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9 Emerging Artists You Need to Know About Right Now

Get up to speed.

Caroline Elbaor & Brian Boucher, July 28, 2016



Zarouhie Abdalian, *Chanson du ricochet*, 2014. Installation view, Prospect.3, New Orleans.

From New York to Detroit, from Chicago to Los Angeles, artists are making their way from their MFA graduation ceremony to their early solo shows. Here are some of the young and youngish artists across America who are catching our eye right now.

1. Zarouhie Abdalian

Oakland-based Zarouhie Abdalian creates site-specific sculpture and sound installations to tell the story of the surrounding architecture with work that, according to a 2016 *Art in America* review of her solo exhibition at New York's Clifton Benevento, demonstrates attentiveness to "the way historical processes are embedded in physical transformations of spaces." Her minimal sculptures and paintings were also on view at Basel's prestigious LISTE fair in 2014, and new works will be featured in a 2017 exhibition at LAXArt, in Los Angeles.

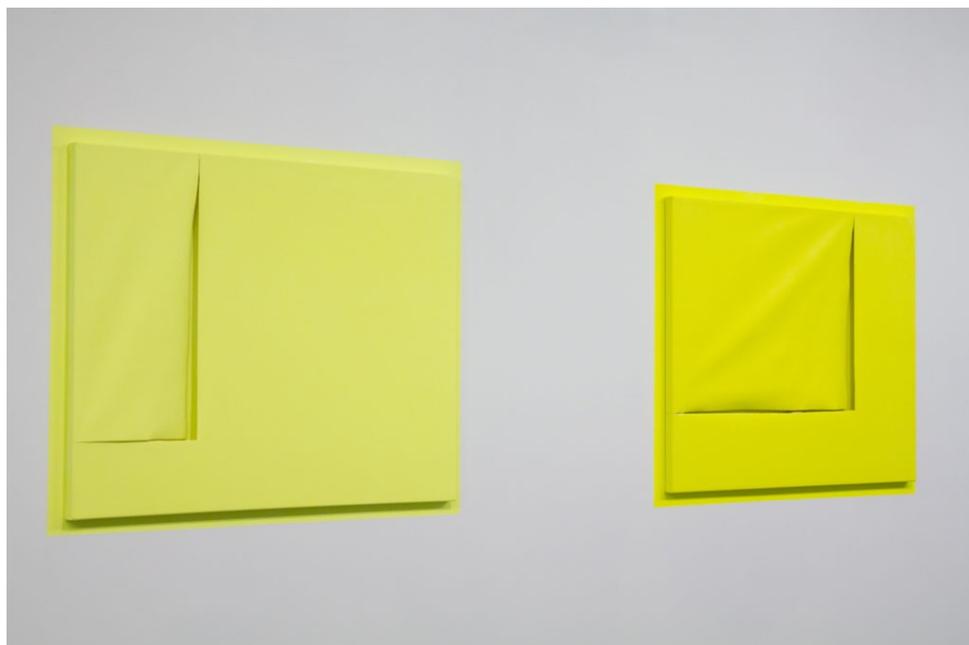
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Lucas Blalock, *a picture for Wallas*, 2015. Courtesy of Ramiken Crucible.

2. Lucas Blalock

Working with subtly altered photographs, Lucas Blalock just reached a new level of exposure with his inclusion in the current group show “A Modest Proposal,” at Hauser & Wirth New York (through July 29). The New York artist caught artnet News critic Blake Gopnik’s eye in a recent show at New York’s Metropolitan Museum of Art; Gopnik praised the way Blalock “comes very close to achieving an impossible goal that art has set itself at least since Cubism: To represent two pieces of space at the same time, in a single image.”



Left to Right: Nathan Coutts, *Untitled (Two of Four)*, 2014. Nathan Coutts, *Untitled (Three of Four)*, 2014. Courtesy of the Artist.

3. Nathan Coutts

Nathan Coutts uses spray paint and fluorescent colors to create wall works, installations, and canvases marked with bright, highlighter-like hues. An Ohio native working in Los Angeles, he is currently in the group exhibition “Dark Mimes” at LA’s [Ashes/Ashes](#) (through August 6) and had a solo presentation at [Baby Grand](#) in Detroit last year. Coutts moonlights as a curator, and organized the show “You Must Stand This While Reading There” at Minneapolis’s [David Petersen Gallery](#) in 2014, fielding artists from across the US and Europe.



