

Alison Saar

AI-AP PRESENTS



## The DART Board: 08.18.2021

By: Peggy Roalf

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**ESTAMOS BIEN – LA TRIENAL 20/21**, El Museo del Barrio’s first national large-scale survey of LatinX contemporary art featuring more than 40 artists from across the United States and Puerto Rico, continues in person, on weekends, through September 26th. Featuring works in diverse mediums, from time-based art to reliefs from detritus to sculpture in the round as well as paintings, drawings and works in many digital forms, the exhibition addresses how identity and structural racism; migration, displacement; climate and ecological justice are classified in the context of the current and ongoing global pandemic, as it relates to Latinx populations. *Photos: © Peggy Roalf*



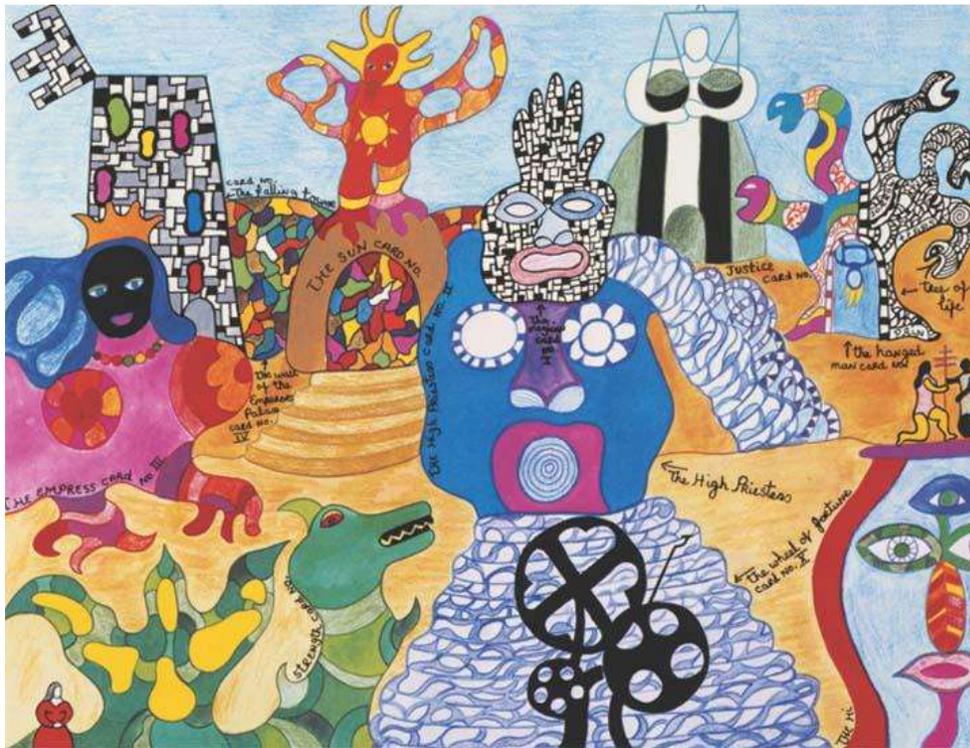
This exhibition is a necessary corrective to a category in art that Holland Cotter, writing in *The New York Times* last October, said was unalluring to the market in that it is perceived as being both too narrow and too broad. On the one hand it is identified with a specific politics, defined by “the street,” “the people,” in which the mainstream art world has little sustained interest.

I am including this lengthy quote because this is a subject that becomes increasingly important in this year following the census, which is revealing some surprising truths about diversity in the USA. Cotter continues, “But at the same time, LatinX art is hard to pin down. It crosses national borders,

mixes social histories, and spans the color range, encompassing Black, brown, red, yellow, white, and mixtures of all of those....To an art world reliant on pitch-ready hooks and slots, it feels unexotically diffuse and ignorable.

“This dismissive perspective is racist, and classist, and just plain wrong. It is the necessary job of El Museo del Barrio, a formative LatinX institution, to correct it....If El Museo did nothing more, from this time forward, than focus its attention on LatinX art and its complex past and electric present, it would have its hands, and its galleries, more than full.”

***Estamos Bien—La Trienal 20/21*** continues at El Museo del Barrio through September 26. 1230 Fifth Avenue, NY, NY [Info](#)



**Closing September 6 | MoMA PS1**

***Niki de Saint Phalle: Structures for Life***

From the very outset of her career in the 1950s, [Niki de Saint Phalle](#) (American and French, 1930-2002) defied artistic conventions, creating works that were overtly feminist, performative, collaborative, and monumental. Her first major US exhibition, *Niki de Saint Phalle: Structures for Life* features over 200 works that highlight Saint Phalle’s interdisciplinary approach and engagement with pressing social issues. Innovation was key to Saint Phalle’s process: from beginning to end, she envisioned new ways of inhabiting the world. *Above: Niki de Saint Phalle, Tarot Garden, 1991*

Saint Phalle produced fantastical and figurative houses, parks, and playgrounds while engaging with the politics of social space in her work. These structures were charged spaces of imagination from which she envisioned experimental societies emerging, places “where you could have a new kind of life, to just be free.” Central to this vision was *Tarot Garden*, a massive sculptural installation outside of Rome, open to the public since 1998. The intricate detailing and organic shapes of the garden’s structures, based on the 22 Major Arcana of the tarot deck, underscore Saint Phalle’s belief that art can alter perception and shift reality.

