

MULTI-ARTS TRAC

FALL 2024

@ HAUSER & WIRTH

ATISHA / DEHNVER / HENRY / MARIAM



New York Live Arts (NYLA)

Our first workshop and event of the TRaC season was on November 8.

The mood in the city was bleak; we considered not going to the show given how people were feeling—but we were attending a performance that was about healing, and we had talked about that quality at the kickoff, before the election happened. So we went. And right before the show began, Mr. Bill T. Jones himself—the artistic director of NYLA and acclaimed choreographer—stood up from his front row seat, turned to the audience and began singing, “We shall not, we shall not be moved.” It was a reminder of the resilience of art and artists, and a beacon in the darkness that perfectly set the stage for this meditation on humanity.

1. Ismaël Mouaraki | Destins Croisés Le Sacre de Lila @ NYLA



Meaning “night” in Arabic, a “Lila” is a set of nocturnal healing rituals that blends singing, dancing, and music, traditionally found in some North African countries. Mouaraki transposes the rites and codes of these dance rituals onto the stage, while infusing his signature contemporary street dance style to reveal the sensitivity and sensuality of the male body. Tinted with the tastes and colors of Morocco, the artists transform the performance into a celebration and exaltation of bodies that unfolds with an undeniable energy.

<https://fjordreview.com/blogs/all/a-journey-of-healing>

The Gnawa and Their Lila

The term "Gnawa" refers firstly to a North African ethnic minority that traces its origins to West African slaves and soldiers. Gnawa communities in the Maghreb (Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia) trace their origins to the Sudan, not meaning the present-day nation of Sudan, but rather sub-Saharan African in general. (The word "Sudan," after all, is merely the Arabic word for "the Blacks.") Thus, like the term "African-American," Gnawa refers to a group of people whose ancestors came from diverse regions of Africa but took on a collective identity in exile.

The second use of the term "Gnawa" refers to the people who participate in the musical and ritual tradition of the *lila* (Arabic "night") or *derdeba* ceremony. Not all ethnic Gnawa participate in this tradition, and not all *lila* practitioners trace their ethnic ancestry to the Sudan. However, the *lila* tradition is recognized to be a manifestation of the expressive culture of the historical Gnawa.

The *lila* is a rich ceremony of song, music, dance, costume, and incense that takes place over the course of an entire night, ending around dawn. An explicit goal of the *lila* is to allow participants to negotiate relationships with their *melk* (pl. *mluk*). The *melk* is an abstract entity that gathers a number of similar *jnun* (genie spirits). The ritual enables participants to enter the trance state of *jadba*, in which they may perform startling and sometimes spectacular dances. It is by means of these dances that participants negotiate their relationships with the *mluk* either placating them if they have been offended or strengthening an existing relationship.

https://www.sonispheric.net/the_gnawa_and_their_lila.htm

2. SMACK MELLON - DUMBO

Gallery Two

Madjeen Isaac
*Come as You Are,
This Is Our Battle Too*

September 28-November 17, 2024

The works that comprise this exhibition invoke healing and transformation following an unexpected battle with a recent health diagnosis. Inspired by spaces of resistance, the works depict reimagined landscapes illuminated by various sources of light and ancestral guidance in the form of celestial beings. The imagery draws from the artist's involvement in local community gardens, as well as Black and Caribbean diaspora's relationship to communal establishments such as the *lakou* which are common in Haiti. Once a catalyst for revolutions, these spaces bridge connections between bodies, community, and land while holding space for rage, celebration, ancestral connection, and most importantly agricultural autonomy. As the exhibition's title suggests, the deep connections forged through community, family, and spirituality provide strength, allowing life's major struggles to be dispersed among many, while gathering support focused towards healing.



Wow, It's Almost Like I'm There

To all the first generation New York teenagers: it's okay, I know. New York City is such a melting pot which gives us the advantage that someone who moved to Ohio would not have. Even if you don't actively display your culture at home, you have the opportunity to learn about it for free, whether that be through street vendors or your local mom 'n pop restaurant. However, as a first generation New Yorker, you might often feel yourself searching for more connection to your culture. If you identify with this dilemma then a great place to start is Madjeen Isacc's "Come as You Are, This Is Our Battle Too" as it illustrates life in the Caribbean.



3. DCTV



Here we are with 16-time-E Emmy-award winning journalist and founder of DCTV, Jon Alpert, working on his newest documentary, “The Raging Rabbi” about a prize-fighter in rabbinical school.

And the winners are...

