that goes back to the institution's roots while retaining its freshness and immediacy. Endeavoring to gauge the state of art in America today, the Biennial demands curators who are attuned to the art of the current moment and there is no question that Chris Lew and Mia Locks have their fingers on the pulse. The expanded spaces and possibilities offered by our new downtown building will make this Biennial particularly lively and groundbreaking."

[For the 2014 Biennial](#), the Whitney tried a new format with three curators each presenting a single floor of the biennial held at the New York City art museum. The curators were Stuart Comer, Anthony Elms, and Michelle Grabner.

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**BASIC FACTS:** The Whitney's 78th Biennial takes place in spring 2017. It will be the 78th in the Whitney's series of Annual and Biennial exhibitions inaugurated in 1932 by Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney. The Whitney is located at 99 Gansevoort St, New York, NY 10014. [www.whitney.org](http://www.whitney.org).

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