

TimeOut

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The five must-see artworks at the Whitney Biennial

by Howard Halle



Photograph: Hollis Johnson

It's that time once again for the Whitney Biennial to take top billing on the museum's schedule of exhibitions, and this edition (which marks the second since the Whitney moved to the Meatpacking District in 2015) presents 75 artists working in all mediums, including painting, drawing, sculpture, photography, installation, video and outdoor art.

The show opens on Friday, but since we've already had a look, we thought we'd give you a taste of what to expect with our choices for the five works you're not going to want to miss this year.



Photograph: Hollis Johnson

Nicole Eisenman, Procession, 2019

Eisenman's monumental hit parade of horrors features a cast of grotesque characters around a float with square tires and a passenger on all fours who emits smoke from its ass at regular intervals



Photograph: Hollis Johnson

Josh Kline, Skyline, San Francisco, 2019

Kline's photo sculptures literally weep for the social media-besotted state of America today, in which politics have become broken and income disparity begets economic despair. Recirculating water pumps sealed inside light boxes shoot jets of water across images like this one of San Francisco's Salesforce Tower, which doubles as a warning about rising sea-levels.



Photograph: Hollis Johnson

Marlon Mullen, Untitled, 2018

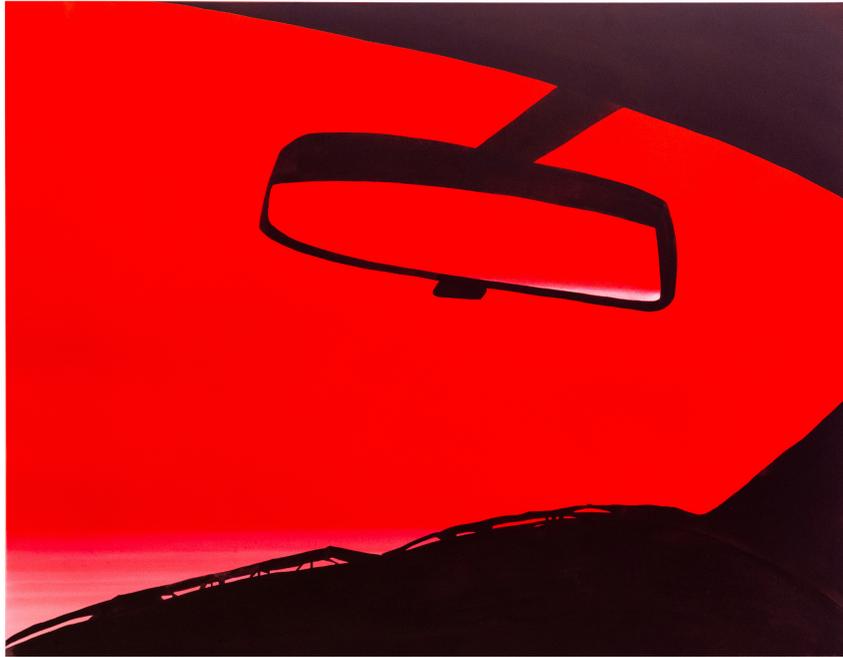
Exhibition announcements, art magazine covers and auction house catalogs are some of the source materials that Mullen, who is both autistic and self-taught, draws upon to create his thickly painted canvases. They have presence to spare and give the efforts of the other, academically-trained artists in the show a run for their money.



Photograph: Hollis Johnson

Joe Minter, '63 Foot Soldiers, 1999

Like Mullen, Minter is an outsider artist, a self-taught sculptor who uses cast-off materials to create rambling assemblages that evoke African-American life in the Deep South, before and after the Civil Rights movement.



Photograph: Hollis Johnson

Calvin Marcus, Los Angeles, 2018

Marcus's slacker-primitive style fits into a tradition of deliberately bad figurative painting going back, arguably, to the late work of Francis Picabia. This L.A. artist's twist on the genre mixes economy of means with Millennial generation diffidence to plumb the vagaries of life.