

What ArtReview Editors Are Looking Forward to in January 2022

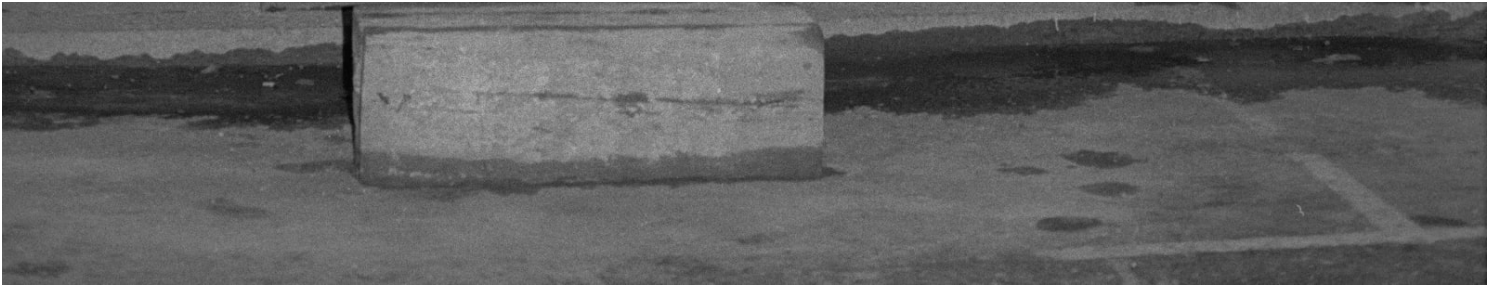
ArtReview Previews 11 January 2022 artreview.com

Exhibitions to see this month – plus: what to read, watch and listen to when you're self-isolating

THE MAYOR GALLERY

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HAROLD SHAPIRO



Cork Street Attack, The Mayor Gallery, photograph: Andrew Catlin, London, 1985

The Grey Organisation, *Cork Street Attack*

The Mayor Gallery, London, 12 January – 25 February

Before the Young British Artists of the 1990s (remember them?) there was a post-punk art scene in 1980s London. The Grey Organisation, a collective of artists formed in 1982, shaven-headed and dressed in uniform grey suits, staged Situationist-inspired interventions against an otherwise stuffy and conservative artworld, with Cork Street as its commercial epicentre. There, in May 1985, they staged their notorious grey-paint vandalism of the Mayor Gallery's shopfront. The group broke up in 1991, but not before having immersed themselves in anti-Thatcher agit-prop and the experimental music scene, while working increasingly in pop culture (a move to New York led to the group designing the cover art for De La Soul's legendary 1989 album *3 Feet High and Rising*). Thirty-seven years later, the Mayor Gallery has forgiven everything and is the venue for this archival show returning to the group's anarchic, diverse output.



Steven Claydon, *Lacrimosa*

Sadie Coles HQ, London, 12 January – 26 February

Claydon's ceramic vessels are full to the brim with grand allegory and sprawling citation, from his use of ancient Japanese stoneware techniques through to references that range from the wabi-cha tea ceremony to the tear-vials of Roman mourners. Claydon's objects – created through 'a process of arcane forging and archaeological retrieval' by being fired over the course of 60 hours in an anagama 'hole kiln' – invoke the artistic tradition of *vanitas*, foregrounding its themes of the passage of time, life, death and transience: perhaps visible in the forms of the vessels themselves, which suggest the shapes of mines and grenades.



Tenant of Culture, *Untitled (monument for Oxford Circus)*, 2021. Digital render by Janne Schimmel.

Testament

Goldsmiths CCA, London, 21 January – 3 April

This group show offers 'proposals' from 50 artists for a new monument in the UK, in response to the highly-charged debate around the role of memorialisation, heritage and monument culture in public life (last week saw the acquittal of four young activists who tore down the statue of slave-trader Edward Colston in Bristol in 2020). The proposals include drawings, installations and performances from the likes of Phyllida Barlow, Alvaro Barrington, Holly Hendry, Lawrence Lek, Oscar Murillo, Tai Shani, Zadie Xa and Abbas Zahedi, in order to 'consider what is at stake in tearing down and erecting monuments, and what it might mean to rethink the idea of the monument'.



