



Reena Makes Lists

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# Chaos Is The New Cocaine

Art and digital collide, Latin American art and more.



Reena Devi

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## In this eighth issue

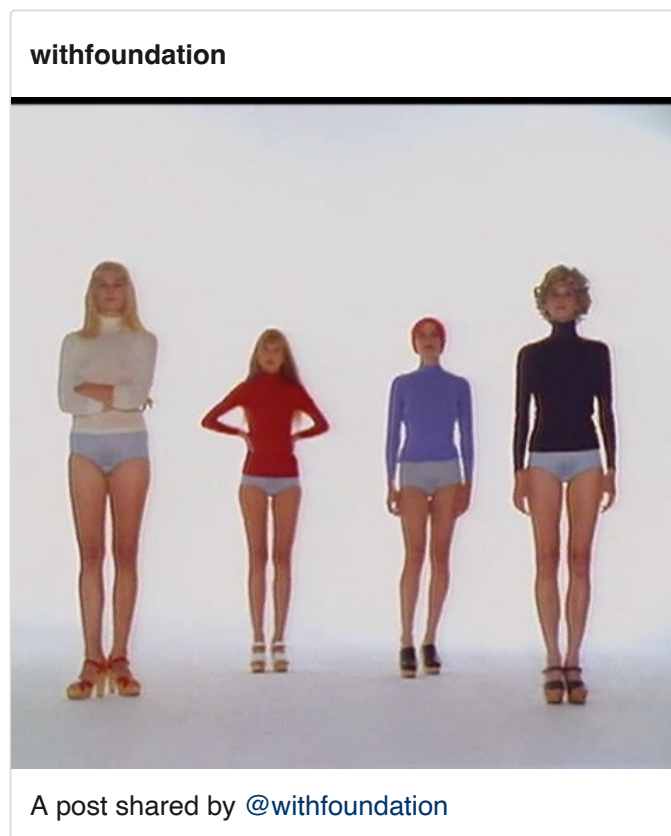
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(All gifs via giphy.com)

Thanks to the disruptive forces of the pandemic and fourth industrial revolution, the previously tech averse art world is busy taking on the digital sphere (or vice versa, depending whom you ask).

- Bored wealthy people are apparently entertaining themselves by outgunning one another in online auctions for luxury items such as jewelry, watches, furniture, sports cards, vintage cars, limited edition shoes and crypto art.
- They are turning every luxury acquisition into a “so-called alternative asset class.” This is probably why **Sotheby’s** is auctioning rare **Nike** sneakers online.
- Amongst the various established artists doing NFT drops, Italian artist **Vanessa Beecroft**, known for collaborating with **Kanye West** and **Kim Kardashian West**, recently put up never-before-seen analog animation and digital performance *they’re coming* (1995) as her first NFT with a reserve price around \$33,667.

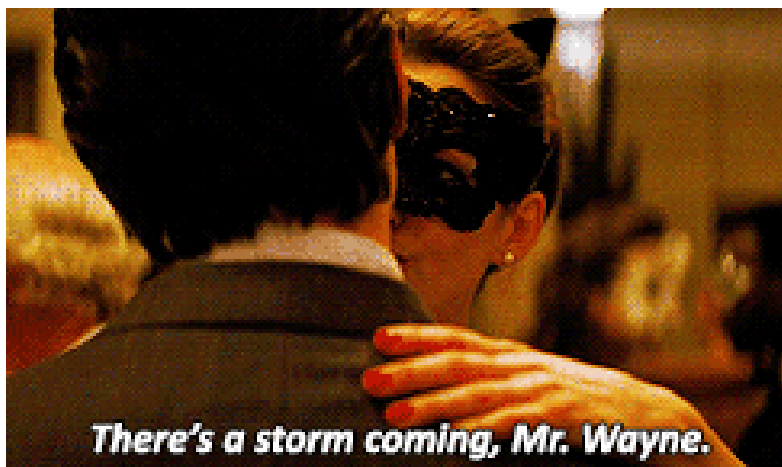


- In its haste to be a part of the NFT gravy train, the **Guggenheim** published a job post seeking MBA students for a full-time intern position requiring high level expertise on crypto and museum collection strategy. The post, which inevitably drew flak for its blatant inequity, has since been removed.
- Even more telling is the way **Guggenheim** described NFT as a “nascent, fast-growing, highly scalable area of the art world” in the ad. Never mind possible boom-and-bust implications.



Guggenheim senior management. Probably.

- From **Marina Abramović** to London's **Design Museum**, there seems to be a surge of interest in creating digital experiences beyond websites, be it participatory meditation while downloading files or paid virtual exhibition tours.
- Yet, the physical still holds sway. In spite of the OVR multiverse, art dealers have been “quietly traveling throughout the U.S. for much of the past year, making themselves present in the new gallery-jammed meccas of Palm Beach, Aspen, and the Hamptons.”



