Week in Review: A Mural for George Floyd; Walker Art Center to Stop Working With Police Department

Also, a new grant for cultural critics of color, SFMOMA is accused of censoring a former Black employee, and more.

Cassie Packard, Valentina Di Liscia  June 5, 2020

Week in Review is a weekly collection of news, developments, and stirrings in the art world. Subscribe to receive these posts as a weekly newsletter.

As protests against the murder of Black Minneapolis resident George Floyd continue, a group of local artists created a mural to commemorate the slain 46-year-old at the street corner where he was choked to death by a white former police officer.

The Walker Art Center has pledged to stop working with the Minneapolis Police Department until it “implements meaningful change,” it said in a statement released yesterday. The decision has been one of the most significant actions taken by a cultural institution in the wake of George Floyd’s murder.

The San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (SFMOMA) was accused of censoring a Black former employee after removing his comment from an Instagram post featuring a work by Glenn Ligon. The museum removed and disabled comments on the post, as institutions come under increasing scrutiny for vague or insubstantial expressions of solidarity for Black Lives Matter.
The Nelson-Atkins Museum in Kansas City was criticized for allowing police to station on its premises last Friday. The museum’s director told Hyperallergic that onsite security granted the request, and the police were later asked to relocate.

A new grant for cultural critics is awarding unrestricted $500 grants to writers of color who have been affected financially by the COVID-19 pandemic. The deadline to apply is June 8, 11:59pm EDT.

Artist Paul Mpagi Sepuya is offering one of his photographs to anyone who donates $250 or more to advocacy organizations like National Bail Out and #BlackLivesMatter-Los Angeles. Sepuya said he wants to “see receipts from non-Black collectors to know their interests in Black bodies aren’t salacious.”

An original mosaic floor from a Roman villa has been uncovered in Negrar, a small township in northern Italy. Archaeologists successfully uncovered the beautifully tiled floor after decades of thwarted attempts.

The director of the Uffizi Gallery in Florence, Eike Schmidt, has suggested that religious artworks residing in institutional collections should be returned to their respective places of worship.

Artist Jorge Rodríguez-Gerada will paint a 20,000-square-foot mural for healthcare workers at the Queens Museum. “Somos La Luz” (“We Are the Light”), a painting of a masked medical professional, will be visible to satellites.
Transactions

Le Musée d’Orsay in Paris acquired Édouard Manet’s “Tête de jeune homme” in an online sale at Christie’s. Made by Manet when he was just 21, the painting is based on a self-portrait by Quattrocento painter Filippino Lippi. Le Musée d’Orsay purchased the painting for €95,000 or about $106,000; it will join 29 other works by Manet in the museum’s collection.

In 2017, Floridian interior designer Antonio DiMarco, with the help of art advisor Joakim von Ditmar, used a false identity to purchase two works at a Sotheby’s New York sale: a Mark Rothko painting for $6.4 million, and an Ad Reinhardt painting for $1.2 million. Sotheby’s alerted the FBI; now, the case has come to a close. DiMarco was sentenced to 54 years in prison and ordered to pay $2.4 million in restitution.

At Munich’s Hermann Historica auction house, an 1898 U.S. Medal of Honor sold for more than $15,000. The medal was bestowed upon army private Thomas Kelly for rescuing wounded soldiers during the Battle of San Juan Hill in Santiago,
Cuba. Interest spiked in the lot when Texas senator Ted Cruz wrote to US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo urging him to work with German officials to cancel the sale.

This Week in the Art World

Jane Moss will step down as the artistic director of the Lincoln Center. | New York Times

Night Gallery in Los Angeles announced representation of Tomashi Jackson. | Night Gallery

Lévy Gorvy named Elena Bonanno Di Linguaglossa as its senior director in Italy. | artnet

Charles Desmarais left his role as the San Francisco Chronicle’s art critic. | Twitter

Van Doren Waxter in New York added Jack Tworkov to its roster. | ARTnews

London’s Frith Street Gallery now represents the estate of Nancy Spero. | Frith Street Gallery

Roland Rudd will be the new board chairman of the Tate in London. | Artforum

The San José Institute of Contemporary Art (SJICA) appointed Alison Gass as its new director. | Artforum

New York gallery Danese/Corey has announced that it will close. | ARTnews

In Memoriam

Chris Beaty (1981–2020), 38-year-old businessperson and former football player in Indianapolis | ESPN
Christo (1935–2020), public sculptor | The Guardian

Elsa Dorfman (1937–2020), portrait photographer | Artforum

Alice Negley Dorn (1951–2020), Texan arts philanthropist | The Art Newspaper

David Dorn (–2020), 77-year-old retired police officer in St. Louis | NY Daily News

Bruce Jay Friedman (1930–2020), screenwriter | Variety

Javar Harrell (1999–2020), 21-year-old son in Detroit | Forbes

Calvin L. Horton (1977–2020), 43-year-old father in Minneapolis | Star Tribune


John Loengard (1934–2020), Life photographer | The New York Times

David McAtee (1967–2020), 53-year-old barbeque restaurant owner in Louisville | The Daily Beast

Dorian Murrell (2002–2020), 18-year old son in Indianapolis | IndyStar

James Scurlock (1998–2020), 22-year-old son in Omaha | The Daily Beast


Dave Patrick Underwood (1967–2020), 53-year-old federal officer in Oakland | The Richmond Standard

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