



# FOCUS

**Exhibition Series 2020-21**

MODERN ART MUSEUM OF FORT WORTH

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The FOCUS series is organized by the Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth and features three solo exhibitions each season. Started in 2005, this series spotlights emerging and mid-career artists. FOCUS is international in scope and presents work across all media, celebrating the art and artists of our time.

Be sure to mark your calendar today and join us as we toast cutting-edge contemporary art in our community this season!

**The 2019-20 FOCUS exhibition acquisitions for the Museum's permanent collection, made possible through the support of the Director's Council:**

Top right:

**Martine Gutierrez**

*Body En Thrall, p114-115 from Indigenous Woman, 2018*

C-print mounted on Sintra

Edition of 2, plus 1 AP

71 3/4 x 107 3/4 inches

© Martine Gutierrez

Bottom right:

**Hrair Sarkissian**

*Final Flight, 2019*

Archival inkjet print, mounted and framed: 34 x 73 inches

Seven hand-painted resin/bone casts of a 3D-modelled skull:

10 1/4 x 2 3/8 x 2 inches each, placed on

metal plinths with micro-cement base

Milled relief on aluminum plate: 50 x 90 1/2 inches

Single-channel high-definition video: 9 hours, 3 minutes

Edition of 2

© Hrair Sarkissian



## FOCUS: Marina Adams

November 6, 2020–January 10, 2021

Contemporary artist Marina Adams will show seven large-scale abstract paintings from the past four years alongside recent gouache works on paper. Adams explores the relationship between color and shape in her energetic works where organic forms of solid hues abut and interlock. Her paintings balance organization and improvisation. She sketches out the compositions in advance, but once she begins painting, there is an immediacy made obvious by her loose brushstrokes and drips of acrylic paint.

Though abstract, Adams's paintings are rooted in textile design and architecture. As she stated in a *Brooklyn Rail* interview, "Pattern is a language that crosses boundaries. It offers common ground." As similar patterns have historically been found in far-flung locations not likely to have been in contact, it is clear certain designs are elemental and primal, and in these synchronicities, as she says, "we find how we're alike, as opposed to always thinking about how we're different."

**Marina Adams was born in Orange, New Jersey, in 1960 and lives between New York and Parma, Italy. She earned a BFA from the Tyler School of Art, Philadelphia, and an MFA from Columbia University, New York. Solo exhibitions of her work have been presented at Salon 94, New York; Galerie Gris, Hudson, New York; CUE Art Foundation, New York; and Magazzino d'Arte Moderna, Rome. Her work has been included in recent group exhibitions at the Camden Arts Centre, London; Lisson Gallery, New York; American Academy of Arts and Letters, New York; and The Center for Contemporary Art, Bedminster, New Jersey. Adams received the Award of Merit Medal for Painting from the Academy of Arts and Letters and the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Fellowship.**



*Cheops*, 2018  
Acrylic on linen  
98 x 78 inches

Courtesy of Salon 94, New York





## FOCUS: Leidy Churchman

January 22–March 21, 2021

As part of their upcoming FOCUS exhibition, the American painter Leidy Churchman will present several new and recent works. Drawing on the postmodern idea that no subject is forbidden, Churchman's imagery is broad and varied, mirroring the sheer abundance and circulation of images today. The paintings treat equally such disparate subjects as animals, landscapes, themes from Tibetan Buddhism, real estate advertisements, and remakes of works by other artists, such as Henri Rousseau and Barbara Kruger.

Churchman begins a painting with an interest in knowing the subjects intimately through observation. As they stated in a *Bomb Magazine* interview, "I love the surprise element that comes from giving attention. There is always more to be seen. In some moments, with some things, I feel that they could become a painting, but not for the purpose of transcribing those things. The surprise comes from the thing, or idea, merging with painting. The painting ultimately takes over. It is more powerful than the information." Churchman's approach, including developing paintings from found images, is an exercise in being present and taking stock of the surrounding world. *FOCUS: Leidy Churchman* will be the artist's first museum exhibition in the Southwest.