Pedro Wirz, *Sour Ground VII*, 2020. Courtesy the artist and Kai Matsumiya Gallery, New York

Pedro Wirz, *Environmental Hangover*
Kunsthalle Basel, 21 January – 1 May

In the library of Kunsthalle Basel, during the last Art Basel art fair, hung what appeared to be a giant nest. A murky mix of brown, green and a burnt-earth red, ribbed and mottled, the sculpture seemed set to burst, threatening to spray the surrounding books with bugs. Titled after *Marimbondo surrao*, a wasp native to the artist's Brazil, with the word *surra* meaning 'a beating' in Portuguese, the organic form was undercut with questions of labour and violence, and humankind's relationship with the natural world. Wirz is now back at the Swiss institution for his biggest museum show yet: expect eggs, earth and beeswax, cast bronze, decaying textiles and organic debris in work that plays with seduction and disgust in equal measure.



Protestors storming Capitol building, Washington, 6 January 2021. Photo: Victor J. Blue. Courtesy the Bronx Documentary Center

Storming of the Capitol

Bronx Documentary Center, New York, 29 January – 20 March

Shortly after the Capitol riot on 6 January 2021, an event that saw pro-Trump protestors storming Washington's Capitol Building during a joint assembly of Congress where the formalisation of Joe Biden's presidency was taking place, and which resulted in the deaths of five and the assault and injury of more than 150 people, Lewis Gordon wrote for *ArtReview* about the proliferation of selfies taken by MAGA and QAnon protestors – the 'inevitable byproduct of twenty-first century-rioters armed with smartphones and social-media accounts' – and which remain on the internet as trophy images for the far-right. On the Capitol riot's first anniversary – amidst reflections on its impact and legacy for the US's divided political landscape – the Bronx Documentary Center's forthcoming exhibition of photos and film offers a sharp survey of the day's confluence of far-right radicalisation and mob violence.

ARTISTS CALL AGAINST U.S. INTERVENTION IN CENTRAL AMERICA

IF WE CAN SIMPLY WITNESS THE DESTRUCTION OF ANOTHER CULTURE, WE ARE SACRIFICING OUR OWN RIGHT TO MAKE CULTURE. ANYONE WHO HAS EVER PROTESTED REPRESSION ANYWHERE SHOULD CONSIDER THE RESPONSIBILITY TO DEFEND THE CULTURE AND RIGHTS OF THE CENTRAL AMERICAN PEOPLE.

THE ARTS ARE USED BY OUR GOVERNMENT AS EVIDENCE OF CREATIVE FREEDOM, AND THE LACK OF CENSORSHIP IN A DEMOCRACY. AT THE SAME TIME, THE REAGAN ADMINISTRATION DENIES THE PEOPLE OF CENTRAL AMERICA THE RIGHT TO SELF-DETERMINATION AND TO INDEPENDENCE.

IT IS OF THE UTMOST IMPORTANCE THAT THE PEOPLE OF NORTH AMERICA EXPRESS NOW OUR DEEP CONCERN FOR PEACE AND FREEDOM IN CENTRAL AMERICA, WHERE THE SITUATION BECOMES MORE CRITICAL EACH DAY.

THE U.S. GOVERNMENT CONTINUES TO AMPLIFY ITS MILITARY PRESENCE IN THE REGION, AND IN THE CASE OF NICARAGUA, TO IMPOSE HARSH ECONOMIC SANCTIONS THAT MAKE LIFE EVEN HARDER FOR ITS INHABITANTS. HONDURAS HAS BEEN TRANSFORMED INTO A GIANTIC MILITARY BASE, THE ONGOING CONFLICT OF GUATEMALAN INDIANS IS IGNORED, AND AN UNDECLARED CIVIL WAR IS BEING WAGED AGAINST NICARAGUA. EXTENSIVE MILITARY ASSISTANCE IS GIVEN TO A GOVERNMENT IN EL SALVADOR THAT VIOLATES INTERNATIONALLY RECOGNIZED HUMAN RIGHTS BY SUBJECTING PRISONERS TO INHUMAN PUNISHMENT, BY CLOSING THE NATIONAL UNIVERSITY AND BY TOLERATING POLITICAL ASSASSINATIONS BY RIGHT-WING DEATH SQUADS.

