

Ai Weiwei

Chinese, born 1957

Marble Chair, 2008

White marble

Courtesy of the artist and Haines Gallery, San Francisco

Ai Weiwei spent part of his childhood in exile when his father, the famous poet Ai Qing, was sent to the Gobi Desert during the Chinese Cultural Revolution. After Chairman Mao died in 1976, Weiwei enrolled at the Beijing Film Academy and subsequently moved to the United States at age twenty-four. In New York he was exposed to the pop and conceptual artists who were yet unknown in China. He returned to his homeland twelve years later to care for his ailing father. It was there that his work began to garner significant attention, and he has today become one of the country's most eminent artists—and one of its most vocal social critics.

Weiwei started collecting Ming and Q'ing dynasty pieces shortly after his return to China and, in 1997, began

Art ReMix

disassembling and reconstructing them into hybrid forms and minimalist sculptures. *Marble Chair* is inspired by antique Chinese furniture and influenced by the systematic destruction of Chinese culture that began during the Cultural Revolution. It is carved from a single block of marble to resemble a traditional yokeback chair, one of which his family was allowed to keep when they were in exile.

In the setting of the MIA's historic *Wu Family Reception Hall*, Weiwei's marble chair takes its place alongside the antique chairs. It is a poignant symbol of the continuities and disruptions of cultural tradition that permeate China today. The solemnity of the object, and its ability to evoke all that has been lost in China's rush to modernize, make it a powerful memorial to the past.

Web site: <http://www.aiweiwei.com>

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JoAnn Verburg

American, born 1950

Art ReMix

Thanksgiving, 2001

Six chromogenic prints each mounted to Plexiglas

Courtesy of Pace/MacGill Gallery, New York

Patient observation and careful art scholarship are at the heart of JoAnn Verburg's photographs. While her subjects vary from ancient olive trees to people's faces, here she focuses on the intricacies and transcendent nature of an Italian landscape. Using a 5 x 7-inch camera, she employs selective focus to accentuate one part of a photograph while leaving other portions evocatively blurry. The multi-panel format suggests that seeing, like viewing cinema, is a process that occurs over time—we don't see just one thing in a single moment.

That Verburg's multi-panel approach recalls the folding screens on view in the museum's Asian galleries is no accident. For years Verburg has been inspired by Japanese, Korean, and Chinese screens, and studied how images move from one panel to the next, their spaces shifting forward and back, the individual pictures seeming both independent and integrated. The natural world is in process, and both the Asian screens and these photographs give us simple structures and beautiful subjects that reflect dynamic changes. Careful observation of both nature and art makes our human experiences rich and full.

Web site: <http://www.pacemacgill.com/joannverburg.html>

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Thomas Struth

German, born 1954

Kölner Dom, Köln, 2007

Chromogenic print, edition one of ten

Courtesy of Marian Goodman Gallery, New York

Art ReMix

This photograph is Struth's homage to Germany's Cologne Cathedral, to photographic documentation of European architecture, and to his art teacher and mentor, Gerhard Richter. The Cologne Cathedral, located not far from Struth's residence in Düsseldorf, is an outstanding example of Gothic architecture. Begun in 1248, and built over a period of six hundred years, it is Cologne's most revered building and features the largest church façade in the world, encompassing a set of twin spires.

Photographers began documenting architecture in earnest in the late nineteenth century, when technical photographic advances whetted their artistic appetites. Photographers of churches are challenged by the scale of their subject, and often have limited vantage points. For this image, Struth was able to find a camera position that emphasized the great depth and height of the structure and showcased Richter's spectacular new stained-glass window. Three years ago the Richter window replaced temporary clear glass that was installed after the cathedral's original south transept window was lost to Allied bombing during World War II. Richter, one of Germany's most prominent artists, based the design on one of his paintings of 1974, using a computer to randomly select the colors for the window's 11,500 square panes. The resulting pixel-like pattern references new digital technology and is a dramatic counterpoint to the building's period architecture.

Web site: <http://ow.ly/1gg7G>





Thomas Struth

German, born 1954

Hermitage 1, St. Petersburg, 2005

Chromogenic print, edition six of ten

Courtesy of Marian Goodman Gallery, New York

Art ReMix

In *Hermitage 1*, a small gaggle of museum visitors peers at an object just to the left of the camera. Photographer Thomas Struth works with bulky equipment, which makes him conspicuous, but the fact that none of these people is looking at him is a testament both to his patience and to the power of the art. Most of these viewers are taking in the unidentified objects not only visually, but also through audio devices. While their primary connection is with the art, the trio of viewers on the right (the blond ponytail indicates a third listener) gently interacts by sharing the hearing piece.

