



Labor Day Art Guide: Summer Shows to See Before They Close

Fall is quickly approaching, so are the closing dates for shows like “Camp” at the Met and the Whitney Biennial.

By Julianne McShane

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As the summer winds down, so do many of the city’s blockbuster museum exhibitions. This year is no different, with the Met’s Costume Institute show “Camp: Notes on Fashion” closing Sept. 8 and the 2019 Whitney Biennial running through Sept. 22. At the New-York Historical Society, a pair of exhibitions commemorating the 50th anniversary of the Stonewall uprising close Sept. 22, and “Life: Six Women Photographers” ends its run on Oct. 6.

But some recently opened surveys will be on view for longer: at the Brooklyn Museum, “Pierre Cardin: Future Fashion” is open through Jan. 5, and at the Guggenheim, there are exhibitions examining the works of Jean-Michel Basquiat (through Nov. 6) and Robert Mapplethorpe (through next summer). The Museum of the City of New York has a pair of companion exhibitions highlighting the works of the photographer Fred W. McDarrah: “The Voice of the Village” is on through Dec. 1, and “Pride: Photographs of Stonewall and Beyond” closes Dec. 31.

And another show at the Museum of the City of New York is particularly pertinent this Labor Day: “City of Workers, City of Struggle,” which highlights the 200-year history of how labor movements shaped New York. (The museum will cut its admission 50 percent from Sept. 1-7 for visitors with a union card.) On view through Jan. 5, the show charts the evolution of the continuing fight for workers’ rights, beginning with the dawn of unions in the 19th century, when discontent among laborers over the changing realities of their workplaces prompted them to agitate for better pay and working conditions, according to the show’s curator, Steven H. Jaffe.



Members of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union picketing outside Macy's department store in 1965. The image is among the archival works and more in the exhibition “City of Workers, City of Struggle,” at the Museum of the City of New York. Kheel Center for Labor-Management Documentation & Archives, Cornell University

“As the city became industrialized in the 19th century and streams of wealth and poverty came to characterize New York, it became a place of opportunity for many immigrants and working people, but it also became a place of tremendous disparities,” Mr. Jaffe said. “It became a place of anger, militancy, and great aspirations to improve one’s own lot.”

But the exhibition also shows that not all laborers had a seat at the table: The white male workers leading labor movements in the early days often prevented women, African-Americans, and new immigrant workers from joining unions.

These workers persisted, though: women formed strike committees in the mid-19th century, and carried out reforms in the garment industry following both a 1909 strike and the 1911 Triangle shirtwaist factory fire. Black workers founded their own unions and locals after the Civil War, and immigrant workers went on to create the Chinese Hand Laundry Alliance of New York and the national Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance — among others — in the 20th century.

More recently, the battle among groups of organized workers over plans for the since-defeated Amazon headquarters in Long Island City, Queens, has shown the city's enduring role in leading national debates about workers' rights, according to Mr. Jaffe. "New York has remained a real incubator for labor struggles on the part of working people," he said.

Below, we offer a listing of some of the art exhibitions closing over the next month, many of which were reviewed by our art critics.

Last Chance



Gina Beavers's "The Life I Deserve," from 2016, at MoMA PS1. Gina Beavers



A Manish Arora spring/summer ensemble from 2009, part of "Camp: Notes on Fashion" at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Dolly Faibyshev for The New York Times

'GINA BEAVERS: THE LIFE I DESERVE' at MoMA PS1 (through Sept. 2). Gina Beavers took #FoodPorn from a hashtag to a high-relief object. The artist transposes images culled from social media — like a rainbow soft-serve ice cream cone captioned with the aforementioned hashtag and snapshots of red lips and smoky eyes — into sculptural paintings, made with multiple layers of acrylic paint, to explore the relationship between selfhood and modern consumer culture. 718-784-2084, momaps1.org

'SIMONE FATTAL: WORKS AND DAYS' at MoMA PS1 (through Sept. 2). The first solo museum exhibition in the United States of the works of the Lebanese artist Simone Fattal features more than 200 works — including sculptures, paintings and collages — that were created over the past five decades. Inspired by war, mythology, and Sufi poetry, the pieces consider themes such as displacement, personal memory and the politics of excavation. 718-784-2084, momaps1.org

'DEVIN KENNY: ROOTKITS ROOTWORK' at MoMA PS1 (through Sept. 2). In his first solo museum exhibition — named after a computer virus ("rootkits") and black-American folk magic ("rootwork") — Devin Kenny displays more than a dozen multimedia works that aim to consider how technologies that forge online communities and activist movements exist in tandem with the displacement and oppression of black people in the United States. 718-784-2084, momaps1.org