ACCORDING TO A REPORT SUBMITTED BY AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL TO THE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE U.S. CONGRESS ON JULY 26, 1980, TEACHERS AND ACADEMICS IN PARTICULAR HAVE BEEN TARGETED FOR REPRESSION IN EL SALVADOR, AS POTENTIAL COMMUNITY LEADERS, THEY FOCUS OPPOSITION TO THE AUTHORITIES. ARTISTS, WRITERS, POETS, MUSICIANS, JOURNALISTS, WORKERS, UNION MEMBERS AND MEDICAL PERSONNEL ARE ALSO AMONG THE SEVERE VICTIMS OF MURDER AND TORTURE BY THE U.S.-BACKED FORCES IN EL SALVADOR IN THE LAST THREE YEARS. OVER 1000 PEOPLE, MANY OF THEM INNOCENT CIVILIANS, HAVE BEEN KILLED BY THE U.S.-BACKED CONTRA REVOLUTIONARIES IN NICARAGUA IN THE LAST YEAR.

THE U.S. GOVERNMENT RECOGNIZES HUMAN RIGHTS LAWS AS BINDING ON THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY AND AT THE SAME TIME GIVES MILITARY AND ECONOMIC SUPPORT TO A GOVERNMENT IN EL SALVADOR THAT OPENLY VIOLATES THESE LAWS. THE U.S. GOVERNMENT RECOGNIZES THE RIGHT TO NATIONAL SELF-DETERMINATION, AND AT THE SAME TIME, SUPPORTS BAILY INTERVENTIONS INTO NICARAGUA.

WE CALL UPON THE REAGAN ADMINISTRATION TO HALT MILITARY AND ECONOMIC SUPPORT TO THE GOVERNMENTS OF EL SALVADOR AND GUATEMALA, TO STOP THE MILITARY BUILDUP IN HONDURAS AND TO CEASE SUPPORT OF THE CONTRAS IN NICARAGUA.

INTERVENTION BY THE U.S. GOVERNMENT INEVITABLY REINFORCES COLONIALIST AND OLIGARCHICAL ELEMENTS HOSTILE TO THE PEOPLE, AS THE INVASION OF GRENADA DEMONSTRATES. THEREFORE, WE CALL UPON THE REAGAN ADMINISTRATION AND THE U.S. CONGRESS TO RESPECT THE RIGHT OF THE CENTRAL AMERICAN PEOPLES TO SELF-DETERMINATION AND TO STOP INTERFERING IN THEIR INTERNAL AFFAIRS. WE MUST SPEAK OUT AGAINST THESE BURNING INJUSTICES NOW AND WE WILL CONTINUE TO DO SO AS LONG AS IT IS NECESSARY.

ARTISTS CALL AGAINST U.S. INTERVENTION IN CENTRAL AMERICA IS A NATIONWIDE MOBILIZATION OF ARTISTS ORGANIZING OUT OF NEW YORK CITY. A WIDE SERIES OF EXHIBITIONS AND EVENTS WILL BE CENTERED AROUND JANUARY 22nd—THE 25th ANNIVERSARY OF THE 1955 MASSACRE IN EL SALVADOR WHICH MARKED THE BEGINNING OF THE SYSTEMATIC DESTRUCTION OF THE SALVADOREAN CULTURE. IN CONNECTION WITH THE ANALISE (THE INSTITUTE FOR THE ARTS AND LETTERS OF EL SALVADOR IN EXILE) AND IN COOPERATION WITH THE ACTO (THE SANDINISTA ASSOCIATION OF CULTURAL WORKERS)—ARTISTS CALL WILL JOINTLY EXHIBIT ART FROM CENTRAL AMERICA, ART ABOUT CENTRAL AMERICA AND ART IN SUPPORT OF CENTRAL AMERICA AS A POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC





Claes Oldenburg, Artists' Poster Committee of Art Workers Coalition, 1984. Gift of the Artists' Poster Committee with funds provided by the ICP Acquisitions Committee, 2002

Art for the Future: Artists Call and Central American Solidarities

Aidekman Arts Center, Medford, and SMFA at Tufts, Boston, MA, 20 January – 24 April

In 1982 General Idea organised an open call group show in solidarity with the people of Central America, and in protest of Washington's covert and overt backing of various right-wing coups and totalitarian regimes within the region. Alongside paintings by Nicaraguan school children, protest banners and homemade solidarity flags, was work by the likes of Ana Mendieta, Juan Sánchez and Tim Rollins. Anne Pitrone made a papier-mâché sculpture depicting a peasant farmer strung up, Christy Rupp created an installation drawing attention to the bloody industry behind America's banana businesses. The show galvanised a short lived movement, Artists Call, which nonetheless in its twelve-month existence organised hundreds of exhibitions and events throughout the US drawing attention to the horrors being perpetuated across the border. Drawing on the archives of the movement, as well as works by contemporary artists including Naeem Mohaiemen and Carlos Motta, this new show recalls a history unjustly forgotten.