Web site: <http://ow.ly/1gg7G>



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Thomas Struth

German, born 1954

Art ReMix

Audience 1 (Galleria Dell'Accademia), Florenz, 2004

Chromogenic print mounted on UV Plexiglas

Courtesy of Marian Goodman Gallery, New York

For the last twenty years Thomas Struth has been photographing in the galleries of European and American museums, capturing viewers in the act of looking, often at recognizable works of art. More recently he has created images in which the art object is not visible and goes unidentified, as in the case of this image. A little museum sleuthing reveals that the audience here is taking in Michelangelo's *David*, one of the world's best-known sculptures.

In every picture from his ongoing series "Museum Photographs," Struth makes the viewers his—and consequently our—subject. In *Audience*, we look at how museum-goers, like us, respond to and perceive art in museums.

Web site: <http://ow.ly/1gg7G>

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Yinka Shonibare MBE

Art ReMix

English, born 1962

Dressing Down, 1997

Wax printed cotton textile, crinoline, aluminum, plastic, felt

Collection of Gordon Locksley and George T. Shea

At first glance this fancy gown seems right at home in a dazzling Parisian salon. A closer look will reveal that the dress is made not of French silk but of printed cotton, produced in Europe for the West African market. The artist uses this type of Dutch wax-resist dyed fabric, inspired by Indonesian batiks, to suggest the complex web of trade and exploitation that enabled Europeans to control most of the world's riches for centuries. Yinka Shonibare's *Dressing Down*, in fact, is an alluring critique of colonialism. Its placement in the *Grand Salon from the Hôtel Gaillard de La Bouëxière* (c. 1735) raises the question, "Whose resources and labor made this luxury possible?"

Medallions on either side of the room indicate the homeowner's power and privilege, portraying the world's continents as beautiful women, each identified by a headdress. Europe wears the helmet of Minerva, Greek goddess of wisdom; Asia sports a camel; the Americas are topped with feathers; and Africa dons an elephant. Other carved and gilded decorations of the *Grand Salon* refer to hunting, music, and the theater, all pastimes of a so-called gentleman.

Shonibare has called himself a "postcolonial hybrid." Born in London in 1962 to Nigerian parents, he and his family moved to Lagos when the artist was three. He returned to London to attend art school, and now lives in that city's East End. Shonibare was made a Member of the Order of the British Empire (MBE) in 2005; he has chosen to make this title a part of his name to further express the colonial legacy, class structure, and social justice issues that persist in Africa.

Web site: <http://ow.ly/1ggak>

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Marco Breuer

German, born 1966

Untitled (Tip), 2001

Silver gelatin paper, scored

Courtesy of Von Lintel Gallery, New York, and the artist

Art ReMix

Placing Marco Breuer's photograph, *Untitled (Tip)* with works from aboriginal Australia reveals how design patterns might appear similar but embody very different meanings. Breuer created his wispy white vertical lines by pressing an object against light-sensitive photography paper, exposing the paper to light, then developing the image. This camera-less photograph represents the artist's interest in exploring the possibilities of photography as a material form. It does not try to represent anything other than what it is. The aboriginal works in this gallery feature similar abstract patterns and colors, but have very distinct symbolic meanings connected to dreaming, the past, and rituals. The dotted flowing pattern and earth tones of Turkey Tjupurrula Tolson's, *Untitled*, 1984, for example, suggest landscape and crops, while the patterns of other works evoke dreams deeply connected to the Australian culture. In the end, abstraction is dependent on the artistic intention and the cultural context of the work.

Web site: <http://www.vonlintel.com/index2.html>

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Art ReMix

Cindy Sherman

American, born 1954

Untitled, 1989

Color photograph

Courtesy of the artist and Metro Pictures

Cindy Sherman's untitled photograph of herself in the guise of a Renaissance woman is overtly disconcerting. Her opulent dress and jewel-adorned hair run counter to her awkward, false nose. Though piously folded, her reddened hands suggest hard work. The coloration beneath her eyes betrays a very real woman, while the classical column suggests an idealized European society portrait. By using extensive makeup and costuming to assume different personas in her "History Portrait" series, Sherman at once references and challenges the conventions of female portraiture.

By emphasizing the artificial and the grotesque, Sherman urges viewers to look beyond the surfaces and consider portraits as constructions designed to serve a social, political, or even erotic purpose. In this gallery, Lucas Cranach's portrait of Anna Buchner is frank in its realism but reveals little of her personality. The exaggerated opulence of her weighty gold chains and rings serves as an inventory of her husband's wealth. In the small portrait of Charlotte of France by Jean Clouet the Younger, the richly dressed seven-year-old girl poses as an adult; her portrait may well have served to attract a future husband in a foreign court.

