

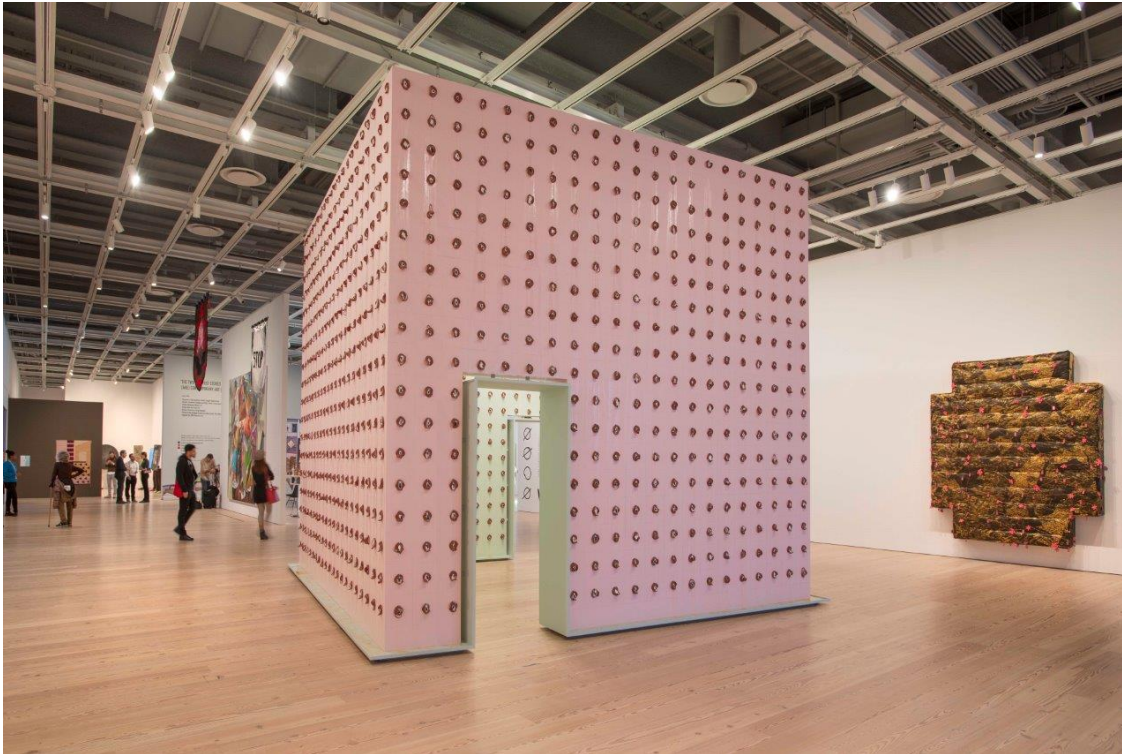
WHITNEY

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PRESS RELEASE



Installation view of Pope.L aka William Pope.L, *Claim (Whitney Version)*, 2017. Whitney Biennial 2017, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, March 17-June 11, 2017. Collection of the artist; courtesy Mitchell-Innes & Nash, New York. Photograph Bill Orcutt

POPE.L TO RECEIVE 2017 BUCKSBAUM AWARD

NEW YORK, NY, June 2, 2017 – Adam D. Weinberg, the Whitney’s Alice Pratt Brown Director, announced today that the multidisciplinary artist Pope.L (aka William Pope.L) has been named the recipient of the 2017 Bucksbaum Award.

Pope.L (b. 1955, Newark, NJ; lives and works in Chicago, IL) is a visual artist and educator whose boundary-breaking practice spans nearly four decades and includes performance, painting, installation, video, sculpture, and theater. Best known for enacting arduous and provocative performances and interventions in public spaces, Pope.L addresses issues and themes ranging from language to gender, race, social struggle, and community.

Mr. Weinberg commented, “For almost four decades, Pope.L has challenged us to confront some of the most pressing questions about American society as well as about the very nature of art. We are thrilled that he is joining the illustrious group of American artists whom we have honored with The Bucksbaum Award.”

The Bucksbaum Award, created and produced by Tiffany & Co., is given in each Biennial year in recognition of an artist, chosen from those included in the Biennial, whose work demonstrates a singular combination of talent and imagination. The selected artist is considered by the jurors to have the potential to make a lasting impact on the history of American art, based on the excellence of past work as well as present work in the Biennial. In addition to receiving a \$100,000 grant, each Bucksbaum laureate is invited to present an exhibition at the Whitney.

Melva Bucksbaum (1933–2015), a patron of the arts, collector, and longtime Whitney trustee from 1996 until her death, launched The Bucksbaum Award in 2000. Her daughter, Mary E. Bucksbaum Scanlan, now herself a member of the Whitney’s Board, remarked: “The Bucksbaum Award recognizes extraordinary artists whose works are inventive, urgent, and promise to be enduring. I am proud that this tradition continues with the first Biennial in the Whitney’s downtown home by honoring Pope.L, a singular artist in a class of his own.”

