

# Art in America

The World's Premier Art Magazine

## MIXED MEDIA

COMPILED BY STEPHANIE CASH

### UNGOVERNABLE ARTISTS DESCEND ON THE NEW MUSEUM

The **New Museum** in New York opens its second triennial of emerging artists on Feb. 15. Titled "The Ungovernables," the show might also become known as the predominantly non-Western triennial. Organized by **Eungie Joo**, curator and director of education and public programs, the survey will feature 34 artists and collectives from some 20 countries, with all participants born between 1973 and 1984. Joo, who has a PhD in ethnic studies from UC Berkeley, told *A.I.A.* that the roster of artists reflects her longstanding interests, including her research in southern Africa. The Museum as Hub initiative, which connects the institution with international art spaces, figured prominently in her research, she said, as did living in L.A., where she was the director of CalArt's REDCAT gallery for four years. "You have different access to Asia there, and I was also aware that I should be doing more in South America."

The show borrows its title from the term co-opted by the African National Congress, now South Africa's ruling party, in 1986, transforming its use from denigration to one of organized defiance. The New Museum's first triennial, "Younger Than Jesus," featured 50 artists born after 1976, the titular qualification being the only unifying criterion. For "The Ungovernables," Joo has selected artists who, according to press materials, express "the urgencies of a generation who came of age after the independence and revolutionary movements



of the 1960s and '70s." And she has chosen to concentrate on those who grew up almost anywhere but in the U.S. or Europe. Only five of the 34 artists on the roster were born in Western countries (one each for Canada and Finland, two each from the U.S. and the UK), the others hailing from such places as Lebanon, Brazil, Kuwait, Nigeria and Thailand.

Participants include **Adrián Villar Rojas**, whose towering clay and cement forms were a hit last summer in the Argentine pavilion at the Venice Biennale. Vietnamese artist **Danh Võ** had craftsmen replicate the two-penny-thick copper skin of the Statue of Liberty for his work *WE THE PEOPLE*, a scattered installation of its disassembled components. For her project, Peruvian-born **Rita Ponce de León**, who is based in Mexico City, asked friends and family to describe major historical events—military violence, social upheaval, etc.—that they lived through. She then made tiny, intimate drawings related to those developments. In one example, abstract ink marks on paper, actually depict a pile of bodies. A selection of 120 of these drawings will be displayed in a vitrine. ◻



Above, Rita Ponce de León, *Untitled*, 2009.

Left, Danh Võ: *WE THE PEOPLE*, 2011.

**CURRENTLY ON VIEW**  
 "The Ungovernables" at the New Museum, New York, through Apr. 22.