Sherman's critique is as relevant for portraiture today, in which digital photography enables easy manipulation of images to suit the sitter's purpose.

Web site: <http://ow.ly/1ggcV>



Nam June Paik

American, born Korea, 1932–2006

TV Buddha, 1989

Single channel video and mixed media

Partial gift of Pamela and Richard Kramlich to the New Art Trust to benefit the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, The Museum of Modern Art, New York, and Tate, London

Art ReMix

Nam June Paik's *TV Buddha* explores contemporary relationships among religion, technology, and self-perception. The Buddha continuously monitors his own state of enlightenment, absent worldly desire and suffering, on a video playing on a closed-circuit television. Perhaps the artist offers the promise of enlightenment in a world dominated by media. In contrast, the neighboring *Amida Buddha*, the Buddha of Infinite Light, offers the possibility of enlightenment through faith alone to twelfth-century believers.

Given the prevalence of social media sites such as Facebook, MySpace, and Twitter, Paik's commentary on the discovery and consequent redefinition of self through technology is more relevant today than ever before. Often revered as the "father of video art," Paik defined and redefined the nature of video art over decades of working with digital media. He began his work with video in the mid 1960s, and predicted video and other digital media would become the dominant forms of artistic and cultural communication in the late twentieth and twenty-first century.

Web site: <http://www.paikstudios.com>





Lorraine O'Grady

American, born 1934

Art ReMix

Miscegenated Family Album, 1980/94

2 cibachrome diptychs

Courtesy of Alexander Gray Associates, New York

Lorraine O'Grady's highly personal *Miscegenated Family Album* is both a memorial and an art-history essay. Each diptych, or pair of images, includes a photograph of O'Grady's deceased sister, Devonia Evangeline, and a photographic representation of an artwork depicting the ancient Egyptian queen, Nefertiti. By pairing them, O'Grady draws a parallel between her own troubled relationship with Devonia and the sibling rivalry between Queen Neferiti and her sister, Mutnojme.

The title of O'Grady's work adds layers of meaning to the pairs. The word "miscegenated," coined in 1863 during the American Civil War to describe people of mixed ethnicity, connects O'Grady's photographs to highly politicized scholarly and popular debates about the African identity of the ancient Egyptians, their place in African and European histories, and racism. In these galleries, O'Grady's diptychs converse with the ancient Egyptian portraits of the young woman named Teshat, represented on the mummy case nearby, and King Amenhotep III. Meanwhile, the Roman funerary portraits to the right illustrate how the Romans incorporated Egyptian practices when they conquered Egypt late in the first century. On yet another level, the photographs encourage a discussion of the art historical origin of idealized beauty and realistic depictions in ancient Egyptian art.

Web site: <http://lorraineogrady.com>



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Kota Ezawa

American, born Germany, 1969

Art ReMix

The History of Photography Remix, 2005

35mm slide projector, slide carousel and forty 35mm slides

Courtesy of the artist, Haines Gallery, San Francisco, and Murray Guy, New York

Kota Ezawa's *The History of Photography Remix* presents a personal, aesthetic, and critical interpretation of the medium and its history. Inspired by a class on photography at Stanford University, Ezawa decided to create his own unofficial historical survey in the old-fashioned format of the art-historical slide show. He chose forty photographs from various sources and, through a process combining hand-tracing and computer manipulation, translated them into minimal yet evocative versions of the originals. Ezawa's remix includes images that are both idiosyncratic and familiar. Some, such as Matthew Brady's *Harvest of Death* (1863) and Edward Ruscha's *Parking Lot* (1967), are commonly referenced in general art-history surveys. Others are drawn from the popular press, such as the widely circulated photograph of kidnapped newspaper heiress Patty Hearst brandishing a machine gun. Ezawa's selection suggests the influence of television, film, and photography in shaping collective knowledge and memory. But the last slide, a portrait of the artist himself, points to the subjective nature of history. In the end, Ezawa's remix might signify a generational shift in which historical narratives have become a "wikireality" to which any one can contribute.

Web site: <http://ow.ly/1ggfE>

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Kota Ezawa

American, born Germany, 1969

Art ReMix

This gallery presents two installations by contemporary artist Kota Ezawa. The first, *The History of Photography Remix*, is a work comprising forty slides; each is a well-known historical or popular photograph the artist has translated using a simplified, cartoon-inspired drawing style. The second is an installation of eight works Ezawa selected from the MIA's collection of more than 11,500 photographs and arranged frame-to-frame in a horizontal strip. Departing from long-standing curatorial taxonomies, such as chronology, authorship, and style, Ezawa uses the visual continuity of horizons to contextualize photographs ranging from Henry P. Bosse's *Pine Bend* (1891) to Lynn Geesaman's *Vista from Terrace, Hinton* (1991).

