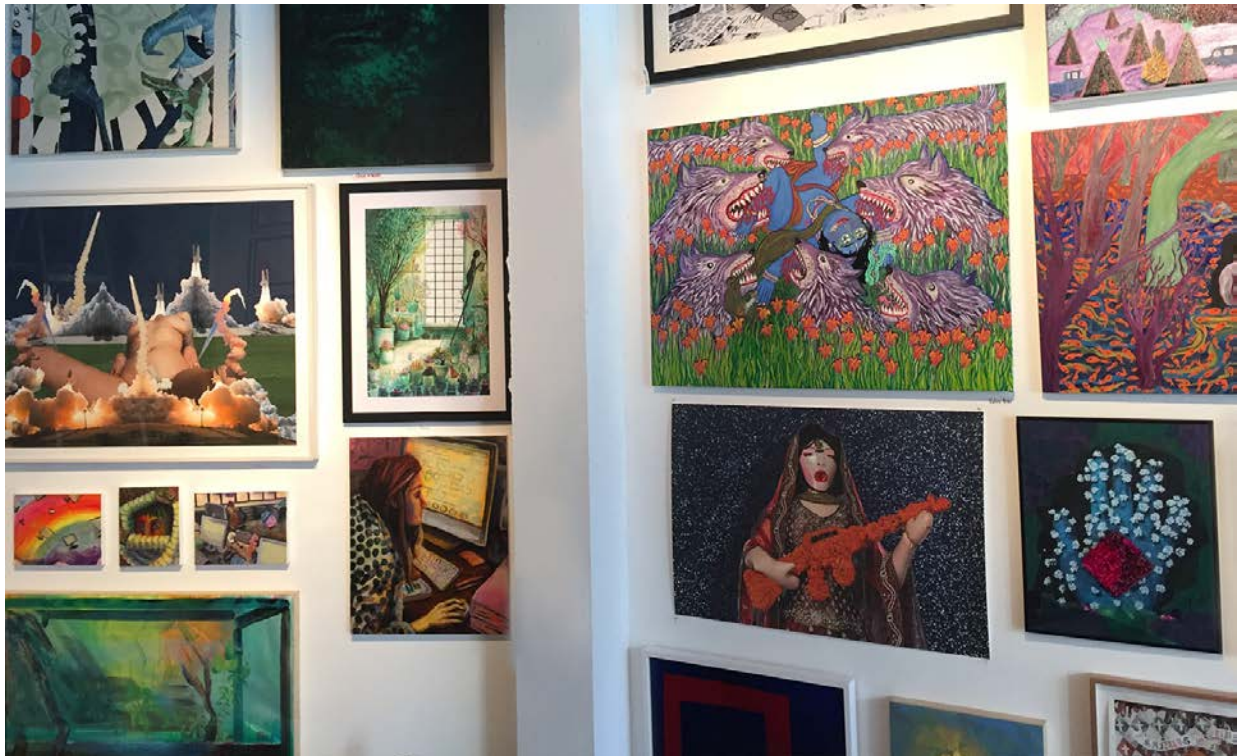


Who runs the world? The second Whitney Houston Biennial offers an all-female spectacle

ART / 28 MAR 2017 / BY TIFFANY JOW



Female artists fill a 3,000 sq ft Brooklyn suite for this year's Whitney Houston Biennial, dubbed the 'Greatest Love of All'

Three years ago, artists Christine Finley and Eddy Segal were talking about the Whitney Biennial. If she were curator, said Finley (known professionally as C Finley), she'd mix things up by filling three floors with art by women. 'It'd be called the Whitney Houston Biennial!' Segal declared. While their exchange was only half-serious, Finley realised it was a solid idea. Two months later, she launched the inaugural Whitney Houston Biennial as a four-hour happening,

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where work by 85 female artists filled a 3,000 sq ft Brooklyn suite. Finley has been planning its second iteration, which kicks off this week, ever since.

‘There’s a palpable amount of love in the air here,’ Finley says from the exhibition’s Soho venue, where more than 220 works by some 160 artists hang salon-style to make the most of the small space. While the other Whitney Biennial helped hatch the project, it isn’t merely a critique of gender imbalance in the art world or the country’s state of affairs. ‘I wanted to make an event filled with joy, light and positivity that celebrates the coming together of a beautiful group of women,’ Finley says. ‘It creates a consciousness. And it’s refreshing and fun.’



