

# Sara Issakharian

Born in 1983, Tehran, Iran; lives and works in Los Angeles, Berlin, and Tehran

*I don't want to just show a conflict, because conflict is never isolated. If there's conflict, there's freedom; if there's darkness, there's light. If there's color, there's black and white. And I have to show that maybe when you free yourself from these dualities, then something else appears.*

Sara Issakharian wields color—in dustings of pure pigment, painstakingly blended gradients, entangled lines, and washes running wild—to set the figure into continual motion and disarray. Her paintings depict animalesque and human forms caught in a single mass that is defined only by turbulence. Issakharian's practice filters her experience as an Iranian Jewish immigrant—an existence of constant contrasts and fusions. Blending distinct cultural mythologies, she draws from the artistic and literary traditions of Judeo-Christian biblical storytelling, thirteenth-century Persian imagery, old master painters in the European tradition, and Hindu philosophy.

In monumentally scaled paintings, Issakharian captures allegorically the atrocious events of our time, rendering scenes of epic struggle. Underlying her works are themes of state-sanctioned violence: the oppression of women in her native Iran, the enduring trauma of war, and the push and pull of emigration. The artist paints through these painful subjects with a formal language of delicate, gentle strokes and bold, propulsive marks. Her colors and characters soften the unspeakable violence unleashed by humans, which she feels is too much for the spaces of representational painting. She consciously reclaims a palette and figures that could easily be seen as both feminine and juvenile, transmitting her message to refute hopelessly violent outcomes. Throughout her canvases, beauty persists, even in struggle.



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# Sula Bermúdez-Silverman

Born in 1993, New York City; lives and works in Los Angeles

*I use transparent or translucent materials to suggest the idea of perceiving or seeing through things in ways that are not straightforward. I like the seductiveness of color as well. Something may be dark or horrific but then you use a really soft pink or another seductive color, and that creates tension.*

Sula Bermúdez-Silverman infuses her sculptures with shape-shifting colored light. Their luminescence extends beyond their outermost edges, making unclear exactly where they begin and where they end. Light leaks into the space of the viewer, visibly manifesting the often-unconscious ways that materials shape and define environments. The artist's choices of medium expose the power systems that operate invisibly in our everyday lives.

Through rigorous research, Bermúdez-Silverman explores the little-known colonial histories of colors, materials, objects, and architecture, tracing the ways they mold our contemporary realities. She often chooses global commodities that were pivotal to the rise of European imperialism, such as sugar, rubber, and minerals. The artist combines these into assemblages with found objects and images as well as cast and blown forms. By selecting sugar, salt, and glass—translucent materials that can pass as something else or that seem to be something they are not—the artist jarringly combines elements that are at once familiar and awry.



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# Austin Martin White

Born in 1984, Detroit; lives and works in Philadelphia

*It wouldn't be useful for me as an artist to commit to one palette for the rest of my career. I want to experiment and push what kind of sensations I can pull out of a palette and its parameters.*

In Austin Martin White's work, paint oozes out from the surface of the picture plane, escaping its limits. Layers of dense and vibrant color push through and spill over the contours of the figures. The artist draws from a range of colonial-era art historical and ethnographic sources to probe the way their power dynamics are perpetuated in the contemporary moment. He first alters his reference images via hand drawing and digital tools before rendering fragments of them using a repurposed vinyl-cutting machine to generate a negative image—similar to certain printmaking techniques. White then presses his signature mixture of liquid rubber and pigment through the back of his substrate, a manual extrusion that creates a vibrant relief. The resulting compositions are textured and topographical, matte and glossy, brightly colored and darkly shadowed, at points glowing. Their seepages of color and light emphasize amorphous shapes over any crisp lines to create figures. White's process makes his source materials nearly unrecognizable, effectively removing any fixed idea or definition that the original images conveyed.



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# Rosha Yaghmai

Born in 1978, Santa Monica, California; lives and works in Los Angeles

*It's a strange bleeding or seepage of information—this sort of slow drip, digging out my understanding of this world. I'm realizing my work is very personal. The process is totally entangled with me figuring out what I'm drawn to and why.*

Rosha Yaghmai's *Afterimage* series pushes figuration to its most far-flung possibilities, harnessing layers of pure color to evoke the aura of figures she intentionally removes from her compositions. These works address notions of inheritance and collective memory that are absorbed through the body but become abstracted through generations and over great geographical distances. Their blurred swaths of color connect to images that emerge when we stare directly into a bright light and overstimulate our retinas. An inverted, residual copy imprints on our field of vision, unmoored from the physical world. Such afterimages are the direct apparition of what is happening inside the body.

