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# Arts Power 50: The Changemakers Shaping the Art World in 2019

By [Paddy Johnson](#), [Mary von Aue](#), [Juliet Helmke](#), [Sissi Cao](#) and [Helen Holmes](#) • 04/01/19 10:30am



The art industry changes fast. Spurred on by artists who are bringing forward new ideas and radical aesthetics into the discourse, this is an industry where those who promote, represent, exhibit, sell, critique and generally support art have to stay nimble. For this reason, Observer takes a moment each year to consider the power players impacting the arts. This industry is a complicated ecosystem, but we look to the changemakers both behind the scenes and in the spotlight to see who is building the future zeitgeist.

Here, in our second edition of this list, we bring you a group of individuals each working to strengthen the impact, reach, social responsibility or financial stability of a field that is seemingly in a constant state of flux. These are the people you'll be talking about this year. They are artists and curators, museum directors and gallery owners, auctioneers and government officials, creative thinkers and truly hard workers. Each has been building something new in 2019, from reimagining the most prestigious art fairs to establishing a new norm for how artists are paid. The Arts Power 50 is Observer's list of the people who are taking action to bring the art world into a new paradigm.

## **Pope.L**



Pope L. Courtesy the artist and Mitchell-Innes & Nash, New York

It's not often an artist sees the launch of three major exhibitions in the same city at the same time. This fall, though, Pope.L, a performance and installation artist known for his scathing and unsettling critiques of race and power, will see it happen.

His long-overdue major MoMA retrospective opens this October and will focus on 13 performance pieces made between 1978 and 2001. Pope.L will simultaneously present a newly-commissioned installation for the Whitney

## MITCHELL-INNES & NASH

Museum of American Art this fall and execute his largest and most ambitious crawl performance yet for Public Art Fund. Pope.L says he also plans to produce a special version of the play *Rachel* by Angelina Weld Grimke.

That's one hell of a lineup, and timely, too. With the Trump administration waging war on minorities, powerful, sustained critiques of racial inequity in the U.S. are providing a much-needed counter-narrative.

That context doesn't necessarily change his own approach, though. When asked if politics has affected the urgency of his work, Pope.L replied, "I'm not sure there is an urgency to my work. There is an urgency to respond to the current administration, especially concerning the build-up to the coming election."

—P.J.