



## Met Museum Pushes Contemporary Art to the Forefront

APRIL 12, 2023 | REBECCA SCHIFFMAN



Left: The Great Hall of the Met Fifth Avenue. Right: Portrait of Jacolby Satterwhite. Photo by Xavier Scott Marshall. COURTESY OF THE ARTIST AND MITCHELL-INNES & NASH, NEW YORK

On Monday, the Metropolitan Museum of Art announced the latest on their agenda: Nairy Baghramian will premiere work for the building's facade commission, and Jacolby Satterwhite will be featured in the Great Hall beginning this September. With these two contemporary art commissions, in addition to the previously announced roof garden project by Lauren Halsey, as well as their new wing for modern and contemporary art, the Met makes it clear that diverse contemporary art is a top priority for the museum.

The upcoming string of contemporary commissions will begin as early as next week with Lauren Halsey's roof garden commission, which is titled, the eastside of south central los angeles hieroglyph prototype architecture (I). The installation, opening April 18th, will be a full-scale architectural structure that is designed to be inhabited by the Met's visitors. It is promised to explore its connection to sources as varied as ancient Egypt symbolism, 1960s utopian architecture, and contemporary visual expressions.

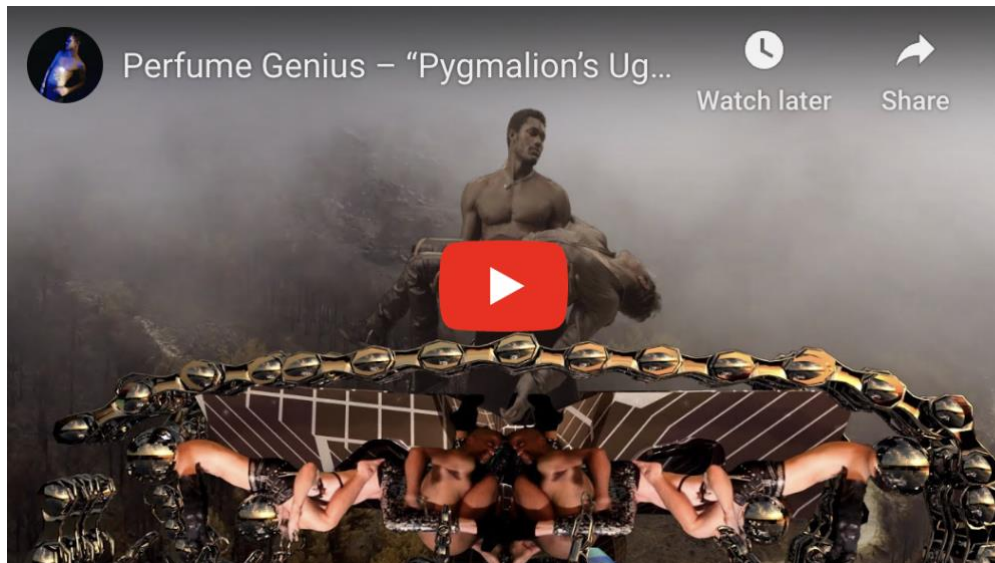
This fall, Nairy Baghramian will create four sculptures that will sit in the niches of the facade along Fifth Avenue at the Met. Baghramian is an Armenian-Iranian born, and Berlin based artist whose work comprises sculpture and installations that often reference architecture and the human body. She uses materials such as marble and steel to create works that reflect movement within an environment, so we can expect these elements to shine through in her upcoming Met commission. For these works, Baghramian will use polychrome to create sculptures that seem to have washed up like flotsam and jetsam in the voids of their respective niches. The commission will be the fourth in the ongoing series of facade commissions, and it will mark Baghramian's first public art installation in New York City.

For Jacolby Satterwhite, this will be the second in the series of commissions for the Met's Great Hall. The first was in 2019, with works by Kent Monkman. Satterwhite will create a large-scale work, comprised of video, sound, music, and performative interventions. According to the Met's release, Satterwhite's installation will incorporate over one hundred objects from the museum's collection in animation, alongside imagery of New York City and its diverse communities. The goal is to celebrate the vital role of the Museum within the city, and beyond. This is not by any means a departure from his practice. Satterwhite is known for his dreamlike performances and videos that incorporate voguing, illustrations, music, and 3-D animation to explore notions of queerness, bodies, media culture, and identity.

All of these projects are meant to celebrate the Met's devotion to contemporary art and emerging artists. On this announcement, Max Hollein, the director of the Met said that these commissions "will challenge and expand our

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Though these commissions will all be up within the next six months, The Met’s long awaited modern and contemporary wing won’t be ready for quite some time – it’s expected to open in 2029. And despite the long timeline, it’s well underway. The decision was first announced in 2014, but the museum had trouble securing the funds. Last November, it was announced that emeritus trustee Oscar L. Tang and his wife H. M. Agnes Hsu-Tang would give \$125 million to help complete the renovations, the largest capital gift the museum has ever received. The new wing will be called the Tang Wing, after its donors. And just last month, the Museum picked Frida Escobedo, a Mexico City based, female led architecture firm, to design the wing.

And if you just can’t wait until next week or September, Hew Locke’s sculptures “Gilt” are up on the outdoor facade of the museum now, until May 30th.