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## Whitney Heads for the High Line



Guyton\Walker

Part of a digital rendering of the Guyton\Walker installation near an entrance to the High Line.

By CAROL VOGEL  
Published: April 15, 2010

Even before a final decision on whether the [Whitney Museum of American Art](#) will build a \$680 million downtown museum in the meatpacking district, the institution is planting its flag on the site — a parcel of land at Gansevoort and Washington Streets — in a series of outdoor exhibitions.

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“We invited three different artists who are comfortable using digital technologies to create temporary projects there,” said Scott Rothkopf, a Whitney curator. “This is an opportunity to do something on a large scale with a group of artists of different generations and sensibilities who have had a long history with the Whitney.”

The participants are Guyton\Walker, the collaborative made up of the New York painters Wade Guyton, 38, and Kelley Walker, 40; Tauba Auerbach, 28, the New York artist whose large paintings, creased and spray-painted, look like abstract versions of Photorealism and are on view in the Whitney Biennial; and Barbara Kruger, 65, the Conceptual artist known for photographs layered with confrontational slogans.

Their work is intended to reflect the spirit of the neighborhood and the site, the entrance to the [High Line](#), the former elevated railway line that is now a public park. (High Line officials expect more than a million visitors this summer.)

Each project will have a different Whitney curator — Mr. Rothkopf, Gary Carrion-Murayari and Donna De Salvo — and will last about six or seven weeks, with the series ending in October.

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Up first is the Guyton\Walker entry, overseen by Mr. Rothkopf. It involves wrapping the fence around the site with nearly 450 feet of vinyl printed on both sides with bold graphic patterns as well as brightly colored images of citrus fruits, bananas and zebras. Holes in the vinyl will allow pedestrians to peek inside the site, where the Friends of the High Line maintenance and operation team is now working in trailers that will be decorated by the artists.

The work also includes a recurring motif of a paint can, which is meant to symbolize the Whitney's intention of bringing art to its future location. The museum's board is expected to vote on the plan next month.

"It's like a pop-up store," Mr. Rothkopf said. "We're putting something there, and then in time it will go away."

#### **OPEN ALL NIGHT**

Also at the Whitney, Michael Asher, the 66-year-old Los Angeles Conceptual artist, has won the museum's Bucksbaum Award. The prize, given to an artist whose work is in the Biennial, includes a \$100,000 stipend and a solo exhibition.

Mr. Asher is known for altering environments, sometimes by repositioning artworks, walls or facades; his Biennial project involves keeping the museum open around the clock from May 26 at 12:01 a.m. through May 28 at 11:59 p.m. He originally wanted the work to last a week, but the Whitney, for budgetary reasons, cut it back to three days.

The biennial prize was established in 2000 by the museum and the Bucksbaum Family Foundation of Des Moines, which is overseen by Melva Bucksbaum, a Whitney trustee since 1996.

#### **MONET IN THE GALLERY**

Although [Larry Gagosian](#) is known for representing contemporary art stars like [Damien Hirst](#), [Jeff Koons](#) and Richard Prince, in recent years he has also made a name for himself presenting historic shows of modern artists like [Picasso](#), Brancusi and Giacometti.

Now he's turning the clock back further still, with a show of Monet's late paintings (1905-24) that is being organized by Paul Hayes Tucker, a Monet scholar and curator.

Rather than install it on Madison Avenue, where one would expect to see a display of Impressionist paintings, the work will go on view at Mr. Gagosian's 21st Street gallery in Chelsea from May 1 through June 26.

"Sometimes you have to go backwards to go forwards," Mr. Gagosian said in a telephone interview.

While a few works will be for sale, most are on loan from collectors and institutions, including the [Art Institute of Chicago](#), the Beyeler Foundation in Switzerland and the Musée Marmottan Monet in Paris.

"I think Monet was a very radical artist," Mr. Gagosian said. "He painted on an epic scale, and the paintings prefigure abstraction."

Monet is also the one Impressionist artist who was prolific and whose top works are in many cases still available. Ever the salesman, Mr. Gagosian added: "This is a part of the market that is far from dead. The last auctions showed there's still a lot of activity and interest in these paintings."

#### **NATIONAL GALLERY FIRSTS**

The [National Gallery of Art](#) in Washington has recently made several acquisitions chosen to fill gaps in its collection. Top among them are the gallery's first video work by Nam June Paik, one of the founders of the medium, and its first sculpture by the Minimalist artist John McCracken.

"McCracken may not be a household name," said Harry Cooper, the National Gallery's curator of modern and contemporary art. "Although we have a strong collection of Minimalism, he was one artist who was missing." Mr. Cooper, through the gallery's Collectors Committee, was able to buy "Black Plank," a 1967 painted plywood sculpture,

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from the Chelsea dealer David Zwirner.

Mr. Paik died in 2006; the work the gallery purchased, "Ommah" (Korean for "Mother"), was his last video sculpture, a genre he helped to create in the early 1960s. For this piece he suspended a traditional Korean robe from a stick of bamboo. The silk of the robe forms a screen, through which viewers can see a television monitor showing three Korean-American girls dressed traditionally and performing various activities. The background music includes snippets from the artist's own experimental music of the 1950s. The gallery bought the work from his estate.

**NEW CURATOR AT P.S. 1**

In July a new curator will arrive at the P.S. 1 Contemporary Art Center in Long Island City, Queens, but he is an old name in New York's public art circles: Peter Eeley, a curator and producer for Creative Time in Manhattan from 2002 to 2007. He was most recently a visual arts curator at the Walker Art Center in Minneapolis.

In his new job Mr. Eeley will organize exhibitions and public programs as well as oversee the curatorial staff. He will also work with Klaus Biesenbach, P.S. 1's director, on long-range planning for the institution, which has been affiliated with the Museum of Modern Art for the last 10 years.

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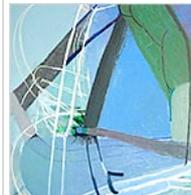
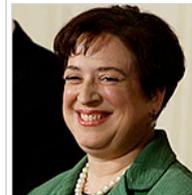
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