Us! Because we got to DCTV! Yes, we got to hold Emmys (which was very cool) but that doesn't even begin to describe the DCTV experience. This organization is a beacon for teenagers and young adults in New York City; not only do they offer a gateway to the film industry, they also supply members with food, computers, and other resources that they otherwise might not have access to. If you're looking for a creative found family or simply looking to try something new to try, DCTV is definitely the place to be!

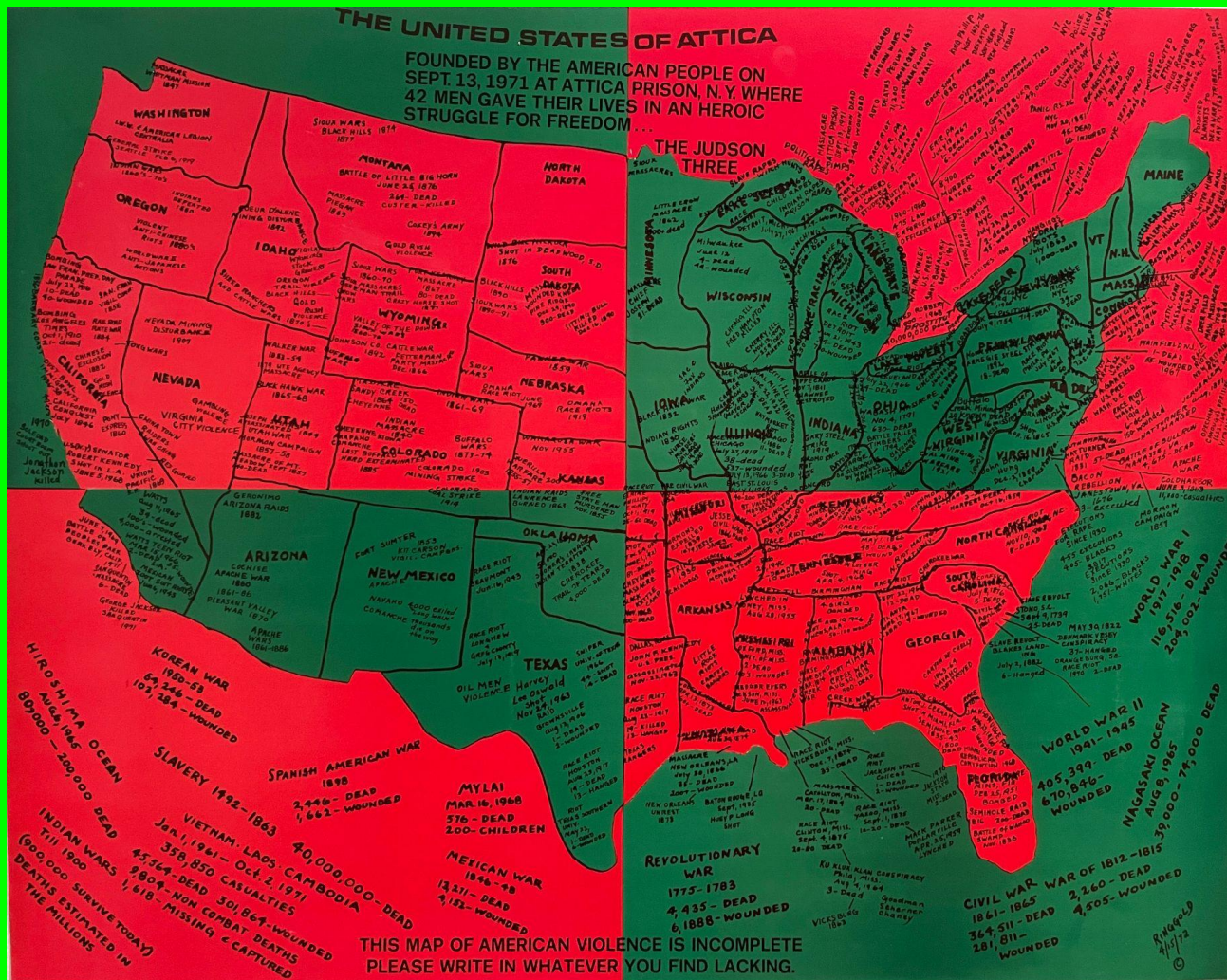


[illegible]

A photograph of an art installation. A large wall features a digital display with the word "REPROGRAMMING" repeated in a grid pattern, with some letters highlighted in green. A woman in a white shirt and glasses is gesturing towards the display, explaining it to two other people. A red arrow points to the top of the wall.

