

NEW SEASON OF THE PEABODY AWARD-WINNING SERIES **ART21 ART IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY** PREMIERES FRIDAY, OCTOBER 24 ON PBS

Season 7 Profiles Twelve Artists Who Reveal
How Art Can Inspire and Transform Lives and Communities

**Tania Bruguera, Abraham Cruzvillegas, Leonardo Drew,
Omer Fast, Thomas Hirschhorn, Elliott Hundley,
Katharina Grosse, Graciela Iturbide, Joan Jonas,
Wolfgang Laib, Trevor Paglen, and Arlene Shechet
Featured in Four New Episodes**

New York, NY — July 8, 2014 — **ART21**, the preeminent nonprofit global leader in art education, announced today that the anticipated seventh season of its Peabody Award-winning television series **ART21 Art in the Twenty-First Century** will premiere on four consecutive Fridays, October 24 through November 14 at 10 p.m. ET on PBS (check local listings). Providing unique access to some of the most compelling artists of our time, the new season features a dozen artists from the United States, Europe, and Latin America, and transports viewers to artistic projects across the country and around the world. In locations as diverse as a Bronx public housing project, a military testing facility in the Nevada desert, a jazz festival in Sweden, and an activist neighborhood in Mexico, the artists reveal intimate and personal insights into their lives and creative processes.

"Providing access to the creative process is the hallmark of PBS's commitment to the arts," said Paula Kerger, President and CEO of PBS. "Art in the Twenty-First Century consistently deepens our understanding of contemporary art by taking it beyond galleries and museums and making the work of these remarkable artists available to all of us through the inspiring voices of the artists themselves."

"Whether engaging communities to effect social change, probing personal and cultural histories, exploring timely political issues, or experimenting with how things are made, the artists in *Art in the Twenty-First Century* demonstrate that the art of today is truly relevant to our everyday lives, incorporating age-old forms and processes to make contemporary art that challenges us to see our world in new ways," said Susan Sollins, Executive Producer and Curator of *Art in the Twenty-First Century*.

Socially and politically engaged art is particularly present in Season 7. Swiss artist **Thomas Hirschhorn** works with residents of the Forest Houses, a New York City Housing Authority development, to create his ambitious *Gramsci Monument*, an outdoor sculpture and participatory artwork featuring a library, radio station, stage, lounge, and workshop area. Cuban artist **Tania Bruguera**, whose work is informed by her deeply personal connection to both the promise and failings of Castro's revolution, is filmed at her

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Immigrant Movement International project, which takes the form of a community center in Queens, New York. **Omer Fast**'s videos include interviews with a former US drone operator and adult film industry workers, while **Trevor Paglen**, photographing stealth drones at military bases in the Mojave Desert, explores the connections between seeing, technology, aesthetics, and politics.

Three artists from Latin America are featured. In addition to Bruguera, Season 7 includes Mexican photographer **Graciela Iturbide**, whose haunting images capture cultures at the crossroads between traditional life and contemporary existence, and **Abraham Cruzvillegas**, whose sculptures and installations are inspired by the improvisational construction of his childhood home, built by his parents and fellow community members on inhospitable land settled by squatters on the outskirts of Mexico City.

The influence of family and youthful experiences resonates throughout Season 7. Sculptor **Leonardo Drew** references the visual landscape of his childhood in a Bridgeport, Connecticut housing project, while **Wolfgang Laib**, whose installations bind together ephemeral substances such as beeswax and pollen with archetypal forms, discusses his initial desire to pursue a medical career and the strong relationship he had with his parents. Los Angeles-based artist **Elliott Hundley** connects the roots of his artistic practice to his Southern upbringing and making crafts with his mother, as he creates densely layered collages that defy traditional categorization.

