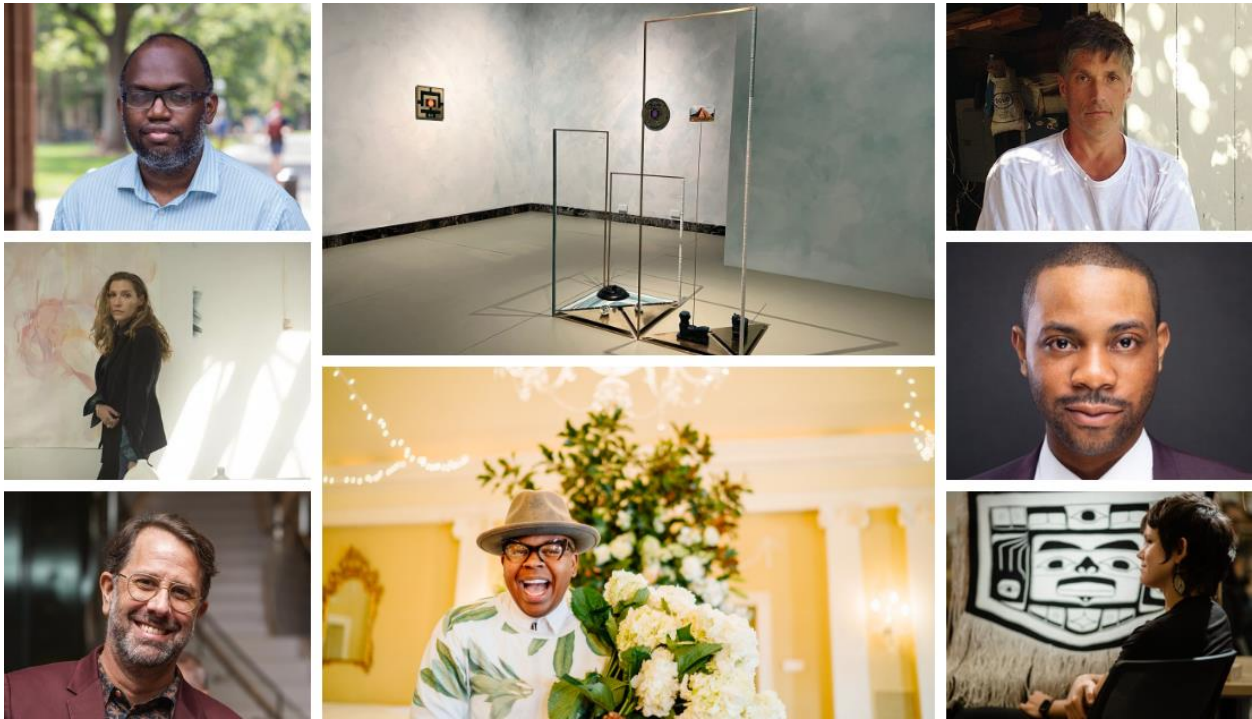


MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS ST. PETE

THE MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, ST. PETERSBURG UNVEILS CAPTIVATING 2024 SEASON OF ARTISTIC EXPLORATION

An Inspiring Confluence of Creativity: Esteemed Artists, Best-Selling Authors, Art Historians, Notable Curators, and Distinguished Art Scholars Illuminate the Vibrant Engaging Winter-Spring Programming Season at the Museum of Fine Arts, St. Petersburg



ST. PETERSBURG, FL (January 18, 2024) – [The Museum of Fine Arts, St. Petersburg](#) (MFA), is thrilled to announce its highly anticipated 2024 Winter-Spring Season of diverse and engaging programming and exhibitions. This upcoming season promises a rich tapestry of artistic experiences, featuring renowned artists, cultural luminaries, and thought leaders from around the world. Each program invites audiences to explore the depths of the MFA Collection, gain diverse perspectives from experts, and contemplate the influence of current issues on both the art museum space and our individual lives. In addition to educational programming, the MFA opens the highly anticipated site-specific exhibition, *Claudia Peña Salinas: Ahua Can*.

"We are delighted to present programming and exhibitions that reflect our commitment to providing our community with diverse and enriching artistic experiences," expressed Dr. Stanton Thomas, Chief Curator. "The 2024 Winter-Spring lineup is a testament to our dedication to fostering dialogue, sparking creativity, and cultivating a deeper appreciation for the arts."

