Unfinished Conversations

New Work from the Collection

John Akomfrah
Jonathas de Andrade
Kim Beom
Anna Boghiguian
Andrea Bowers
Paul Chan
Simon Denny
Samuel Fosso
Iman Issa
Erik van Lieshout
Cameron Rowland
Wolfgang Tillmans
Adrián Villar Rojas
Kara Walker
Lynette Yiadom-Boakye

Unfinished Conversations: New Work from the Collection is organized by Klaus Biesenbach, Chief Curator at Large, The Museum of Modern Art and Director MoMA PS1; Lucy Gallun, Assistant Curator, Department of Photography; Thomas J. Lax, Associate Curator, Department of Media and Performance Art; Christian Rattemeyer, Associate Curator, Department of Drawings and Prints; and Yasmil Raymond, Associate Curator, Department of Painting and Sculpture, with Elizabeth Henderson, Department Coordinator, Office of the Chief Curator at Large

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Unfinished Conversations: New Work from the Collection brings together works by more than a dozen artists, made in the past decade and recently acquired by The Museum of Modern Art. The artists that make up this intergenerational selection address current anxiety and unrest around the world and offer critical reflections on our present moment.

The exhibition considers the intertwining themes of social protest, the effect of history on the formation of identity, and how art juxtaposes fact and fiction. From Cairo to St. Petersburg, from The Hague to Recife, the artists in the exhibition observe and interpret acts of state violence and the resistance and activism they provoke. They reexamine historical moments, evoking images of the past and claiming their places within it. They take on contemporary struggles for power, intervening into debates about government surveillance and labor exploitation. Together, these artists look back to traditions both within and beyond the visual arts to imagine possibilities for an uncertain future.

The title of this exhibition is inspired by John Akomfrah's three-channel video installation *The Unfinished Conversation* (2012), which is included here and chronicles the life and work of the Jamaican-born British cultural theorist Stuart Hall (1932–2014). Hall recognized the power that museum collections have to both shape and reflect culture and communities, contending that they are sources of inspiration "which create thought-provoking visions of our past. They provide testimony to the darkest and brightest of human history."