US OF ATTICA*

In September 1971, half of Attica's 2,000-person incarcerated population took over the prison in a historic week-long uprising that ended in the massacre of 42 people. Artist and activist Faith Ringgold began researching and crafting her next piece immediately. By 1972, it was complete: the United States of Attica. Instead of the flag's red, white, and blue, Ringgold's map uses a Pan-African palette of red, black, and green. Instead of marking towns and cities, she painstakingly inscribed events of anti-Black and colonial violence, from the Civil and Vietnam Wars to the Battle of Little Bighorn and the Watts Rebellion. Splitting the map into four quadrants deliberately divides the "United" States. It also resembles the scope of a gun. Everyone on U.S. soil is a target. Ringgold even included a key message: "This map of American violence is incomplete / Please write in whatever you find lacking."



Lorraine O'Grady (September 21, 1934 – December 13, 2024) was an American artist, writer, translator, and critic. Working in conceptual art and performance art that integrates photo and video installation, she explored the cultural construction of identity – particularly that of Black female subjectivity – as shaped by the experience of diaspora and hybridity.



Artist, activist, and community organizer Tom Lloyd worked primarily in abstraction and technology to create unique, electronically programmed light works.



Ulysses Jenkins

"He's a meme on tiktok."

A pivotal influence on contemporary art for over 50 years, Ulysses Jenkins (b. 1946, Los Angeles) is a groundbreaking video artist who emerged in the late-1970s. His video and media work is remarkable for its fusion of forms to conjure vibrant expressions of how image, sound, and cultural iconography inform representation. Using archival footage, photographs, image processing, and elegiac soundtracks, Jenkins pulls together strands of thought to construct an "other" history that consistently interrogates questions of race and gender as they relate to ritual, history, and state power.



5. THORNTON DIAL

Thornton Dial has a different perspective on America that you may or may not be used to. As a Black person growing up in a time period of racism and slavery, Dial saw many injustices and was subject to them himself. He could not read hence his artwork, which became a way for him to express his views and opinions with the world. His work, though stemming from reasons that are sad and abhorrent, though sad, may give more information than some history books today do. Thornton Dial's most notable artworks, such as "Mr. Dial's America" give insight into just how America, the so-called "land of the free and home of the brave" has been to Black people. Dial, though not able to use words, communicates to his viewers that the society we have been living in, while obviously unfair, might be more messed up than we thought.





Mr Dial's America

Mr. Dial's America is riddled with symbolism, both blatant and hidden. While it may seem like a simple piece on the surface, the longer you stare at it, the more you notice. Do you think that you can find the hidden symbols?



6. EDGES OF AILEY @ THE WHITNEY



“Edges of Ailey” at Whitney showcased Ailey’s artistic legacy and the establishment of Alvin Ailey American Dance Theatre (AADT). It consisted of a huge installation which played the recordings of AAADT including the creation of his iconic work “Revelation”. The timeless choreographies depicted Ailey’s upbringing as an African-American navigating the culture.

Ailey’s presence comes across through video surrounding the upper and his personal effects, in a floor filled with artworks by over eighty artists. These works are arranged by themes that shaped Ailey’s life and dances. Sections span an expanded Black southern imaginary that enfolds histories of the American South with those of the Caribbean, Brazil, and West Africa; the enduring practices of Black spirituality; the profound conditions and effects of Black migration; the resilience for and necessity of an intersectional Black liberation; the prominence of Black women in Ailey’s life; and the robust histories and experiments of Black music; along with the myriad representations of Blackness in dance and meditations on dance after Ailey.

OUR BIG ART QUESTION

What would you do if you were trapped in a museum or gallery overnight?

Here's an article from the British publication The Guardian about such things:

Nights at the museum: tales of being trapped in galleries, a cathedral ... and a 'hotel'

We're probably the most like Louis Morris Murphy Jr, mostly for the 911 call **LOL**

AILEY AND MORE...

The exhibit also included many artists of color working in different media that connected to the Ailey aesthetic. It was amazing to see works by artists like Basquiat, Mickalene Thomas, Faith Ringgold, Jacob Lawrence, William H. Johnson, Barkley Hendricks, Ralph Lemon, Glenn Ligon. We couldn't help but notice those works and artists that Multi-Arts TRaC had seen at other exhibits (like Code Switch) or that Map Free City saw last summer at the Giants exhibit at BAM or the Harlem Renaissance exhibit at The Met.