Through an intuitive and materially driven practice in sculpture and painting, Yaghmai explores the sensorial effects of intense color and the interplay of light using a variety of translucent materials. Harnessing the refractive properties of their surfaces, her work becomes a portal through which our own visual and spatial experience shifts as we move around it and see through it, commingling our perceptual and bodily experiences with the artist's.



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# Ilana Savdie

Born in 1986, Miami, Florida; lives and works in Brooklyn, New York

*Color offers possibilities for seduction and trickery—a sort of bait-and-switch in which I can lure the viewer to grapple with something perhaps horrific, grotesque, or beyond the simply digestible, through a candy-colored lens.*

Ilana Savdie uses chromatic saturation and density of imagery as strategies to complicate figuration. Her signature palette combines luminous fluorescent colors that contrast with shocking deep, rich hues. Although Savdie's works center on the body, and her canvases deal with figures, they put forth only phantom fragments of realism. Glimpses of torsos and limbs are drenched in sweeping flows of leaky paint, broad-brushed gleaming color, and dimpled, skinlike textures created with wax. The effect sows both confusion and intrigue, sparking attraction and repulsion through brightly hued yet grotesque details drawn largely from the biological world.

A particular interest in Savdie's new body of work is the dynamic between predator and prey, autonomy and forced dependence—emblematic of not only hierarchical power structures but also interconnected relationships. Familial legacies of the Jewish diaspora inform her exploration of placelessness in her canvases. Savdie's family emigrated variously from Egypt, Lebanon, Romania, Poland, and Venezuela as the result of conflicts and expulsions, ultimately arriving in Colombia. Drawing on such upheaval and cultural fluidity, she is able to balance multiple contexts and traditions. Savdie leverages an enveloping scale and dynamic, gestural forms, inviting the viewer to examine intricate details from a state of near disorientation. This environment—teeming with colors, patterns, and textures—is a space of questioning where desire and resolution are perpetually at odds, colliding and coalescing.



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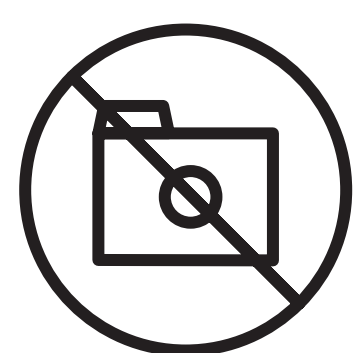
# Chella Man

Born in 1998, Hershey, Pennsylvania; lives and works in Brooklyn, New York

*Golden hour is reclamation. It reminds me of a period of my life when I left central Pennsylvania and I was falling in love with life, finding connection with other artists in New York City. It was during this grounding time when I could finally notice the light that visits every morning and evening. Golden hour is liberation.*

Myriad and fluid conceptions of the self inform Chella Man's multi-disciplinary practice—the artist draws from their lived experience as Deaf, transmasculine, genderqueer, and Chinese and Jewish American. Man lays bare their inherent multiplicities with bravery and vulnerability in *Autonomy*, a performance installation that provides an intimate encounter with a clone of their nude body. Bathed in warm golden-hour light, their figure is one with the environment, illuminated and poised for a limitless and liberated future.

In Man's recent performance of *Autonomy* at Performance Space, New York, they painstakingly and lovingly recreated and eroded the scars and tattoos that grace their body on the silicone clone's skin. Through these actions, the artist memorializes their long journey of gender transition and exercises self-determination. *Autonomy* does not center trauma, struggle, discrimination, or exclusion, though not for lack of such experiences. Instead the work foregrounds resilience, remembrance, curiosity, and care—for oneself, for others, for family and chosen family. Man emphasizes joy and rest as defenses against the backdrop of unsettling gender politics in the United States and beyond, presenting their body cradled in the afterglow of transformation.



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# Sasha Gordon

Born in 1998, Somers, New York; lives and works in Brooklyn, New York

*Color can be another form of expression, the temperature or mood ring of a person no matter what their face appears to be saying.*

Sasha Gordon infuses her figures' skin with unreal hues and textures drawn from their surroundings. Her surreal dreamscapes feature bold incarnations of the artist's multifaceted self, her doppelgängers, and her lover. Their forms are frequently exaggerated to emphasize intense emotional states, with color critically emanating their feelings. Gordon uses oil paint, which allows her to build up and add luminosity to surfaces by applying many thin, translucent layers. These glazes create an illusion of color that glows outward and toward the viewer. She chooses vibrant hues that stimulate the eye and play off each other, generating an uncanny perceptual dynamism between discrete forms.

Through jewel tones and jarring color combinations, her early compositions manifest an inner monologue on the isolating experience of growing up in a predominantly white suburb as a queer Korean Jewish American. In more recent works, Gordon expresses her defiant strength and transfixing power as an artist through the off-center gaze of her confident figures. In these lush, prismatic, and world-building compositions, they unabashedly take up space and seek out pleasure, making magic out of the mundane.



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