'HOCK E AYE VI EDGAR HEAP OF BIRDS: SURVIVING ACTIVE SHOOTER CUSTER' at MoMA PS1 (through Sept. 8). Through drawings, prints and installations, the artist Edgar Heap of Birds — who has lived on tribal land in Oklahoma City since 1981 — explores the largely unacknowledged history of violence committed by United States troops against Native populations more than a century ago through the lens of the modern-day notion of an "active shooter." 718-784-2084, momaps1.org

'CAMP: NOTES ON FASHION' at the Metropolitan Museum of Art (through Sept. 8). Inspired by Susan Sontag's 1964 essay, "Notes on 'Camp,'" the latest spectacular from the Met's Costume Institute tries to define this elastic, constantly evolving concept, which leaves taste, seriousness and heteronormativity in the dust. The show researches camp's emergence in 18th-century France and 19th-century England, examines "Sontagian Camp" and culminates in an immense gallery of designer confectionaries from the 1980s to now that calls to mind a big, shiny Christmas tree barricaded with presents. (Roberta Smith) 212-535-7100, metmuseum.org

'T.S. CANNON: AT THE EDGE OF AMERICA' at the National Museum of the American Indian (through Sept. 16). In 31 years, Cannon made more stunning artworks than some artists make in much longer lifetimes. This retrospective brings together his polychromatic paintings of Native Americans, intimate drawings commenting on the country's violent history, and original poetry, folk songs and letters to emphasize the full breadth of his singularly hybrid vision. That he made so much mature work in so many mediums before dying in a car accident in 1978 is all the more remarkable. In Cannon's most powerful works, he brings Modernist styles — most notably Post-Impressionism and Fauvism — to bear on portraits of Native Americans. There are echoes of Matisse in his ambush of colors and patterns, and shades of van Gogh in his animation of the landscape. But paintings like "Two Guns Arikara" (1974-77) and "Indian With Beaded Headdress" (1978) demonstrate his irrefutable originality. (Jillian Steinhauer) americanindian.si.edu



A wall of images from the late 19th-century "Photographic Atlas of the Moon," assembled by Maurice Loewy and Pierre Puiseux, in "Apollo's Muse: The Moon in the Age of Photography" at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Justin Lane/EPA, via Shutterstock

'APOLLO'S MUSE: THE MOON IN THE AGE OF PHOTOGRAPHY' at the Metropolitan Museum of Art (through Sept. 22). This exhibition is a journey through an uncommon history, that of representations of the moon across four centuries. An outsize and beautifully installed revelation of persistent astronomical searches, it is a trailblazing marriage of science and art — 300 images and objects (a telescope, a photograph used as a fire screen, two moon globes, Hasselblad cameras used by astronauts), plus film excerpts. The images shine a bright light on astronomers' unstoppable pursuit of knowledge as well as on technological advances, artistic responses and fantasy, and also a generous serving of unabashed cuteness. The show amounts to a testament to the human drive to know and explore, and it quietly affirms the growing influence of visual representations of the moon from the invention of the telescope through the Apollo 11 moon landing 50 years ago. (Vicki Goldberg) 212-535-7100, metmuseum.org

'STONEWALL 50 AT THE NEW-YORK HISTORICAL SOCIETY' (through Sept. 22). For its Stonewall summer, the society offers a bouquet of three micro-shows. One is devoted to relics of L.G.B.T.Q. night life, from the 1950s lesbian bar called the Sea Colony to gay male sex clubs like the Anvil and the Ramrod that sizzled in the 1970s. Another documents the founding in 1974 — by Joan Nestle, Deborah Edel, Sahli Cavallaro, Pamela Olin and Julia Stanley — of a compendious and still-growing register of lesbian culture called the Herstory Archives. And a third turns a solo spotlight on charismatic individuals: Storme DeLarverie (1920-2014), Mother Flawless Sabrina/Jack Doroshov (1939-2017), Keith Haring (1958-90) and Rollerena Fairy Godmother. (Holland Cotter) 212-873-3400, nyhistory.org

2019 WHITNEY BIENNIAL at the Whitney Museum of American Art (through Sept. 22). Given the political tensions that have sent spasms through the nation over the past two years, you might have expected — hoped — that this year's biennial would be one big, sharp Occupy-style yawp. It isn't. Politics are present but, with a few notable exceptions, murmured, coded, stitched into the weave of fastidiously form-conscious, labor-intensive work. As a result, the exhibition, organized by two young Whitney curators, Rujeko Hockley and Jane Panetta, gives the initial impression of being a well-groomed group show rather than a statement of resistance. But once you start looking closely, the impression changes artist by artist, piece by piece — there's quiet agitation in the air. (Cotter) 212-570-3600, whitney.org