This double installation emerged from a conversation about *The History of Photography Remix* between the artist and MIA curators. The original plan was to present Ezawa's powerful slide work, which investigates the issues of selection, history, and memory. As the conversation developed, it seemed there was no better way to address these issues than to use the MIA's collection as a counterpoint. Both remixes are made up of individual works that encourage close attention, but together ask: What stories of photography do the respective installations present? Which images are most memorable and why? How might your remix differ from the artist's?

Web site: <http://ow.ly/1ggfE>

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Sharon Core

American, born 1965

Early American: Lemons, 2007

Chromogenic print

Early American: Tea, Cakes, and Sherry, 2007

Chromogenic print

Courtesy of Yancey Richardson Gallery, New York

Art ReMix

Painting or photograph? In her “Early American” series, contemporary photographer Sharon Core pays homage to the exquisite still lifes by nineteenth-century American painter Raphaelle Peale. Core’s photographs interpret Peale’s work and are loosely based on printed reproductions of his paintings. The photographer painstakingly re-created each tableau, hunting down period-appropriate tableware and growing the featured produce herself. Even the photographic process she used is traditional, absent any digital technology. The simplicity of Core’s subject and the delicacy of her compositions belie the advance planning necessary for the success of her photographs.

Originally trained as a painter, Core is familiar with the use of the photograph as source material for a painting. She reverses this tradition by using Peale’s paintings as a reference for her photographs. *Early American: Tea, Cakes, and Sherry* is a wonderful complement to the MIA’s Peale painting *Still Life with Fruit, Cakes, and Wine*. Both in terms of subject matter and technique, Core’s photographs are beautiful modern riffs on Peale’s historic paintings.

Web site: <http://ow.ly/1ggij>





Kehinde Wiley

American, born 1977

Art ReMix

Santos-Dumont—The Father of Aviation II from “The World Stage: Brazil” series, 2009

Oil on canvas

Collection of Gordon Locksley and George T. Shea

The baroque paintings in this gallery appeal to our emotions by emphasizing the most dramatic moments in their narratives, and by welcoming viewers as participants. The large scale, realism, bright colors, and theatrical presentation of seventeenth-century European art grew out of the Catholic Church’s desire to regain the allegiance of those who had turned to Protestantism. But the paintings’ principles apply equally to subjects from ancient mythology. We become part of the story being enacted.

What is the story behind Kehinde Wiley’s painting? These fallen heroes are wearing contemporary clothing and, although they assume poses of the dead, they are looking directly at us. The artist’s point may be that young black men have rarely been depicted in such historically charged visual language.

Wiley finds his subjects on the streets of huge cities all over the world; these young men lived in Rio de Janeiro. While his earlier portraits were based on famous paintings in the history of art, here the inspiration—the base of a monument to pioneers of Brazilian aviation—is obscure. The challenge is not to identify the source, but to think about how the art of the past shapes how we see and think about the art and life of our own time.

Web site: <http://www.kehindewiley.com>



Art ReMix

Meyer Vaisman

Venezuelan, born 1960

Giorgio, 1990

Ink on fabric

Courtesy of the artist and Sonnabend Gallery, New York

At first glance, Meyer Vaisman's *Giorgio* is a fitting companion to the fifteenth- and sixteenth-century tapestries in this corridor. The intricate details of the natural environment, fanciful animals, and limited color scheme link it in spirit to *Allegorical Millefleurs Tapestry with Animals*, to the left. Vaisman's work also features cartoon bubbles, racy humor, and a playful puppy, all of which place it firmly within the realm of contemporary popular culture.

Against the lofty backdrop of Latin verse from the ancient Roman poet Horace, the text reads:

“Wife: Giorgio, I inform you that soon there will be three of us.

Giorgio: Are you going to have a son?

Wife: “No... a lover.”

The overzealous puppy barks with excitement, and three bunnies, age-old symbols of fertility, frolic around the couple.

A former gallery owner, Vaisman addresses the idea of art as a commodity. For centuries, tapestries were among the most expensive and highly sought artworks in the courts of Europe. These large wall hangings were prized above all other art forms not only for the sheer cost of the materials and labor required to create them, but also for their ability to celebrate histories, families, and unions in grand style.

Vaisman's lowbrow lady and gentleman wittily poke fun at the idealized portraits of Europe's finest and the high-minded topics of Renaissance art. The cartoons in the finished work may well be an art historical joke, as the word “cartoon” denotes the large-scale preliminary drawings for tapestries.

