

White Columns

Looking Back / The 13th White Columns Annual – Selected by Olivia Shao

January 20 – March 4, 2023

Opening Reception: Friday, January 20, 2023. 6-8pm.

Participating artists:

Terry Adkins

Olga Balema

Lyndon Barrois Jr.

Patricia L. Boyd

James Castle

Leidy Churchman

Jenni Crain

Blacklips Performance Cult

Verne Dawson

Trisha Donnelly

Elise Duryee-Browner/Graham Vunderink

Elizabeth Englander

Donald Evans

Minnie Evans

Ryan Foerster

Raque Ford

Ellie Ga

Fernanda Gomes

Ray Hamilton

Yun-Fei Ji

Dominique Knowles

Marc Kokopeli/Matthew Langan-Peck

June Leaf

Maggie Lee

Agosto Machado

Danny McDonald

Peter Moore

Maria Nordman

Andy Robert

Rafael Sánchez

Ser Serpas

Jack Shannon

Ahlam Shibli

Bob Smith

Anita Steckel

Unknown Lakota Artist

Frank Walter

Johanna Went

and Benjamin Péret/Robert Rius/André

Breton/Thérèse Caen/Remedios Varo

White Columns is pleased to announce the 13th edition of its Annual exhibition *Looking Back*, which has been selected by the New York-based curator Olivia Shao. The exhibition will be presented throughout all of White Columns' galleries.

As with previous 'Annuals' an individual or a collaborative team (e.g. an artist, a curator, a writer, etc.) is invited to organize an exhibition based on their personal experiences and interactions with art in New York City during the previous year. In a very straightforward way, the 'Annual' exhibitions hope to reveal something of the complexities involved in trying to negotiate – and engage with – New York's constantly shifting cultural landscapes. The format of the exhibition inevitably encourages highly subjective and personal responses to the realities of viewing art in New York City. The 'Annual' exhibition series hopes to illuminate aspects of the specific, yet highly idiosyncratic networks – historical, social, aesthetic, etc. – that individuals follow in an increasingly expansive and fragmented cultural environment.

Through the recontextualization of artworks encountered in other circumstances, the exhibition hopes to establish – albeit temporarily – a new 'narrative,' a conversation of sorts, amongst both artists and artworks that seeks to illuminate and/or explore certain underlying tendencies or connections that might otherwise have remained elusive or obscured. In rethinking aspects of the (fairly) recent past the exhibition hopes to provoke something akin to a sense of *déjà vu*, establishing a scenario that is at once both reflective and forward-thinking.

There are no restrictions as to what type of work can be included. The 'Annual' exhibitions seek to eliminate any categorical or hierarchical distinctions we might place upon artworks (e.g. based upon the circumstances in which they were originally seen, or the seniority of an individual artist, etc.). The works included in the exhibition might have originally been encountered in a variety of contexts such as exhibitions at galleries, not-for-profit spaces, or during visits to artists' studios.

Writing in *Artforum* in 2022 about the 12th 'Annual' exhibition selected by artist Mary Manning, Johanna Fateman wrote:

"In 'Looking Back,' Manning's response to what could have been a dismaying subject – the not-quite-back-to-normal art world of 2021 – left me somewhat relieved. The show seemed to credibly propose that it was a good year for small things, for perceiving and adjusting to, but not making decisive claims about, our particular catastrophic-embryonic state."

Writing about the 'Annual' exhibitions in *The New York Times*, Holland Cotter wrote:

“One of the things that makes the White Columns annuals so valuable is that they often include artists ... who are unlikely to find their way into mainstream institutions. A second, equally important function that Looking Back serves, or should serve, is to provide a view of contemporary art that is not entirely determined by art-industry consensus – meaning the market – but rather is seen through a single informed, idiosyncratic, even resistant sensibility.”

About Olivia Shao:

Olivia Shao is a curator based in New York.

The curators of the previous White Columns Annual exhibitions were: White Columns' Director Matthew Higgs; Clarissa Dalrymple; Jay Sanders; Primary Information (Miriam Katzeff and James Hoff); Bob Nickas; Ken Okiishi and Nick Mauss; Richard Birkett; Pati Hertling; Cleopatra's (Bridget Donahue, Bridget Finn, Colleen Grennan, and White Columns' Deputy Director and Curator Erin Somerville); Anne Doran; and Mary Manning.

White Columns and Olivia Shao would like to thank all of the participating artists and galleries for their enthusiasm and support for *Looking Back*.

For further information about this exhibition contact: violet@whitecolumns.org

Gallery hours: Tuesday - Saturday, 11am to 6pm.