Formal experimentation is a recurring topic in Season 7. **Katharina Grosse**'s process straddles painting and sculpture in large-scale works that she makes using sprayed acrylic in electrifying colors. **Joan Jonas**, a pioneer of performance and video art who was recently chosen to represent the United States at the 2015 Venice Biennale, fluidly alternates between performance, sculpture, and drawing, and **Arlene Shechet**, the first ceramic artist ever featured in the series, creates unique clay-based ceramic vessels through which she explores the nature of how things are made.

As in past seasons, each one-hour episode in Season 7 is organized around a theme that connects the artists. Season 7 features episodes on *Investigation*, *Secrets*, *Legacy*, and *Fiction*.

Episode 1: *Investigation* **Friday, October 24 at 10 p.m. ET**

How do artists push beyond what they already know and readily see? Can acts of engagement and exploration be works of art in themselves? In this episode, artists use their practices as tools for personal and intellectual discovery, simultaneously documenting and producing new realities in the process.

While enlisting the participation of the residents of a Bronx public housing development to develop a sprawling installation out of everyday materials, **Thomas Hirschhorn** poses political and philosophical questions, and searches for alternative models of thinking and being. The process leads to the creation of a new kind of monument that, while physically ephemeral, lives on in collective memory. For **Graciela Iturbide**, the camera is a pretext for understanding the world. Her principal concern has been the photographic investigation of Mexico—her own cultural environment—through black-and-white images of landscapes and their inhabitants, abstract compositions, and self-portraits. Whether photographing indigenous communities in her native country, *cholos* in Los Angeles, Frida Kahlo's house, or the landscape of the American South, her interest, she says, lies in what her heart feels and what her eyes see. **Leonardo Drew**, whose art career began as a child in inner city Bridgeport, Connecticut, transforms new materials—through processes of decay, oxidization, and exposure to weather—in his sculptures. Never content with work that comes easily, Drew reaches daily beyond his comfort zone, charting a course of experimentation with his materials and processes and letting the work find its own way.

Episode 2: *Secrets*

Friday, October 31 at 10 p.m. ET

How do artists make the invisible visible? What hidden elements persist in their work? Is it the artist's role to reveal them, or not? In this episode, artists share some of the secrets that are intrinsic to their work.

Elliott Hundley draws inspiration from many sources, including Greek tragedy, classical mythology, Japanese woodblock prints, and his own family history. His intricately collaged paintings, teeming with humble materials and ephemera, are like palimpsests that simultaneously reveal and hide meaning. At his Los Angeles home and studio, Hundley works with a team of assistants to create a new series of paintings and sculptures based on the myth of Eurydice and Orpheus. **Arlene Shechet** is curious about the obscured origins of industrial objects, folding clues about production processes into her handcrafted ceramic sculptures. With their hollow interiors often hidden from view, Shechet's sturdy clay vessels disguise their true nature through dazzling surface effects and the illusion of solidity. For her exhibition *Meissen Recast* at the RISD Museum in Providence, Shechet juxtaposes her reproductions of original Meissen factory molds made during a residency at the Meissen Manufactory in Germany next to the original Meissen porcelain dating back to the 18th century, revealing the usually hidden industrial roots of those objects. **Trevor Paglen** makes the invisible visible, documenting evidence of the American surveillance state of the 21st century. Concerned with the politics of perception, Paglen investigates the development of machines that see and the historical relationship between photography and military technology.

Episode 3: *Legacy*

Friday, November 7 at 10 p.m. ET

Why do we break with some traditions and perpetuate others? Artists in this episode use life experiences and family heritage to explore new aesthetic terrain.

Inspired by the teachings of Laozi, by the modern artist Brancusi, and by formative experiences with his family in Germany and India, **Wolfgang Laib**'s sculptures seem to connect the past and present, the ephemeral and eternal. His attention to human scale, duration of time, and his choice of materials give his works the power to transport us to unexpected realms of memory, sensory pleasure, and contemplation. **Tania Bruguera** explores the relationship between art, activism, and social change, staging participatory events and interactions that build on her own observations, experiences, and understanding of the politics of repression and control. Her work advances the concept of *arte útil*, according to which art can be used as a tool for social and political empowerment. **Abraham Cruzvillegas** works in his Mexico City studio and at exhibitions in Paris and Minneapolis to assemble sculptures and installations from found objects and disparate materials, through which he explores the effects of improvisation, transformation, and decay. His experiments with video, performance, family archives, and academic research reveal the deep connection between his identity, born of the harsh realities of his family's life in Mexico, and his artistic practice.

