



*PMA, Reykjavík Art Museum, and Bildmuseet
announce artists for North Atlantic Triennial: Down North*



Reggie Burrows Hodges (United States, born 1965), *Bathers and the Cleansed: Pearl*, 2021, acrylic paint and pastel on canvas, 48 1/2 x 57 x 2 1/2 inches.
Courtesy of Karma and the artist. © Reggie Burrows Hodges. Photograph by Luc Demers

Featuring both emerging and more established artists living today, the exhibition presents 21st-century art from an unprecedented cross-section of artists living in Maine, the Canadian Maritimes, Greenland, Iceland, Norway, Faroe Islands, Finland, Sweden, and Denmark as well as Indigenous Nations throughout the region.

Ragnar Axelsson | Jordan Bennett | Jason Brown aka. Firefly | Christopher Carroll
Jóhan Martin Christiansen | Lauren Fensterstock | Gideonsson/Londré | Julie Edel Hardenberg
Reggie Burrows Hodges | Ann Cathrin November Høibo | Joan Jonas | Jessie Kleemann | Justin Levesque
Anna Líndal | Meagan Musseau | Mattias Olofsson | Frida Orupabo | Bitá Razavi | Joshua Reiman
Hans Rosenström | Máret Anne Sara | Magnús Sigurdarson | Katarina Pirak Sikku | Andreas Siqueland
Snæbjörnsdóttir/Wilson | Peter Soriano | Anders Sunna | SUPERFLEX | D´Arcy Wilson | Arngunnur Ýr



SUPERFLEX (Denmark, established 1993), *Vertical Migration*, 2019, slip colored ceramic on ash wood pallets, 126 x 47 1/4 x 50 inches. Courtesy of the artists. *Vertical Migration* is based on the research project *Deep Sea Minding*, commissioned by TBA21-Academy, as a continuation of their program *The Current*. Installation view: maat - Museum of Art, Architecture and Technology (Lisbon), 2021. © Courtesy of EDP Foundation. Photography by Francisco Nogueira

Co-organized by the Portland Museum of Art, the Reykjavík Art Museum, Iceland, and the Bildmuseet, Sweden, the *North Atlantic Triennial* is the first exhibition devoted entirely to contemporary art of the North Atlantic region.

At the heart of the project is the idea of turning the North upside-down.

This happens through the way people living around the North Atlantic observe changes happening in their immediate surroundings and within themselves, at the same time as the notion of the North changes in people’s minds all around the world. Thinking about preconceived notions and the ingrained idea of the North being “up there” on the world map, we play with turning things on their head in its title, *Down North*, and visual identity.

In Maine, you will typically say “headed downeast” when you are referring the stretch of coastline along Washington and Hancock counties, including Bar Harbor, Machias, Jonesport, and Eastport. However, originally “downeast” was a sailing term referring to the direction sailing ships traveled to get here from Boston, meaning downwind and to the east. In Icelandic folklore, the way to underworld is “north and down.” As in Maine, the Icelandic etymology originates at sea. A fisherman returning home after fishing caught strong wind carrying him to a foreign shore where he found the Devil, plugging away by a great fire. Managing to escape and finding his way back home he lived to tell the tale and ever since this phrase exists “norður og niður.” The Swedish phrase “ner till norr” is neither used in common language nor established as a saying. Using it will, in most cases, be a conscious act, a demonstrative way of shifting perspective and see the world in a new and different way.

As the North Atlantic gateway for the United States, the State of Maine has a longstanding history with the nations and people who reside in our proverbial front yard.

Both separated and connected by oceans, the North Atlantic Triennial strengthens the bond between our state and the other nations as true partners in the North’s future—what happens in the Arctic Circle affects our state and the actions the State of Maine affect the Arctic Circle. This exhibition adopts the circumpolar north perspective to position the North as the center. To date, however, a platform dedicated exclusively to contemporary art by artists living and working in this expansive region does not exist.

Artists are modern-day explorers, investigating poignant themes and capitalizing on art’s emotional impact and narrative potential as a catalyst for change. Climate and environment changes, and a difficult history of colonization of indigenous groups, have generated new works of art that address a cascading series of social, economic, political, and environmental challenges throughout the region. Artists also confront the illusion of the North as a remote wilderness and challenge the romanticized illusion of an untouched land and its perceived homogeneity. The selected works, in all media, trace shared narratives in the field of contemporary art, reflecting novel affinities and chasms within societies and among nations in the region.



Frida Orupabo (Norway, born 1986), *Untitled*, 2019, collage with paper pins mounted on aluminum (exhibition copy), 35 10/16 x 22 6/16 inches. Courtesy of the artist and Galerie Nordenhake Stockholm/Berlin/Mexico City. © Frida Orupabo

ABOUT THE ORGANIZERS



Reykjavík Art Museum is a dynamic and progressive institution that gives guests an opportunity to get to know diverse art and gain a deeper understanding of the historic, social, cultural and artistic context of different artworks. The museum exhibits work from Iceland, leading international artists in modern and contemporary art, and up-and-coming talents. The exhibitions in Reykjavík Art Museum span all the way from the historic to modern times, from the conventional to the outermost limits of art.



In seven floors of striking architecture, **Bildmuseet** hosts exhibitions of international contemporary art and art historical retrospectives. Existential, political, and philosophical issues are intrinsic to their program. Visitors are invited to guided tours, artist talks, lectures, film screenings, and other events, along with open workshops to inspire creativity.



With an extensive collection and nationally renowned exhibitions, the **Portland Museum of Art (PMA)** is the cultural heart of Portland, Maine. The PMA boasts diverse and significant holdings of American, European, and contemporary art, as well as iconic works from Maine—highlighting the rich artistic tradition of the state and platforming its artists.

Co-organized by the Portland Museum of Art in Portland, Maine, the Reykjavík Art Museum in Reykjavík, Iceland, and the Bildmuseet in Umeå, Sweden.

The North Atlantic Triennial is made possible by the Helen E. and William E. Thon Endowment Fund.

Research travel supported by Frame Contemporary Art Finland, Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Royal Norwegian Consulate General in New York and The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts.