New Museum Spring 2016 Exhibitions

“Andra Ursuta”  
April 27–June 19, 2016  
Fourth Floor  
In spring 2016, the New Museum will present the first museum exhibition in New York of Andra Ursuta (b. 1979, Salonta, Romania). Ursuta’s works span drawing, painting, sculpture, and installation and weave art historical homage with a homespun, anarchic sensibility that distorts folk traditions, caricatures economic symbols, and critiques gender expectations. Ursuta’s visual language thrives on paradox and commingles the monumental and the forensic. Dark and unsettling, her works often allude to her own personal history or expose or challenge the vulnerability of the human body through threatening contraptions, architectures, and figures. Ursuta’s most recent sculpture series, *Whites* (2015), takes the form of anthropomorphic white obelisks—with eye sockets and nostrils cast from human skulls. These austere, ghost-like figures, which collectively resemble a group of gravestones, are seated on chairs whose designs reference periods of European colonialism. In *Commerce Exterieur Mondial Sentimental* (2012), two life-size marble figures adorned with coins gaze defiantly at the viewer. Informed by a Socialist-Realist aesthetic and a news image of a Roma woman being deported from France, they evoke lifeless mannequins trapped in an economy in which the value of both human beings and commodities are determined by foreign powers. For the Fourth Floor of the New Museum, Ursuta will create a sculptural installation that combines new and recent works. The exhibition is curated by Natalie Bell, Assistant Curator, and Massimiliano Gioni, Artistic Director.

“Nicole Eisenman: Al-ugh-ories”  
May 4–June 26, 2016  
Third Floor  
The New Museum will present the first New York survey show of the work of Nicole Eisenman (b. 1965, Verdun, France). One of the most important painters of her generation, Eisenman has developed a distinct figurative language that combines the imaginative with the lucid, the absurd with the banal, and the stereotypical with the countercultural and queer. In her narrative compositions she draws as much from art history as from popular culture, making way for accessible and humorous, yet also critical and poignant images of contemporary life. Gathering a body of work produced over the last two decades, “Al-ugh-ories” pays special attention to the symbolic nature of her depictions of individuals and groups and highlights how the allegorical permeates her oeuvre and fluidly ties the fictional to the autobiographical. Considering Eisenman’s dedication to the history of painting and the ways in which she references...
artists as diverse as Giotto, Francisco de Goya, Paul Cézanne, Pablo Picasso, and Edvard Munch, the show will also underline how her approach to painting involves a deliberate attempt to counter accepted historical hierarchies through wit and irreverence. Her preoccupation with the figure and the complexity of its gestures and form has in recent years also resulted in a number of large-scale plaster sculptures, a selection of which will be included in this show. With proportions that exceed human scale, these bodies—like those in Eisenman’s paintings—act out familiar everyday occurrences such as eating, sleeping, walking, or making love, while also exposing human desire to be equally raw and awkward. The exhibition is curated by Helga Christoffersen, Assistant Curator, and Massimiliano Gioni, Artistic Director.

“Goshka Macuga”
May 4–June 26, 2016
Second Floor
This exhibition will mark the first museum presentation in New York of the work of London-based artist and 2008 Turner Prize nominee Goshka Macuga (b. 1967, Warsaw, Poland). Macuga’s practice typically applies in-depth historical and archival research to an interest in the evolving relationships among artists, institutions, politics, and communities. Occupying the New Museum’s Second Floor galleries, the exhibition will bring together a selection of Macuga’s most significant projects from the past five years, including several of her large-scale tapestries, which “weave” people together in their reimagining of demonstrations, public assemblies, cultural events, and meetings of minds. For Of what is, that is; of what is not, that is not (2012), the artist’s commission for dOCUMENTA (13), Macuga presented two tapestries that were shown simultaneously in two separate locations: Kassel, Germany, and Kabul, Afghanistan. The two black-and-white panels, with their composite stitching-together of figures from disparate yet interlocking communities, illuminate the elusive relationship between historic documentation and truth. In Preparatory Notes for a Chicago Comedy (2014) Macuga expands on the function of demonstration and performance in her tapestries, presenting a stage set for a production based on an unpublished play by eccentric German art historian Aby Warburg. As with many of Macuga’s projects, this piece explores the complicated and oftentimes fraught relationship between art and society throughout history that continues to resonate in the present. The exhibition is curated by Margot Norton, Associate Curator, and Massimiliano Gioni, Artistic Director.

“Cally Spooner: On False Tears and Outsourcing”
April 27–June 19, 2016
Lobby Gallery
The New Museum will present a new installation by Cally Spooner (b. 1983, Ascot, UK), which will be her first solo and institutional presentation in the United States. Marking an important shift of duration in her work, “On False Tears and Outsourcing” will bring Spooner’s live performance practice into the format of an exhibition. Responding directly to the space of the Lobby Gallery—and using it as a readymade pavilion—Spooner’s project will take the gallery’s architectural similarity to industrial glass structures and office environments as a point of departure. By exaggerating the light and heat levels and introducing continuous disembodied sound, Spooner will engage directly with the mechanics of the space to create an intensified situation in which a group of performers will complete a set of tasks that fluctuate between competition and intimacy. Structured according to the logic of corporate development meetings, often referred to as “stand-up scrums,” this performance will also appropriate gestures from romantic movies and competitive contact sports. Interested in the pretense of the neutralizing effects of work environments and the concept of transparency—both conceptually and spatially—Spooner will look at the production of an “architecture of management” and the ways in which it imposes itself very physically onto the human body. The exhibition is curated by Helga Christoffersen, Assistant Curator.
Beatriz Santiago Muñoz’s (b. 1972, San Juan, Puerto Rico) residency and exhibition at the New Museum will be presented in the Fifth Floor gallery as part of the Education and Public Engagement Department’s R&D Season: LEGACY. Santiago Muñoz’s engagement with LEGACY grapples with the ways in which our connections to the past are actively produced, maintained, and refuted, with an eye to utopian communities, institutional histories, and social choreographies. In this exhibition, she will premiere a new body of work, including a series of 16mm portraits of anthropologists, activists, and artists working in Haiti and Puerto Rico. Her projects blur the lines between ethnography, fiction, and documentary film and examine the symbolic and material histories of the local communities she observes with her camera. Santiago Muñoz’s films capture the aspirations and imagined futures of dissidents, feminists, and political organizers who are deeply invested in alternative models of being, using them as allegories for larger political possibilities in the region. This exhibition is co-curated by Johanna Burton, Keith Haring Director and Curator of Education and Public Engagement, and Lauren Cornell, Curator and Associate Director, Technology Initiatives, with Sara O’Keeffe, Assistant Curator.

ABOUT THE NEW MUSEUM
The New Museum is the only museum in New York City exclusively devoted to contemporary art. Founded in 1977, the New Museum is a center for exhibitions, information, and documentation about living artists from around the world. From its beginnings as a one-room office on Hudson Street to the inauguration of its first freestanding building on the Bowery designed by SANAA in 2007, the New Museum continues to be a place of experimentation and a hub of new art and new ideas.