



The New Museum Presents “The Ungovernables”

Posted by [Used York City](#) on Monday, March 12, 2012 · [7 Comments](#)



Paintings by Lynette Yiadom-Boakye (Photo Credit: <http://www.thelodownny.com/>)

“There’s something happening here...What it is ain’t exactly clear.” This lyric hauntingly opens the anthem of a 1960s generation ready to challenge the status quo. This deceptively simple lyric became resoundingly resonant in my ears as I toured “**The Ungovernables**”, a remarkable artistic exhibit currently on display at the **New Museum**. All five floors are needed for this uniquely challenging exhibition, employing every inch of the New Museum’s cavernous space to full advantage, including use of the actual floor.

“The Ungovernables” displays the works of some 50 contemporary global artists, artists groups and collectives. All participants were born in the mid-1970s or later, and most have never been exhibited in the United States. These are the children of military dictatorships, revolutions – the by product of corrupt leaders. The majority of these works cannot be individually displayed or confined in a private setting. Many are specific to this site, reinforcing the temporal nature of their world. The impact of these pieces derives from their strength as a collective. Rhetoric necessarily surrounds each individual piece, and so a context emerges while boundaries – both geographic and intellectual – are broken.

Provocative, emotional, subjective, political, challenging, stimulating, incessant, wacky, intense, intimate, sizzling, sensory, non-linear, urgent, scintillating, insolent, unbalanced, selfish, calm,

aggressive, invigorating, strange, egotistical, assuming, bizarre – and then some – cite an adjective, it will fit this exhibit. I initiated my tour as a supreme skeptic: What on Earth are they trying to say? After some four intriguing hours I was a total convert to this collective of “Ungovernables” – an unvanquished group of innovators. Essays and second hand visuals can never explain these radical transient works. You simply have to observe and absorb it all first hand in its context at The New Museum.

“Each piece creates hours of dialogue. There is urgency to this exhibit, a need to discuss, to converse, to analyze, to understand.”

Unimaginable raw materials and some very sophisticated means of communication are utilized by this expansive show in a manner only an artist’s eye can envision. These individualized creations emanate from movers and shakers, from brave bold youth, from those who have experienced oppression and subsequently repression. You laud this exhibit for its explosive approach to personal expression; it forms its own aesthetic. I can think of no source of reference.



Tropical Hangover (Photo Credit: <http://cargocollective.com/jonathasdeandrade-eng/tropical-hangover>)

This is a dark, inspiring complex and perhaps cynical vision of the world. We move from an intensely personal provoking Power Point presentation – the works of **Pilvi Takala**, i.e. “The Trainee,” wherein we follow a strategically placed corporate intern who has absolutely nothing to do all the working day, to the large solemn oil portraits of **Lynette Yiadom-Boakye**, whose soulful vision continues to haunt me, to the quite personal excerpts (140 in total) from what appears to be a non-chronological diary accompanied by 101 non-sequential photographs by **Jonathas de Andrade** titled “Tropical Hangover.” From copper and clay to carpeting, moving to white lacquer wood in vertical uneven strips, to Styrofoam, these materials are deliberately chosen for their impermanence, defining this show in ways unimaginable to most of its spectators. There is truth behind every piece. Their creators have lived lives way beyond their young years.

Each piece creates hours of dialogue. There is urgency to this exhibit, a need to discuss, to converse, to analyze, to understand. **Eungie Joo**, the exhibition's Curator, claims "The Ungovernables" enact the "present" they desire through their work. They have rejected the usual relationships to the past, to history and to society, and are attempting to come to terms with their inner lives shaped by their turbulent outer world. This show gives them a forum for expression that most likely would never arise elsewhere. The edgy, spirited clothing line "[Joe Fresh](#)" serves as corporate sponsor for this show in addition to a grant from **The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts**.

The New Museum also offers a full schedule of **2012 Triennial Program and Works** featuring "The Ungovernables," which occur outside of the gallery spaces. For a full schedule of programs, visit their [website](#).

WHAT: *"The Ungovernables" – The Second New Museum Triennial*

WHERE: [New Museum](#)
235 Bowery
New York, New York 10002

WHEN: *Wed, 11-6 PM/Thurs, 11-9 PM/Fri –Sun, 11 -6 PM*

TICKETS: *General Admisson \$14; Students \$10; Under 18 Free
FREE admission for all Thursdays from 7pm to 9pm*

By: Joanne Theodorou