**Leidy Churchman was born in Villanova, Pennsylvania, in 1979 and currently lives in New York. Churchman's work has been shown at museums including MoMA PS1 in New York, Museum Brandhorst in Munich, and the Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles. The artist has had solo exhibitions at the Kölischer Kunstverein in Cologne, Boston University Art Gallery, and the Hessel Museum of Art at CCS Bard in Annandale-on-Hudson, New York.**

Top: *Buddhadharma Fever*, 2019  
Oil on linen  
86 1/8 x 102 1/8 inches  
© Leidy Churchman, Courtesy Matthew Marks Gallery

Bottom: *Reclining Buddha*, 2020  
Oil on linen in niche designed by the artist  
48 x 79 inches  
© Leidy Churchman, Courtesy Matthew Marks Gallery



Top: *Cabaret Crusades II: The Path to Cairo*, 2012  
High-definition video with color, sound, and  
English subtitles; 60 minutes, 57 seconds  
© Wael Shawky, Courtesy Lisson Gallery

Bottom: *Cabaret Crusades III: The Secrets of Karbalaa*, 2015  
High-definition film with color, sound, and  
English subtitles; 2 hours  
© Wael Shawky, Courtesy Lisson Gallery

## FOCUS: Wael Shawky

April 2–June 20, 2021

For *FOCUS: Wael Shawky*, the artist, who is based in Alexandria, Egypt, and Philadelphia, will present a film from his ambitious trilogy *Cabaret Crusades*, along with new and related drawings and sculpture. In this exhibition, as with much of his work, the artist explores the ambiguities between history and myth in a multimedia presentation in order to challenge the authority of history. Some of the themes he investigates are the history of the Arab peninsula (*The Gulf Project*), medieval hostilities between Christians and Muslims (*Cabaret Crusades*), and the recounting of poetic myths (*Al Araba Al Madfuna*).

Shawky's projects combine artistic imagination and purportedly accurate facts. This mix of truth and fiction raises questions about the role of history—and the biases held by those writing it—in forming longstanding national identities and geographies. For the *Cabaret Crusades* films, the scripts are based on the work of ancient Arab historians and geographers, such as Ibn al-Qalanisi, Ibn Jubayr, and Ibn al-Athir. However, the scripts are acted out by fanciful, childlike marionettes to foil the serious nature and horrors of the original narratives. Shawky's themes, such as religious and geographical antagonism, still have much relevance today, leading the work to resonate equally with the present and the past. *FOCUS: Wael Shawky* will be the artist's first exhibition in the southwestern United States.

**Wael Shawky was born in Alexandria in 1971, and he divides his time between Alexandria and Philadelphia. Recent solo exhibitions have been held at the AROS Aarhus Kunstmuseum, Denmark; Kunsthaus Bregenz, Austria; Fondazione Merz, Zürich, Switzerland; Mathaf, Doha, Qatar; MoMA PS1, New York; Serpentine Galleries, London; KW Contemporary Art Institute, Berlin; and Walker Art Center, Minneapolis. He has participated in the 14th Istanbul Biennial; 11th Sharjah Biennial; Documenta 13, Kassel; 9th Gwangju Biennial, South Korea; SITE Santa Fe Biennial; and the 50th Venice Biennale. In 2010, Shawky founded the educational space MASS Alexandria.**





Artist Hrair Sarkissian giving a talk to guests at the opening of his FOCUS exhibition in spring 2020.

## FOCUS Exhibition Series: Shaping the Modern

By engaging with the FOCUS series, Museum visitors are exposed to contemporary art through world-class national and international exhibitions. No other museum in the Metroplex offers the number of shows per season that the Modern allots for emerging artists. It is a series unlike any other in the entire Southwest as FOCUS presents an unparalleled opportunity for emerging and mid-career artists to have a solo exhibition in a world-renowned museum. At the conclusion of the FOCUS season in the spring, one work or group of works from each exhibition is held for the annual Purchase Meeting. During this event, attendees vote to determine which work will be recommended for acquisition by the Modern, thus contributing to the Museum's permanent collection and shaping its cultural footprint.

**To learn more about how to deepen your relationship with the Modern and the FOCUS program through membership and to be part of the acquisition process, please call Allie Nikolaisen, Director of Development, at 817.840.2177 or email [development@themodern.org](mailto:development@themodern.org).**



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