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THE ARMORY SHOW ANNOUNCES THEME, PARTICIPATING ARTISTS AND GALLERIES IN FOCUS 2017

***What Is To Be Done?* Brings Together Twelve Artists from Ten Countries Around the Idea of Social and Political Awareness During a Time of Uncertainty**

The Armory Show announced today the fair's 2017 Focus section, encompassing twelve solo presentations of new or rarely seen work by some of today's most relevant and compelling artists. The artists are chosen by curator **Jarrett Gregory**.

The Focus section is part of The Armory Show's new vision to increase engagement with prominent international curators, emphasizing solo-artist presentations and strong curatorial viewpoints. In addition to the new Focus section, The Armory Show 2017 will include Platform, a new section for site-specific projects, curated by Eric Shiner.

"It is with great pleasure that we invite visitors to experience the Focus section. Promoting and supporting curators is at the core of The Armory Show's mission and we are thrilled to be working with Jarrett Gregory," says Benjamin Genocchio, Executive Director of The Armory Show. "After seven years of looking at specific geographic regions we felt it was time for a change. The 2017 Focus section brings a strong and independent curatorial vision to the fair with the single defining criterion for the curator to assemble, in their view, the most relevant and vital art of the moment."

What Is To Be Done? borrows its title from Nikolai Chernyshevsky's eponymous 1863 novel, composed while the author was imprisoned. Through constructed characters and storylines, *What Is To Be Done?* laid the groundwork for Russia's socialist revolution and is considered to be one of the most influential works of Russian literature. The Focus section includes twelve artists grappling with some of the world's most pressing social and political issues.

"Each artist demonstrates an acute awareness of his or her local conditions as well as the failing structures, conflicts and ideologies that define our era," says Gregory. "This project emerged from conversations with artists during trips to the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Moscow, where I witnessed, among other things, the aftermath of widespread social and economic failure. Following this research, power structures have been at the forefront of my mind."

Gregory cites the artist Jimmie Durham as a source of inspiration for her curatorial statement. In his text "Creativity and the Social Process," Durham argues for art that does not speak to other art, but that

speaks to life: "To use art as an escape," he writes, "is a sign of inhumanity." *What Is To Be Done?* takes this statement as a point of departure, bringing together artists who employ various methods of engagement to probe the relationship between creation and participation.

Highlights include new works by American-born Pakistani artist **Amna Asghar** whose work reflects on the exchange of imagery between East and West; sculptures from the **Cercle d'Art des Travailleurs de Plantations Congolaises (CATPC)** that confront the trauma of colonialism; a film by **Johan Grimonprez** exploring the global arms trade; **Deana Lawson's** striking photographs, which investigate the body's ability to channel personal and social histories; a new installation by **Ibrahim Mahama**; an installation by Mexican artist **Teresa Margolles**; **Senga Nengudi's** sculptures from the 1970s; new works by Vietnamese artist **Tuan Andrew Nguyen**; Polish artist **Roman Opalka's** attempts to paint infinity; a video and installation by **Mathilde Rosier**; collaborative experiments by **Koki Tanaka**, who represented Japan in the 55th Venice Biennale; and a new project by Moscow-based artist **Anya Titova**.

"This is not political art, nor does it have an agenda - it is art that helps us to see the historic moment in which we are living," says Gregory. "These artists aren't afraid of big questions, and they approach their subject matter with varying degrees of purity or interference. I'm incredibly grateful to The Armory Show for the support and creative liberty they have afforded me in developing this project."

Participating artists and galleries:

Amna Asghar (b.1984, Detroit, MI) | **Harmony Murphy Gallery**, Los Angeles
Cercle d'Art des Travailleurs de Plantations Congolaises (CATPC) (est. 2014, Democratic Republic of Congo) | **Galerie Fons Welters**, Amsterdam / **KOW**, Berlin
Johan Grimonprez (b. 1962, Roeselare, Belgium) | **Sean Kelly**, New York
Deana Lawson (b.1979, Rochester, NY) | **Rhona Hoffmann Gallery**, Chicago
Ibrahim Mahama (b. 1987, Tamale, Ghana) | **APALAZZOGALLERY**, Brescia
Teresa Margolles (b. 1963, Culiacán, Mexico) | **Galerie Peter Kilchmann**, Zurich
Senga Nengudi (b. 1943, Chicago, IL) | **Lévy Gorvy / Thomas Erben Gallery**, New York
Tuan Andrew Nguyen (b. 1976, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam) | **10 Chancery Lane Gallery**, Hong Kong
Roman Opalka (b. 1931, Paris, France; d. 2011, Chieti, Italy) | **Galleria Michela Rizzo**, Venice
Mathilde Rosier (b. 1973, Paris, France) | **Kadel Willborn**, Dusseldorf
Koki Tanaka (b. 1975, Tochigi, Japan) | **Vitamin Creative Space**, Guangzhou
Anya Titova (b. 1984, Ulan-Ude, Russia) | **Artwin Gallery**, Moscow

NOTES TO EDITORS

The Armory Show

The Armory Show is New York's premier art fair and a definitive cultural destination for discovering and collecting the world's most important 20th and 21st century artworks. Staged on Piers 92 & 94, one of the city's industrial gems, the fair features presentations by leading international galleries, innovative artist commissions and dynamic public programs. Since its founding in 1994, The Armory Show has served as a nexus for the international art world, inspiring dialogue, discovery and patronage in the visual arts.

Jarrett Gregory

Jarrett Gregory has held curatorial positions at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, the New Museum of Contemporary Art and the Whitney Museum of American Art. Since 2005, she has worked on numerous retrospective, survey and group exhibitions including the LACMA iteration of Pierre Huyghe's retrospective (2014–15). Gregory has written for institutions including the List Visual Arts Center at MIT, Cambridge; the New Museum, New York; the Whitney Museum, New York; Castello di Rivoli Museo d'Arte Contemporanea, Turin; and publications such as *The Believer*; *Mousse*; *Even*; *Flash Art International*; and *frieze*.

Important Information for Media

Press Images

To browse and download images for Focus 2017, please [click here](#).

To browse and download images of the 2016 fair, please [click here](#).

VIP Preview Day (Invitation only)

Wednesday, March 1, 2017

Public Days

Thursday, March 2 – Sunday, March 5, 2017

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