2024 Winter-Spring Programming Season

Artist Talk | Alexis Rockman

January 18, 2024, from 6–7 pm



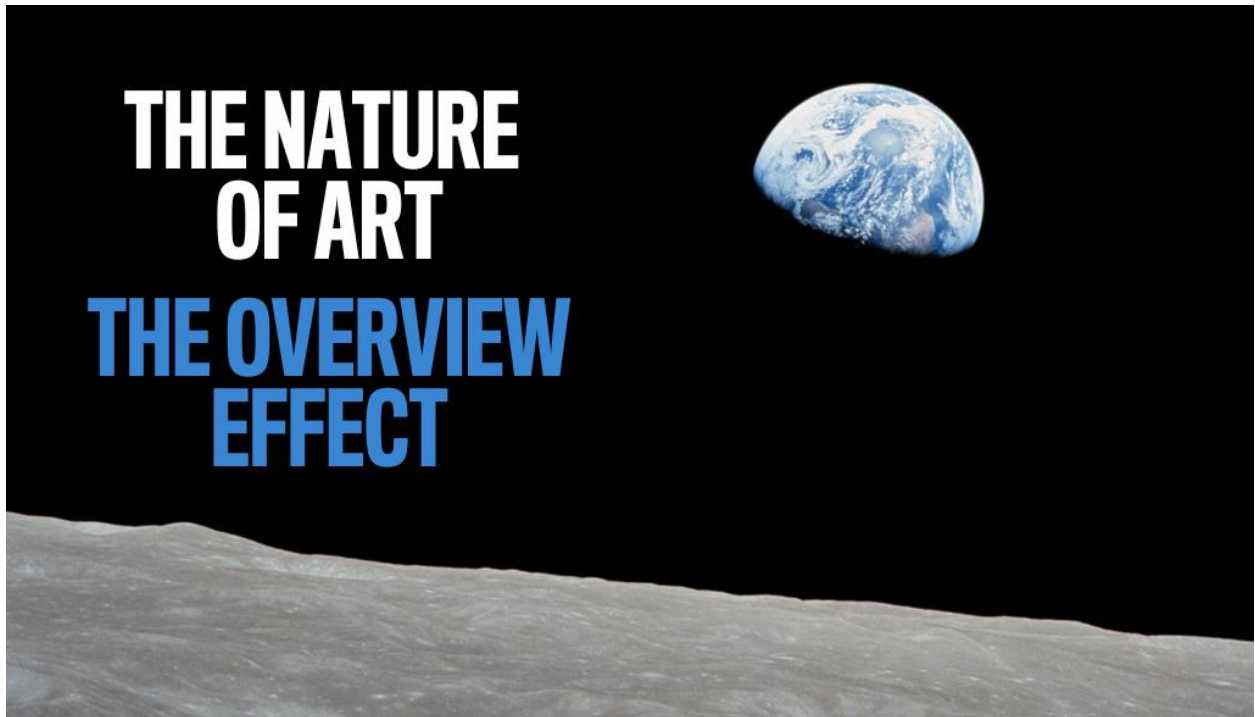
Artist Talk | Janaina Tschäpe

January 25, 2024, from 6–7 pm

The Story of Art: It's the End of the World as We Know It!