Episode 4: *Fiction*

Friday, November 14 at 10 p.m. ET

What makes a compelling story? How do artists disrupt everyday reality in the service of revealing subtler truths? This episode features artists who explore the virtues of ambiguity, mix genres, and merge aesthetic disciplines to discern not simply what stories mean, but how and why they come to have meaning.

Katharina Grosse creates wildly colorful sculptural environments and paintings that unite the fluid perception of landscape with the ordered hierarchy of painting. Her work is a material record—a story—and, perhaps, an inscription of her thoughts, or an illusion. Grosse uses boat building techniques to create monumental abstract sculptures for display at Brooklyn's Metrotech Plaza, while at the Nasher Sculpture Center in Dallas, she adds layers of paint to a room filled with soil as a painted sculpture pierces through the building's architecture.

Shown at work in her Berlin studio, Grosse leads viewers through the recent project *I Think This Is a Pine Tree* at the Hamburger Bahnhof. In Sweden, pioneering artist *Joan Jonas* performs at both Umeå Jazzfestival with musician Jason Moran, and at Kulturhuset in Stockholm, where she reconfigures her 1969 performance *Mirror Piece*. Working in performance, video, installation, sculpture, and drawing, Jonas finds inspiration in mythic stories, investing texts from the past with the politics of the present. Wearing masks and drawing while performing on stage, Jonas disrupts the conventions of theatrical storytelling to emphasize potent symbols and critical self-awareness. In multi-channel video installations, **Omer Fast** blurs the boundaries between documentary, dramatization, and fantasy, frequently generating viewers' confusion. Fast plays with our assumptions about identity and the structure of dramatic narrative, revealing shades of meaning as stories are told, retold, and mythologized.

Executive Producer & Curator Susan Sollins

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Mark Sutton (*Fiction, Secrets*)

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Season 7 of *Art in the Twenty-First Century* will be available on DVD from ShopPBS.org or 800-PLAY-PBS, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

About ART21

ART21 is a nonprofit global leader in art education, producing preeminent films on today's leading visual artists and education programs that inspire creativity worldwide. Acclaimed for its Peabody Award-winning PBS series, *ART21 Art in the Twenty-First Century*, ART21 uses the power of digital media to engage millions of people of all ages with contemporary art, artists, and their creative processes. In addition to *Art in the Twenty-First Century*, ART21 produces the online films series *ART21 New York Close Up*, *ART21 Exclusive*, and *ART21 Artist to Artist*, as well as extensive educational resources and programs.
art21.org

About PBS

PBS, with its over 350 member stations, offers all Americans the opportunity to explore new ideas and new worlds through television and online content. Each month, PBS reaches nearly 109 million people through television and over 28 million people online, inviting them to experience the worlds of science, history, nature and public affairs; to hear diverse viewpoints; and to take front row seats to world-class drama and performances. PBS' broad array of programs has been consistently honored by the industry's most coveted award competitions. Teachers of children from pre-K through twelfth grade turn to PBS for digital content and services that help bring classroom lessons to life. PBS' premier children's TV programming and its website,

pbskids.org, are parents' and teachers' most trusted partners in inspiring and nurturing curiosity and love of learning in children. More information about PBS is available at www.pbs.org, one of the leading dot-org websites on the Internet, or by following PBS on Twitter, Facebook or through our apps for mobile devices. Specific program information and updates for press are available at pbs.org/pressroom or by following PBS PressRoom on Twitter (@pbspressroom).

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