'BEYOND THE STREETS' at 25 Kent Avenue, Williamsburg, Brooklyn (through Sept. 29). This traveling exhibition highlights the evolution of graffiti and street art through the work of more than 150 artists — spread out over two floors of a huge new Williamsburg development — including the photographer Henry Chalfant, who captured the tags scrawled on the side of New York City subway cars in the 1970s and 1980s, and Alexis Ross, who teamed with the tattoo artist Bert Krak to install a functioning tattoo parlor within the space. (McShane) beyondthestreets.com



An installation view of "Brazilian Modern: The Living Art of Roberto Burle Marx" at the New York Botanical Garden.
Brittanny Newman/The New York Times



Mrinalini Mukherjee's "Palmscape III" (2013) at the Met Breuer.
Brittanny Newman/The New York Times

'BRAZILIAN MODERN: THE LIVING ART OF ROBERTO BURLE MARX' at the New York Botanical Garden (through Sept. 29). The garden's largest-ever botanical exhibition pays tribute to Brazil's most renowned landscape architect with lush palm trees and vivid plants, along with a display of paintings and tapestries. In the late 1960s and early '70s, Marx (1909-94) planted bright bands of monochrome plants along Rio's Copacabana Beach and the fresh ministries of Brasília, then the new capital. For this show, the garden and its greenhouses synthesize his achievements into a free-form paean rich with Brazilian species, some of which he discovered himself. (Alcantarea burle-marxii, one of many thick-fronded bromeliads here, has leaves as tall as a 10-year-old.) Check the weather, make sure it's sunny, then spend all day breathing in this exuberant gust of tropical modernism. (Jason Farago) 718-817-8700, nybg.org

'MARTA MINUJÍN: MENESUNDA RELOADED' at New Museum (through Sept. 29). One of the best shows of the summer returns to a legendary moment of midcentury avant-gardism with the vividness of time travel. It replicates with convincing accuracy a funky D.I.Y. multichamber labyrinth created in Buenos Aires in 1965 by the young Argentine artist Marta Minujín, assisted by the artist Ruben Santanonin. The work's title, "La Menesunda," is, appropriately, slang for "a confusing situation," and the immersive combination of happening, performance and installation manifested in cheap, colorful materials makes it so. (Smith) 212-219-1222, newmuseum.org

'PHENOMENAL NATURE: MRINALINI MUKHERJEE' at the Met Breuer (through Sept. 29). You almost forget that art has the power to startle — to make you wonder "How on earth did someone even think to do this, never mind do it?" — until you see a show like this survey of sculptures by Mukherjee (1949-2015), an Indian artist. Roughly half are figure-like forms made from hemp ropes worked in a knotted macramé technique of finger-aching ingenuity and titled with generic names of pre-Hindu nature spirits and fertility deities. Smaller, ceramic pieces, flame shaped and midnight black, suggest Buddhas. Late cast bronze sculptures look both botanical and bestial. The result isn't folk art or design or fiber art or religious art or feminist art. It's modern art of deep originality. And it's an astonishment. (Cotter) 212-731-1635, metmuseum.org

Out of Town Shows Closing Soon

'CHARLOTTE POSENENSKE: WORK IN PROGRESS' at Dia Art Foundation in Beacon, N.Y. (through Sept. 9). This Hudson Valley institution continues its satisfying enlargement of its roll call of Minimalists and Conceptualists with a major showcase of this German artist, who showed her modular, industrially inspired sculptures alongside Donald Judd and Frank Stella in the late 1960s, but then abandoned art for sociology. Posenenske's most important works were free-standing pipes, made of sheet steel or cardboard, that look almost exactly like commercial air ducts. Unlike some of the control freaks whose art is also on view here, Posenenske made her art in infinite editions, out of parts that can be arranged in any shape you like: a generous distribution of authorship from the artist to her fabricators and collectors. (Farago) diaart.org

'RENOIR: THE BODY, THE SENSES' at the Clark Art Institute (through Sept. 22). Go for the stunning review of the great Impressionist's career told in female nudes, whether paintings, drawings and sculptures. Stay for works by his predecessors, peers and heirs from Boucher to Delacroix to Picasso. Your senses will thank you. (Smith) clarkart.edu.