Web site: http://www.patrickpainter.com/artists/Vaisman_Meyer/index.html



Willie Cole

American, born 1955

Art ReMix

Ann Klein with a Baby in Transit, 2009

Shoes, wires, washers, and screws

Gift of funds from the Brenden-Mann Foundation 2009.57

Influenced by African art, Willie Cole constructed this sculpture of mother and child from a stockpile of discarded high-heeled shoes. Cole has created similarly ironic artworks out of other used consumer objects, ranging from lawn jockeys and bicycle parts to salvaged irons and blow dryers. When reassembled by Cole, these cast-offs become potent objects that appear to issue from another time and place.

Ann Klein with a Baby in Transit takes its name from the American fashion designer's label that appears inside two of the shoes. The rich black color and well-worn surfaces of the footwear evoke the beautiful patina of many African sculptures, such as those on view throughout these galleries.

The mother and child grouping is a regal but tender homage to African cultural traditions. The woman seated on a throne of shoes refers to royal maternity sculptures such as the seated Yombe mother and child in this gallery. Most African maternity sculptures celebrate fertility and abundance. Cole's sculpture also represents abundance, but of a very material sort—the waste of American consumer culture.

Web site: <http://www.alexanderandbonin.com/artists/cole/cole.html>



Art ReMix

Alec Soth

American, born 1969

Sunshine, Memphis, Tennessee, 2000

Chromogenic print

The Alfred and Ingrid Lenz Harrison Fund 2007.109.7

“In the seven years I worked at the Minneapolis Institute of Arts, I probably saw Gustave Caillebotte’s *Nude on a Couch* hundreds of times. But I rarely spent serious time with the painting. To do so almost seemed naughty. In this day and age, it is saying a lot that a painting can have such an effect. Some might attribute this to the painting’s prominent pubic hair or the way the model touches her nipple. But for me the supercharge comes from the air of immediacy. The shoes and clothes look like they were quickly removed. And you can almost see the crease in the model’s belly where her belt once was. This enormous painting feels like it was made in a matter of moments. The effect is almost photographic.

“In spring of 2000, I made a quick road trip from Minneapolis down along the Mississippi River. This trip served as the building blocks for a project that I would later title *Sleeping by the Mississippi*. But at the time, I really didn’t know what I was doing. I was just following my curiosity. While driving down Elvis Presley Boulevard, I saw a motel that clearly looked like a brothel. Away from home and totally anonymous, I decided to have a look. I drove up to the hotel and a woman came out to my car. She said her name was Sunshine. I asked if I could take her picture.

“This is not an obviously erotic picture. But as with Caillebotte’s *Nude on the Couch*, there is something about the image that feels naughty. For me, it is the detail. The focus of the camera moves from the subject’s sandal, up her leg, over her fingers then lands on her eyes. The most stunning detail is her fingernails. If you look closely, you’ll see she’s painted figures (dancing? Having sex?) on her nails. This kind of detail has a similar effect to the crease we see along Caillebotte’s model’s waist. It makes the body present, almost alive.”

—Alec Soth

Web site: <http://www.alecsoth.com>

LEFT TO RIGHT:

William Eggleston, American, born 1939
Untitled, Arkansas, 1972

Color coupler print
The Miscellaneous Works of Art Purchase Fund 88.75.1

William Henry Jackson, American, 1843–1942
Upper Twin Lake, Colorado

Albumen print
Gift of W. John and Elizabeth Driscoll 92.75.1

Lynn Geesaman, American, born 1938
**Vista from Terrace, Hinton Ampner,
Hampshire, England, 1991**

Silver gelatin print
Gift of Thomas Barry Fine Arts 92.94.2

Michael Manzanrakos, American, born 1951
Northern California, 1975

Silver gelatin print
National Endowment for the Arts purchase grant and
miscellaneous matching funds 80.19.4

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Stuart Klipper, American, born 1941
Two Fields, Dakota County Summer, 1984

Color coupler print
Gift of The Minneapolis Foundation 90.130

Francis Frith, British, 1822–98
**The Great Pyramid and the Great Sphinx,
Egypt, 1858**

Mammoth albumen print
The Alfred and Ingrid Lenz Harrison Fund 2004.24

Henry P. Bosse, American (born Germany), 1844-1903
Pine Bend, 1891

Cyanotype
The Alfred and Ingrid Lenz Harrison Fund 95.2

Nicholas Nixon, American, born 1947
**Mary Hughes, Tennis Club of Ibuquerque
1973**

Silver gelatin print
The Kate and Hall J. Peterson Fund 75.58.7