



Art

Your Concise Los Angeles Art Guide for February 2021

Your list of must-see, fun, insightful, and very Los Angeles art events this month.

by **Matt Stromberg and Elisa Wouk Almino** 8 hours ago

Installation view of "John Ahearn & Rigoberto Torres: The Bronx Comes to LA" at Charlie James Gallery (photo by Matt Stromberg for Hyperallergic)

Navigate a virtual spiral staircase, bask among outdoor blowup sculptures, listen to a 20-minute orchestral soundscape, and learn about an artist's relationship to prosthetics. This is just a sample of what's in store this month.

Please note that with such a high rate of coronavirus infections in Los Angeles, most galleries are open by appointment only or are presenting their exhibitions online.

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Divya Mehra, The funny things you do, installation view at Night Gallery, 2021 (image courtesy Divya Mehra and Night Gallery, photo by Marten Elder)

Divya Mehra: The funny things You do

When: through February 20

Where: by appointment at Night Gallery (2276 East 16th Street, Downtown, Los Angeles)

The work of Divya Mehra has taken many forms — appropriation, installation, performance — in the service of exploring identity, diaspora, and loss. Her current show at Night Gallery, *The funny things You do*, features two large inflatable sculptures representing emojis: a bright blue tidal wave and a golden urn. Blown up

to monumental size in the gallery's outdoor sculpture garden, these once-cute linguistic symbols take on a more complex significance, teetering between the absurd and the profound.



Alice Könitz, "LAMO A DS#8," EPOCH, Los Angeles (image courtesy the artist and EPOCH, Los Angeles.)

SUBSTRATA

When: through March 5

Where: online at EPOCH

Created by artist Peter Wu as a response to the challenges of viewing work physically during the pandemic, the online gallery EPOCH provides a rich virtual environment which changes with each show. The architectural setting for *SUBSTRATA* was created by Alice Könitz, and resembles a modernist wooden chalet in a snowy Alpine setting. Once inside, you can navigate up a spiral staircase to find Patricia Fernández's delicately carved walnut table displaying items related to the mapping of arborglyphs — tree markings — in the High Sierra. Head down to the caverns below where **Nikita Gale**'s audio collage of screams provides the soundtrack for a range of works, including Kristin Posehn's neon flying buttress. Other participating artists include Paul Pescador, Haena Yoo, Gina Osterloh, Gabie Strong, Sterling Wells, and Won Ju Lim.



Robert Colescott "Girl of the Golden West-California" (1980), colored pencil and graphite on paper, 28 x 20 inches (© the Robert H. Colescott Separate Property Trust / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York, Courtesy of the Trust and Blum & Poe, Los Angeles/New York/Tokyo)

Robert Colescott: Two Drawing Sweets

When: through March 6

Where: by appointment at Blum & Poe (2727 South La Cienega Boulevard, Culver City)

Two Drawing Sweets presents two series of never-before-shown drawings over 40 years old. "Robert's Complete History of World Art" (1979) is a gently satirical take on art history, bringing Colescott's well-known irreverence and humor to ancient Egyptian Art, classical Rome, post-Impressionism, and many other styles and periods. "Girls of the Golden West" (1980) depicts the Western US, with a different cowgirl representing each state: a busty gun-slinger with a knife clenched between her teeth as California, for example. Taken together, these series provide a window onto a formative period in the oeuvre of **this influential artist**, who dug deep into various histories of art to lay bare the systems of racial and social inequity that they promulgated.



Robert Russell, "Teacup #8" (2020), oil on canvas (image courtesy the artist and Anat Ebgi)

Teacups: Robert Russell

When: through March 6

Where: by appointment at Anat Ebgi (2660 S La Cienega Boulevard, Mid-City, Los Angeles)

In this exhibition of teacup paintings, Robert Russell returns with his typical photorealistic style. Mysteriously set against deep black backgrounds, the larger-than-life teacups are carefully rendered like individual portraits. Russell based his surprisingly moving images on photos found on eBay listings and online estate sales.



Rigoberto Torres and John Ahearn, "Ingrid" (1992/2002), acrylic on plaster, 32 x 32 x 14 inches (photo by Matt Stromberg for Hyperallergic)

John Ahearn & Rigoberto Torres: The Bronx Comes to LA

When: through March 7

Where: by appointment at Charlie James Gallery (969 Chung King Road, Chinatown, Los Angeles)

The lifelike sculptures of John Ahearn and Rigoberto Torres serve to monumentalize the everyday, depicting community members and neighborhood residents primarily from the South Bronx. In the late 1970s, Ahearn began making life casts of anyone interested who passed by noted Bronx artspace Fashion Moda. He would then pour plaster in the molds and paint the sculptures, resulting in expressive portraits that captured their subjects as they lived, not in idealized depictions. He was soon joined by Rigoberto Torres, first as an assistant and then as a collaborator, who brought his own technical knowledge, having worked in his uncle's religious statuary factory. Over the past 40 years, the pair has worked together, and on their own, using much the same technique that brought them together four decades ago. *The Bronx Comes to LA* features sculptures from 1990 to 2020 of students, shop keepers, musicians, and family members.