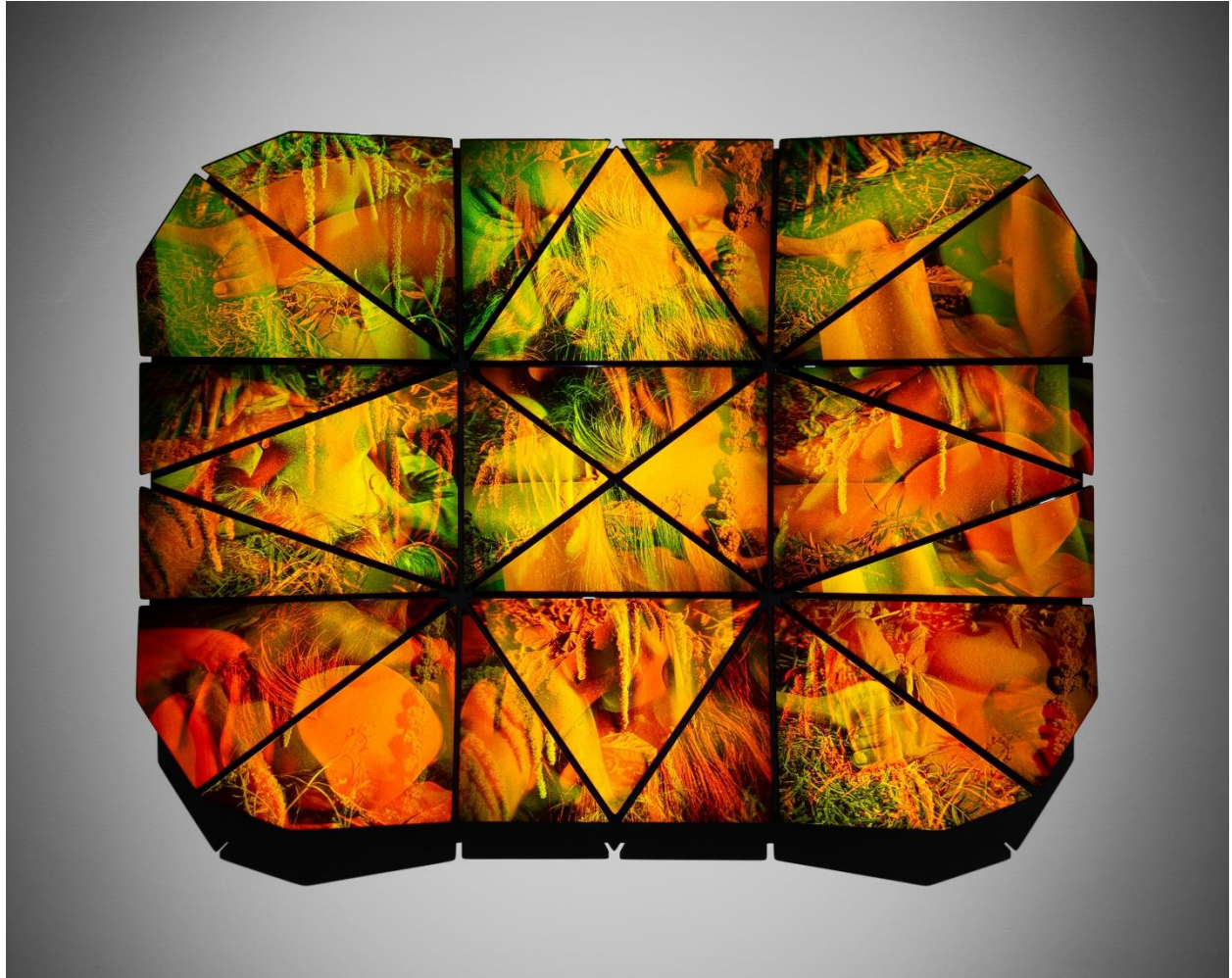
Dr. Stanton Thomas, Chief Curator

February 15, 2024, from 6–7 pm



The Overview Effect: Jane Poynter

February 22, 2024, from 6–7 pm



The Story of Art | The Nature of Art

Katherine Pill, Senior Curator of Contemporary Art

February 29, 2024, from 6–7 pm

Egyptomania: Fashion's Conflicted Obsession

Darnell-Jamal Lisby

March 14, 2024, from 6–7 pm

Making the Middle Republic

Dan-El Padilla Peralta

March 21, 2024, from 6–7 pm

Artist Talk | Ursula Hudson

March 28, 2024, from 6–7 pm

Make Yourself Uncomfortable | Daniel Barber

April 3, 2024, from 6–7 pm

Art IN BLOOM

PRESENTED BY THE MARGARET ACHESON STUART SOCIETY
AND THE MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, ST. PETERSBURG

Art in Bloom

April 4-7, 2024: Installations on view at the MFA

Art in Bloom Related Programs:

April 4: [Flowers After Hours](#)

April 5: [Palm Beach Retreat Luncheon](#)

April 7: [Conversations with the Designers](#)

Claudia Peña Salinas: Ahua Can

Renowned Mexican American artist Claudia Peña Salinas (b. 1975) has recently captured the attention of the art world with her thought-provoking and multidimensional work. A recipient of the EXPO CHICAGO 2023 Northern Trust Purchase Prize, Peña Salinas has expanded the Museum of Fine Arts' collection with the acquisition of her captivating multimedia sculpture, *Ahua Can* (2023).



