

Empire State. Art in New York Today

Francesca Di Folco (July 05, 2013)



Trials, tribulations, and excesses in the intergenerational exhibition of 25 New York-based artists hosted by the Palazzo delle Esposizioni in Rome until July 21

Michele Abeles, Uri Aran, Darren Bader, Antoine Catala, Moyra Davey, Keith Edmier, LaToya Ruby Frazier, Dan Graham, Renée Green, Wade Guyton, Shadi Habib Allah, Jeff Koons, Nate Lowman, Danny McDonald, Bjarne Melgaard, John Miller, Takeshi Murata, Virginia Overton, Joyce Pensato, Adrian Piper, Rob Pruitt, R. H. Quaytman, Tabor Robak, Julian Schnabel, Ryan Sullivan.

“[Empire State. Arte a New York oggi](#) [2]”, Empire State. New York Art Now, is an exhibition organized by Alex Gaterfeld MOCA Museum North Miami curator and co-curated with [Norman Rosenthal](#) [3], former exhibitions secretary of the Royal Academy of Arts in London, that asks how artists might reimagine urban life, and how the city of New York might continue to be a site of



contestation.

Bringing together an intergenerational selection of artists from the city's five boroughs and related suburban and exurban regions, the exhibition includes works that meditate on the city as a means of distributing power. It comes at a crucial time, when people are anxiously reassessing the political, cultural and economic role of the United States in world affairs.

Here, contemporary art is a tool to reflect on the media pervasive in today's cities.

The title "Empire State" references, among many other things, Empire—[Antonio Negri](#) [4] and Michael Hardt's 2000 treatise on global, American-led capitalism—and Jay-Z and Alicia Keys's 2009 boosterish song, "Empire State of Mind".

"The exhibit follows 20 years of the re-urbanization of the Western world after a half century of suburbanization," Gartenfeld says. "It asks, 'How are artists approaching living in a city that is constantly redefining the way we see the world?' "

Contemporary art, like the city of New York, has seen massive growth over the past five decades. This rapid development has manifested new possibilities for visual artists, but simultaneously forced the reevaluation of traditionally critical strategies.

The artists in "Empire State" are grounded in institutional critique and studies of media and economics, but above all, they engage technology and abstraction to present new models of subjectivity. [Dan Graham](#) [5]'s mirrored pavilions combine minimalist art and architecture to reflect and double the human form, while Jeff Koons's new "Antiquity" works manifest the artist's mythical pursuits, but also the incredible technical force harnessed to produce them.

As the art community contends with its new, near-industrial scale, artists in New York must question the conventions that define their social networks. Beyond merely documenting historical genealogies of artists, "Empire State" proposes new connections.

For the first time, [R. H. Quaytman](#) [6] will show as a group her portraits of New York artists. A net artist like [Tabor Robak](#), [7] whose work primarily circulates online and asks fundamental questions about how we define and privilege the art-world community, will be presented for the first time in an international context.

Artists in New York often manipulate their authorship through collectives, and a significant number of artists in "Empire State" have been involved in such groups, among them Orchard, Reena Spaulings, 179 Canal, and Art Club 2000.

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[3] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Norman_Rosenthal

[4] <http://www.filosofico.net/tonynegri.htm>

[5] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dan_Graham

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[7] <http://www.taborrobak.com/site/>