Source: [animusrox](#)

- Nonetheless, it is crucial to consistently explore the confluence of digital sphere and art world, especially given the intriguing evolution of digital art and the way greater fluency in digital media makes larger audiences accessible.
- However, choosing to ignore the tech world's dark side or its financialised mindset could be destructive, especially since such qualities resonate with inherent traits in the art system.

## Curious: Latin American Art



Installation views of Normal Exceptions: Contemporary Art in Mexico, Museo Jumex, 2021. Photos: Ramiro Chaves

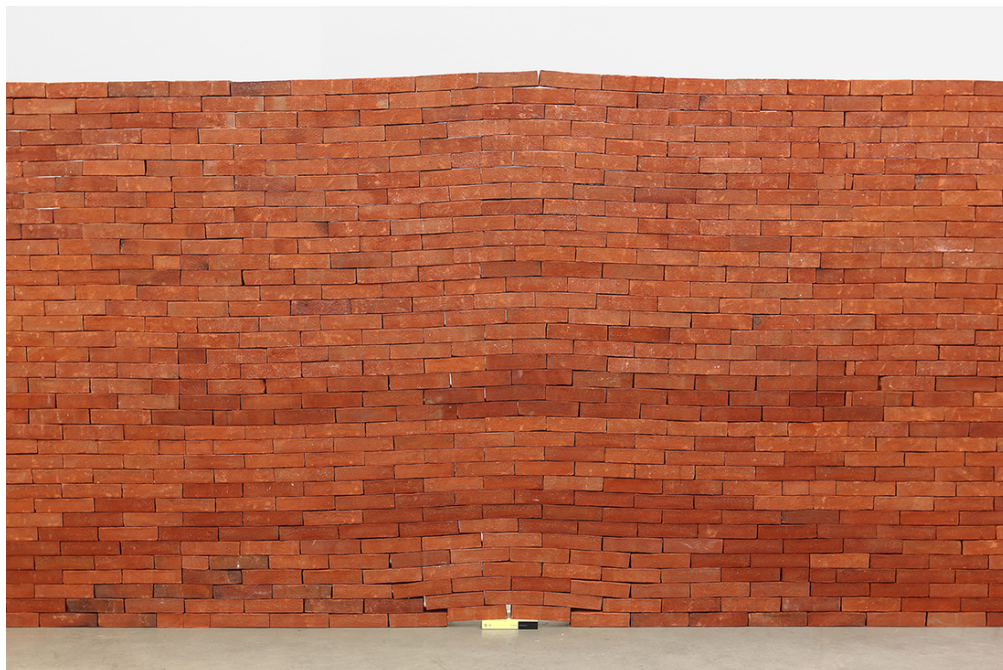
- Running from 27 March to 15 August, **Museo Jumex** in Mexico City presents Normal Exceptions: Contemporary Art in Mexico, surveying Mexican art over the past two decades with over 60 works.
- The show draws from the private collection of Eugenio López Alonso, **Jumex** fruit juice fortune sole heir, and includes works by invited artists and collaborators such as **Galería OMR's** Pia Camil, José Dávila and Jorge Méndez Blake.





When I finally get to travel and see (and write about) all this Latam art.

- Meanwhile, **El Museo del Barrio** in New York is currently showing its first national survey of contemporary “Latinx” art, focusing on artists of Latin American descent working primarily in the United States or the Caribbean.
- On till end of September, **Estamos Bien – La Trienal 20/21** features art such as Brooklyn-born Chicago-based painter Cándida Álvarez’s *Estoy Bien* (2017) and San Diego duo Collective Magpie’s *Who Designs Your Race* (2020).
- In an unfortunate turn of events, a fire broke out last week at an art storage unit in Taboão da Serra, São Paulo, Brazil, destroying a large number of artworks by the country’s leading galleries such as **Nara Roesler**, **Luciana Brito** and **Simões de Assis**.



Jorge Méndez Blake, *El castillo* [The Castle], 2007. La Colección Jumex, México.

## Articles worth reading for their prescience in describing contemporary issues and developments beyond the insularity of the art world:

- I spent most of my week-long newsletter [hiatus](#) following the ship in the **Suez Canal** (and writing a few [insights](#) on art fairs). It definitely brought home [aspects](#) of cross-border trade we take for granted.
- In spite my own ambivalence about the city, I thoroughly enjoyed this [review](#) of New York, New York, New York by Thomas Dyja and I'm even working my way through the book.
- For anyone attempting to formulate an informed view on cancel culture, [Let's Talk About "Cancelling"](#) might be a good start.
- Elite schools help to entrench inequality, according to a recent **Atlantic** [piece](#). Having attended my fair share of such institutions, I can safely concur.

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