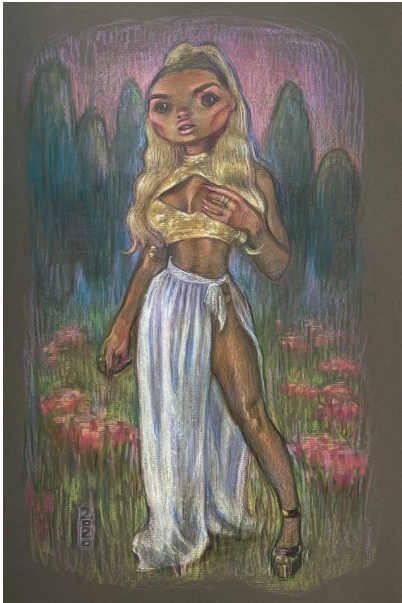
Installation view, *Melvino Garretti: Vino's Carnival of Ceramic Curiosities, or the Circuitous Path to Calamity* at Parker Gallery (photo by Paul Salvesson, courtesy the artist and Parker Gallery)

Melvino Garretti: Vino's Carnival of Ceramic Curiosities, or the Circuitous Path to Calamity

When: through March 27

Where: by appointment at Parker Gallery (2441 Glendower Ave, Los Feliz, Los Angeles)

Don't miss Melvino Garretti's first solo gallery show in his native Los Angeles in 35 years. His whimsical ceramic sculptures and masks build elaborate scenes that could be just as easily spotted at fairs and circuses, featuring carousels, clowns, and dancing elephants. Garretti's playful and performative spirit stretches back to the late 1960s, when he collaborated with Studio Watts and Anna Halprin.



Delia Brown, "Untitled Influencer Drawing (Genie in Landscape)" (2020), Prismacolor pencil on tinted paper, 18 x 12 inches (image courtesy the artist)

GARDEN

When: through March 27

Where: online at Ladies Room

This group show featuring more than 100 female and nonbinary artists imagines the garden as a site of respite and sustenance in a period of “institutional atrophy, financial insecurity, and cultural drought.” Curated entirely through Zoom, the exhibition goes beyond the simply botanical to examine environmentalism, economic shifts, labor, and post-colonial power dynamics. Participating artists include Alison Blickle, Carolyn Castaño, Mary Anna Pomonis, Tanya Brodsky, and many more. 15% of sales will go to benefit LA Food Policy Council, Ron Finley Project, and SummaEverythang. It is only open virtually, but private Zoom tours with the curator are available.



Panteha Abareshi, "Unlearn the Body" (2020), video, TRT: 4:56 (image courtesy the artist)

Panteha Abareshi: Tender Calamities

When: February 4–April 22

Where: online at Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery

In her solo show at the LA Municipal Gallery, *Tender Calamities*, Panteha Abareshi aims to reconsider and normalize disability and illness. Through film and installation, the artist focuses on human prosthetics and the intimate relationship between them and the body. Her exhibition will be accompanied by two public programs, one examining the concept of "**the self in embodied illness**" and one on the "**Taboo Sexualization of the Disabled Body.**"



Mike Cloud, "Beheading Portrait Samuel Paty" (2020), Oil on canvas and mixed media, 69 x 69 x 7 inches (image courtesy the Landing)

Mike Cloud / Sam Jablon: blurred life time

When: opens February 6

Where: by appointment at the Landing (5118 West Jefferson Boulevard, West Adams, Los Angeles)

blurred life time brings together two artists who incorporate language into their paintings, albeit in very different ways. Onto his geometrically shaped canvases, slathered with paint and incorporating everyday objects, Chicago-based artist Mike Cloud writes words that reference tragic events like genocides and suicides, but also the mundane — like potty training or shopping. Painted URLs point to websites with more information on the subject of each work, a decidedly analog representation of digital data. Sam Jablon's canvases are much sparer, but no less vibrant, featuring at most a few evocative words surrounded by backgrounds of energetically painted bright colors. These bits of poetic text are often written backwards or broken mid-word, challenging the viewer to interpret both linguistic and symbolic meaning.



Simphiwe Ndzube, "NoGolide the Great Mother" (2021), mixed media on canvas, 30 x 24 inches (image courtesy the artist and Nicodim Gallery)

Simphiwe Ndzube: Like the Snake that Ate the Chameleon

When: February 13–March 20

Where: by appointment at Nicodim Gallery (1700 S Santa Fe Ave, #160, Downtown, Los Angeles)

South African-born artist Simphiwe Ndzube has garnered attention with his hybrid works that fuse painting, sculpture, and found objects, depicting a surreal world of fantastical Black bodies. His third solo show with Nicodim includes his first audio work: a 20-minute orchestral soundscape created in collaboration with Thabo K Makgolo and **Zimbini Makwethu** that references sorcery and the unjust persecution of women suspected of witchcraft, especially the elderly. The sound will emanate from a floating installation suspended from the gallery ceiling resembling a shack similar to those in the townships ringing Ndzube's birthplace of Cape Town. The artist has crafted a field of corn stalks branching out from the hanging installation into the gallery space filled with his signature figurative works.

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