Jibade-Khalil Huffman, *Lake Overturn*, Installation View, 2013. Courtesy Samuel Freeman Gallery.

4. [Jibadi-Kahlil Huffman](#)

Jibade-Khalil Huffman uses his background in poetry to inform his research in the mediums of performance, photography, and video. His CV is formidable: the artist earned a BFA at Bard College (Annandale-on-Hudson, New York) as well as MFAs from Brown University (Providence, Rhode Island) and the University of Southern California in LA, the city where he currently lives and works. And all the studying has paid off: He has scored shows in Los Angeles at the [Hammer Museum](#), the [Museum of Contemporary Art Los Angeles](#), and [Public Fiction](#), as well as [Marianne Boesky East](#) in New York, and [Southern Exposure](#) in San Francisco, among others.

Related: [9 Artists Under 39 To Know at Art Basel 2016](#)



Zachary Leener, 2016. Courtesy of Tif Sigfrids.

5. [Zachary Leener](#)

LA artist Zachary Leener has joined a wave of artists employing ceramics; since gaining an MFA from the University of California Riverside, he’s shown with cool young Angeleno dealer [Tif Sigfrids](#) and turned our heads in a two-person show at New York’s [Lisa Cooley](#). His bizarro tabletop sculptures exhibit a wide range

of textures and are often fitted with Christmas lights; Leener ups the ante on oddity by giving each bulb its own chunky electrical cable. A solo exhibition of his work is scheduled to open September 17 at TIF SIGFRIDS, Los Angeles.



Sam Moyer, *Blue Moon*, 2014. Courtesy Rachel Uffner Gallery.

6. Sam Moyer

Since earning an MFA from Yale, Brooklyn-based Sam Moyer has quickly racked up solo shows from underground venues like Cleopatra's in Brooklyn and Société in Berlin, and will soon show at Copenhagen's Andersen's Contemporary. We're still reeling from her 2014 show at New York's Rachel Uffner that featured a 23-foot-long slab of white marble, *More Weight*, named for the words spoken by an accused witch in Salem, Massachusetts, when he was being crushed to death in punishment for his so-called sorcery.



Raúl de Nieves, *Celebration*, Installation View, 2016. Courtesy Company Gallery.

7. Raúl de Nieves

New York artist Raúl de Nieves has had a busy time lately in Gotham. He gained honorable mention from our critic Christian Viveros-Fauné for a work in "Greater New York 2015," at MoMA PS1. Just this month, he staged an intense performance at Artists Space in New York and mounted a warmly received show in the

same city at [Company](#), “El Rio” (through July 24), that presents a wild vision, rife with beads and other humble materials, inspired partly by craft traditions of his native Mexico. *Art in America*’s Brian Droicour dubbed the show “a river of life and death that takes fungal, carnal, and floral forms, evoking a vital spiritual force that flows from the natural world to the craft store and back again.”



Tameka Norris, *Ivy League Ratchet*, 2016. Courtesy of the artist.

8. [Tameka Norris](#)

“What does it mean to see this body playing golf, or to see this body twerking?” asks Tameka Norris, an African-American artist living between Berlin and New Orleans. While earning an MFA from Yale, she produced a witty series of [videos](#), riffing on a seminal series by [Alex Bag](#), in which she played a student finding herself through her education. The artist’s latest project, *Ivy League Ratchet*, is a musical release consisting of four “intensely personal” songs that show off her rap skills.

Open up your ears, because she’ll be included in “[The Beat Goes On](#),” opening August 20 at the [School of Visual Arts’ Chelsea gallery](#), curated by artist Derrick Adams and also featuring Elia Alba, Kevin Beasley and Paul D. Miller (aka DJ Spooky). “[Cut From The Same Cloth](#),” a solo exhibition of her work, will also go on view November 25 at [Ronchini Gallery, London](#).

Related: [10 Black Artists to Celebrate in 2016](#)



Molly Soda, “From My Bedroom to Yours,” Installation View, 2015–16. Courtesy Annka Kultys Gallery.

9. Molly Soda

Molly Soda's work is typically first encountered online, as she has garnered Internet fame through her exploration of contemporary feminism. She recently had an impressive solo show at London's newly-minted Annka Kultys Gallery, where she transformed the space into a setting reminiscent of a young girl's room (complete with bubblegum pink bean bags). Visitors could purchase videos from USB sticks that dangled on the rose-hued walls. Soda, who lives and works in Detroit, also co-curated Annka Kultys's current show, "Zero Zero."