Ursula Biemann, *Acoustic Ocean*, 2018, video, 4K, colour, sound, 18 min, video still. Courtesy the artist

Free Jazz IV: Geomancers

NTU CCA Singapore, 14–23 January

Coinciding with [Singapore's Art Week](#), the fourth iteration of NTU CCA's Free Jazz programme of performances, VR and sound installations and more particularly a film programme screening at Gillman Barracks, featuring an intriguing line up of artists: among them Martha Arienzo.

proposed as geomancers – interpreters of the signs of vulnerability, etc; let’s hope they’re kinder than the geomancer who just sent *ArtReview Asia* its annual forecast, suggesting that, in the light of various signs and symbols, it purchase a mine’s worth of crystals, rearrange its living space and never, ever, leave home for the remainder of the year.



Joana Hadjithomas & Khalil Joreige, *MEMORY BOX*, 2021, film still. © Haut et Court, Abbout Productions, micro_scope

Joana Hadjithomas and Khalil Joreige, *Memory Box*

In UK theatres from 21 January

The latest feature from the Lebanese artists/filmmakers extends their longstanding interest in making the invisible visible. Taking as its subject the construction of history, it draws upon Hadjithomas’s own teenage diaries and letters (written during the Lebanese Civil War): *Memory Box* traces what happens when Maia, a single mother living in Montreal with her teenage daughter, receives a package of notebooks, tapes and photos from her own teenage years in Lebanon. While Maia refuses to engage with this aspect of her past, her daughter dives in, using a mix of fact and fantasy to reconstruct a buried past.



Joel Coen, *The Tragedy of Macbeth*, 2021, still. Courtesy Apple TV

Joel Coen, *The Tragedy of Macbeth*

Apple TV+, from 14 January

While Scotland prepares to officially pardon the thousands of women accused of and executed for practising witchcraft, one of fiction's most famous covens prepare to grace the silver screen once again. In Joel Coen's new film adaptation of *Macbeth* (first performed in 1606), veteran of Shakespearean theatre Kathryn Hunter portrays the three witches, delivering in her deep creaking voice the sole line in the trailer: "By the pricking of my thumbs, something wicked this way comes..." This is also Joel Coen's (of the Coen brothers) first solo foray into directing, with Denzel Washington and Frances McDormand cast in the title roles. Already, from the film's original minute-long teaser, which is in itself a celebration of the play's creepy mysteriousness, the distinct visual influence of Ingmar Bergman's 1957 *The Seventh Seal* is apparent. What promises to be an arresting interpretation of the classic about festering betrayal, existential crisis and questionable morals, Coen's *The Tragedy of Macbeth* seems almost as if it's been specially made and timed for those of us who like to wallow in the long dark nights of January.



Courtesy Hyperdub

Burial, *Antidawn*

Hyperdub

The master of the ghostly rave returns, with an EP that takes his sound down to 'just the vapours': a hazy, roaming ambience haunted by 'dislocated, patchwork songwriting' set in an 'eerie, open-world, game space'.

**'A wonderful and
important book'**

TRACY KIDDER

**'A future
American classic'**

AYAD AKHTAR

**'Simply put, this
is a masterpiece'**

THOMAS HARDING

INVISIBLE CHILD



**POVERTY,
SURVIVAL *and* HOPE**

ANDREA ELLIOTT

WINNER OF THE PULITZER PRIZE

Andrea Elliott, *Invisible Child*

Hutchison Heinemann, £16.99 (hardcover)

The New York Times reporter traces eight years in the life of Dasani (named after the bottled water) and her family (two adults and eight children all, at one point, living in a single room in a homeless shelter with a bucket for a lavatory – because of the high incidence of sexual assault on children who used the communal lavatory proper) as they are buffeted by New York City's homelessness crises, the aftermath of parental drug addiction, hunger, structural and systemic racism, and the conflict between sticking together and moving on up in the world. While this is a self-proclaimed tale of hope (its subtitle is *Poverty, Survival and Hope in New York City*), at times the narrative reads like something out of George Orwell's social commentaries, at others like the plot of a Charles Dickens novel, which makes it all the more shocking that it is an account of the here and now.

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