'Amerikkka', by Haley Hughes, 2017

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Finley discovered artists through Instagram and art fairs. She also asked the 2014 participants to submit work and have their friends do the same. Finley made her selection intuitively, aiming to create an inclusive presentation that represents a cross-section of mediums. The resulting exhibition rises to the occasion: Finley is particularly excited about textile-sculptures by Liz Collins, paintings by Sophie Grant and Tracy Molis, and photographs from Maxi Cohen's 'Ladies' Rooms Around the World' series and 18 students from Bard College, curated by the school's artist-in-residence Daphne Fitzpatrick. Events will take place nearly every night until 29 March, including poetry evenings, a dance performance and tours led by Finley herself.

To maximise the spectrum of women represented, Finley asked each participant to pick a pioneering woman and write about her influence in the wall text accompanying their work. 'You'll read about everyone from Joan of Arc to someone's grandma,' Finley says. 'That's really what this is about. We're honouring women who dreamed a bigger dream, and helped us dream a bigger dream.'

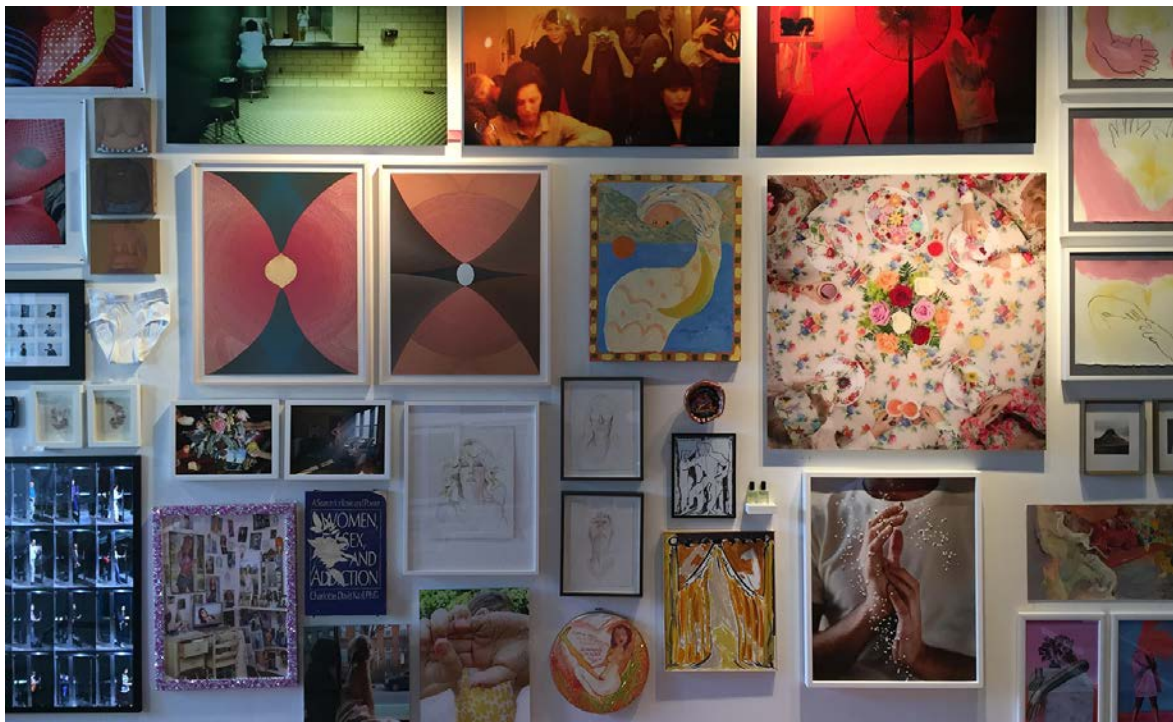


220 works by 160 artists hang salon-style to make the most of the small space

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Featured artists were discovered through Instagram and art fairs



Curator Christine Finley made her selection intuitively, aiming to create an inclusive presentation that represents a cross-section of mediums



Groom Hunter, by Qinza Najm, 2015



Standing Rock, by Hayley Hughes, 2017

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Grab it by the Papaya (detail), by Kira Nam Greene, 2016



Entanglement, by Sharon Molloy, 2015

<http://www.wallpaper.com/art/the-second-whitney-houston-biennial-offers-an-all-female-spectacle-of-creativity>