The Bucksbaum jury selected the artist from among the sixty-three participants in the Whitney Biennial, which remains on view through June 11 at the Whitney. In addition to Adam D. Weinberg, the jury was comprised of Naomi Beckwith, Marilyn and Larry Fields Curator, Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago; Johanna Burton, Keith Haring Director and Curator of Education and Public Engagement, New Museum; Mary Ceruti, Executive Director and Chief Curator, Sculpture Center; Christopher Y. Lew, the Whitney's Nancy and Fred Poses Associate Curator and Co-Curator of Whitney Biennial 2017; Mia Locks, Co-Curator of Whitney Biennial 2017; and Scott Rothkopf, the Whitney's Nancy and Steve Crown Family Chief Curator and Deputy Director for Programs.

Pope.L began his career in the 1970s, training in performance and theatre with Fluxus artist Geoffrey Hendricks and the avant-garde theatrical troupe Mabou Mines. He studied at Pratt Institute and later received his BA from Montclair State College in 1978; he also attended the Whitney's Independent Study Program before earning his MFA from Rutgers University in 1981. Pope.L embarked on one of his most celebrated "crawl" performances for the 2002 Whitney Biennial, *The Great White Way, 22 Miles, 9 Years, 1 Street* (2001–2009), for which he donned a cape-less Superman costume, strapped a skateboard to his back, and crawled up the entire length of Manhattan's Broadway—in his own words, a "public prostration in motion."

For his contribution to the 2017 Biennial, *Claim (Whitney Version)* (2017), Pope.L constructed a small room using a grid of 2,755 slices of bologna, each affixed with a black-and-white photocopied image of a person. As described in the wall text, "*Claim (Whitney Version)* plays with our tendency to project ourselves onto numbers and stokes our awareness that such counting often lays the groundwork for systematic acts of discrimination. The anxiety provoked by the work's calculated absurdity questions the power of 'big data,' raising the specter of its use for nefarious ends—from controlling whose votes are valuable, to who can enter and leave the country freely."

The eight previous Bucksbaum recipients are Paul Pfeiffer (2000), Irit Batsry (2002), Raymond Pettibon (2004), Mark Bradford (2006), Omer Fast (2008), Michael Asher (2010), Sarah Michelson (2012), and Zoe Leonard (2014).

A program honoring Pope.L is being planned for Fall 2017. Further details will be forthcoming.

Funding for the Bucksbaum Award is provided by an endowment from the Martin Bucksbaum Family Foundation.

About the Whitney

The Whitney Museum of American Art, founded in 1930 by the artist and philanthropist Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney (1875–1942), houses the foremost collection of American art from the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Mrs. Whitney, an early and ardent supporter of modern American art, nurtured groundbreaking artists at a time when audiences were still largely preoccupied with the Old Masters. From her vision arose the Whitney Museum of American Art, which has been championing the most innovative art of the United States for more than eighty years. The core of the Whitney's mission is to collect, preserve, interpret, and exhibit American art of our time and serve a wide variety of audiences in celebration of the complexity and diversity of art and culture in the United States. Through this mission and a steadfast commitment to artists themselves, the Whitney has long been a powerful force in support of modern and contemporary art and continues to help define what is innovative and influential in American art today.

Current and Upcoming Exhibitions at the Whitney Museum of American Art

<i>Where We Are: Selections from the Whitney's Collection</i>	Ongoing
<i>Whitney Biennial 2017</i>	Through June 11, 2017
<i>Calder: Hypermobility</i>	June 9–October 23, 2017
<i>Bunny Rogers: Brig Und Ladder</i>	Opens July 7, 2017
<i>Willa Nasatir</i>	July 14–October 1, 2017
<i>Hélio Oiticica: To Organize Delirium</i>	July 14–October 1, 2017
<i>Jimmie Durham: At the Center of the World</i>	November 3, 2017–January 28, 2018
<i>Laura Owens</i>	November 2017–February 2018
<i>David Wojnarowicz: History Keeps Me Awake at Night</i>	Summer 2018

The Whitney Museum of American Art is located at 99 Gansevoort Street between Washington and West Streets, New York City. Museum hours are: Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Sunday from 10:30 am to 6 pm; Friday and Saturday from 10:30 am to 10 pm. Closed Tuesday. Adults: \$22 in advance via whitney.org; \$25 day of visit. Full-time students and visitors 65 & over: \$17 in advance via whitney.org; \$18 day of visit. Visitors 18 years & under and Whitney members: FREE. Admission is pay-what-you-wish on Fridays, 7–10 pm. For general information, please call (212) 570-3600 or visit whitney.org.

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