Inspired by architectural minimalism and ancient Mesoamerican history and craft, Peña Salinas skillfully weaves together diverse influences in her artistic practice. The brass framework of *Ahua Can* pays homage to El Castillo, the iconic Temple of Kukulcan in the ancient Mayan city of Chichen Itza, situated on the Yucatan peninsula. This acquisition, made possible by the generous support of the EXPO CHICAGO 2023 Northern Trust Purchase Prize, adds a unique and globally resonant perspective to the Museum of Fine Arts' collection.

Peña Salinas's work delves into the rich history of the advanced Mayan civilization that thrived at Chichen Itza from 900 to 1200 CE. *Ahua Can* features a multimedia composition with a postcard depicting El Castillo held on a rod atop a Chac Mool figure, accompanied by symbolic objects such as a coiled snake, two shells, and a jaguar. The artist's meticulous craftsmanship is evident in the hand-welded brass framework and hand-dyed and wrapped threads, while vintage postcards and tourist-related objects contribute to the sculpture's rich narrative.

In addition to *Ahua Can*, Peña Salinas has contributed three wall-based objects to a site-specific installation: *Kukulcán Ballgame*, *Calendar*, and *Sunspot*. Each sculpture incorporates vintage postcards, with two referencing architectural elements of Chichen Itza and one exploring Mayan numbers and the spring equinox. The walls are adorned with azul Maya, a mineral and organic pigment sourced from a Yucatan artisan, mirroring ancient artistic practices.

"Through a research-based practice and unwavering dedication to refined craftsmanship, Claudia Peña Salinas creates an exquisite body of innovative conceptual work—beautiful, evocative, and compelling," expressed Katherine Pill, the Senior Curator of Contemporary Art at MFA. Pill sees *Ahua Can* as an ideal addition to the museum's encyclopedic collection, a piece that commands attention on its own and promises to spark rich dialogues with our existing collections.

Born in Nuevo Leon, Mexico, Claudia Peña Salinas holds a BFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and an MFA from Hunter College, New York (2009). Her extensive exhibition history includes prestigious venues such as

Centre Pompidou, Paris; Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; Eli and Edythe Broad Art Museum, Michigan; Queens Museum of Art, New York; El Museo del Barrio, New York; El Museo de Arte de Puerto Rico, and Museo de Arte Carrillo Gil, Mexico.

Claudia Peña Salinas currently resides and works in Brooklyn, New York, enriching the contemporary art landscape with her unique blend of cultural references and artistic vision. The acquisition of *Ahua Can* marks a significant addition to the Museum of Fine Arts, inviting viewers to engage in a critical exploration of the act of collecting and connecting with global art histories.

The Museum of Fine Arts, St. Petersburg invites art enthusiasts, community members, and cultural connoisseurs to join in celebrating a season filled with inspiration, exploration, and appreciation for the arts.

For more information, including the full program schedule, please visit mfastpete.org

IMAGES

Collage - from left to right, top to bottom: Dan-el Padilla Peralta; Ahua Can; Alexis Rockman; Janaina Tschäpe; Darnell-Jamal Lisby; Daniel Barber; Canaan Marshall; Ursula Hudson

Janaina Tschäpe, Brazilian-German, b. 1973, *MTA Small Study*, 2021, Casein and watercolor crayon on canvas, Courtesy of the artist

NASA “*Earthrise*”

Sarah Meyohas, French-American, b. 1991, *Interference #19*, 2023, Holograms, mirrored black glass, aluminum, Courtesy of the artist and Marianne Boesky Gallery, New York and Aspen

Claudia Peña Salinas, *Ahua Can*, 2023, Brass, dyed ceramic, shell, found objects, thread, postcard, Museum purchase with funds generously provided by Northern Trust Purchase Prize

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ABOUT THE MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, ST. PETERSBURG, FLORIDA

The MFA at 255 Beach Drive NE is one of the largest encyclopedic art museums in Florida. The collection includes works of art from ancient times to the present day and from around the world, including ancient Greek and Roman, Egyptian, Asian, African, pre-Columbian, Native American, European, American, and contemporary art. The photography collection is one of the largest and finest in the Southeast. For more information, please visit mfastpete.org and follow @mfastpete on social media.

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