**Niki de Saint Phalle: Structures for Life** continues through September 6 at MoMA PS1, 22-25 Jackson Avenue, Long Island City, NY [Info](#) Photo courtesy of MoMA PS1



**Closing September 12 | Bronx Museum of the Arts**

***Born in Flames: Feminist Futures*** is a constellation of imagined world-scapes projected by fourteen contemporary artists. Set within the space of an exhibition, the artwork presented is a projection of the artists’ larger visions about futurity. Each section of the show is a microcosmic speculation on what could have been, what is, or what is to come. These worlds are steeped in lessons of our complicated pasts, peppered with the ravages of oppression but also blooming joys. Their work critically examines current struggles for equity by exploring strategies for justice and equality through multifaceted futurisms. The exhibition borrows its title from the 1983 film, *Born in*

*Flames*, by artist and activist Lizzie Borden. The film sets forth an essential question within the exhibition: What can the future hold if our present is part of a long-standing cycle of capitalist values? Above: installation view

The works posit that futurity and social justice are inextricably connected, as writer Walidah Imarisha notes in her introduction to *Octavia Brood: Science Fiction Stories from the Social Justice Movement*. She says, “Whenever we try to envision a world without war, without violence, without prisons, without capitalism, we are engaging in speculative fictions.” When we envision a world where social justice is no longer a radical idea, but a reality, we reaffirm the bond between futurism and justice.

***Born in Flames: Feminist Futures*** continues through September 12 at The Bronx Museum of the Arts, 1040 Grand Concourse, Bronx, NY [Info](#) Photo courtesy of The Bronx Museum of the Arts



**Opening September 18 | Prospect Park, Brooklyn**

***Kamala Sankara: The Last Stand***, an experimental opera and sound installation for trees heightening awareness of the complex expanse of multi-species kinship surrounding us.

In the tradition of *musique concrète*, a composition created from recorded sounds rather than instrumentation and vocals, *The Last Stand* chronicles the lifespan of a 300-year-old Northern Red Oak from the years 1750 – 2050. The “Mother Tree” lives in Black Rock Forest, a nearly 4,000 acre diverse ecosystem in upstate New York. The story spans the Mother Tree’s life from acorn to its “last stand,” the final burst of life-giving energy a tree gives to its vast forest network before it dies. From the quotidian to the catastrophic, the sonic narrative spans elements that produce and hold life in nature.

Using the sonic vocabulary familiar to the Northern Red Oak, Sankaram's soundscape unfolds over 10 hours through a montage of field recordings and archival nature noises. At times the composition is a hyper realistic portrayal of a forest, with sounds from nature that feel familiar yet slightly exaggerated. At other times, the sounds are abstracted, with layers and loops that hint at the rhythms found in Electronic Dance Music and hip hop. *Photo courtesy of Creative Time*

**Kamala Sankara: *The Last Stand***, September 18-October 10. Please visit the Creative Time website for location and [Info](#)



**Continuing through December 12 | Armory Center for the Arts and the Benton Museum, Los Angeles**

**Alison Saar: *Of Aether and Earthe***, a two-venue retrospective of the work of Alison Saar, features over 30 years of the LA-based artist's sculptures, installations, paintings, and drawings, highlighting her explorations of the duality of body and spirit. *Above: Hygieia, 2020*

The [Armory Center for the Arts](#) focuses on her sculptures of Black, female figures, carved out of wood or hammered out of pieces of scrap tin ceiling. She surrounds them with metaphorical objects like antlers, water jugs, butterflies, invoking mythical histories. The [Benton Museum](#) will feature

sculptures, paintings, and drawings, as well as a 12-foot-tall figure of the Yoruba goddess Yemaja, mother of all living things who controls the waters.

**Alison Saar: *Of Aether and Earthe***, Armory Center for the Arts, 145 N Raymond Avenue, Pasadena, CA [Info](#). The Benton Museum of Pomona College, 120 W Bonita Avenue, Claremont, CA [Info](#) Photo courtesy of Alison Saar



**Notes from the Home Office | Last chance to enter American Photography Open: August 31**

David Shonauer of Pro Photo Daily says, One rule of photography: The incredible scene you're looking for may be behind you. In February, for instance, Gary Hunter, a serious photo enthusiast from Oakdale, California, was taking part in a photo workshop in Yellowstone National Park. During an outing after a snowstorm, most of the workshop students focused their attention on a fox that had made an appearance. But Hunter turned around and saw a landscape of snowy hills and rolling clouds. The resulting photo was singled out by the judges of the [American Photography Open 2021](#) contest in July, and we feature it now, along with two other standout entries — a striking studio portrait and an astonishing rodeo action shot.

If you're thinking of entering the contest, better get moving: The deadline is August 31. The competition is open to photographers at every level using all types of equipment.

[Go here](#) for more information on the prizes, judges, and information on how to enter. *Photo courtesy of the artist*



**Exhibition extended through August 30 | El Barrio's Artspace PS109**

***The Second Annual Women Celebrate Women***, curated by New York-based mixed media artist, teaching artist and jewelry designer, [Yvonne Lamar-Rogers](#), the exhibition includes works by 71 local artists working in all disciplines to celebrate and honor diversity in New York's female visual arts community. Lamar-Rogers says the mission of this year's Women Celebrate Women exhibition is to celebrate and honor women of all backgrounds, quoting Black feminist playwright Ntozake Shange: "Where there is a woman, there is magic." *Above: One of three pieces by yrs truly in the show / @peggy.roalf*

***Women Celebrate Women*** continues through August 30 at El Barrio's Artspace PS109, 215 East 99th Street, NY, NY Info

<https://www.ai-ap.com/publications/article/28831/the-dart-board-08182021.html>

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