

The Week in  
New York

## Emerging artists take the Bronx

When looking for the next big thing in NYC's art world, the Bronx may not be the first stop on your itinerary, but a new exhibit at the Bronx Museum of the Arts means it should be.

"Bronx Calling," which opened last week, showcases the work of 72 artists in the New York City area, giving exposure to promising lesser-known talent while affording New Yorkers the chance to see the new wave of creatives working just under the radar. (And all who attend get a fully illustrated catalog.)

"Over the last two years, we've met with all the artists, did studio visits and had discussions about choosing the work that best represents where they're going," says Laura Napier, who co-curated the exhibit with fellow Bronxite Hatuey Ramos-Fermin. "We started meeting with some in 2013, so it was a long conversation."

The artists featured in the biennial exhibit all participated in the Bronx Museum's super-competitive Artist in the Marketplace (AIM) program, which has been providing professional



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development to up-and-coming artists since 1980. The show is the only opportunity to see work from every artists who's been in the program throughout the past two years.

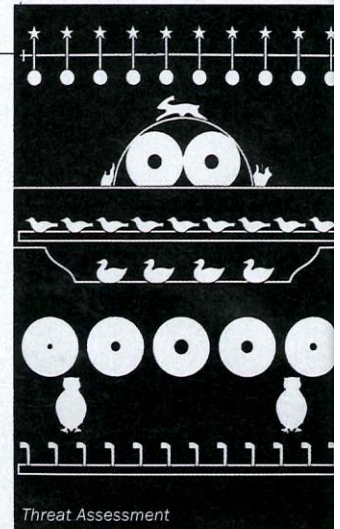
Pieces range from traditional painting and sculpture to contemporary video and installation work. Sculptor Keith Anderson is presenting a chair covered in burned matches, while German artist Hannes Bend has been filling potholes in city streets with sugary liquid to create sculptural candy models of the holes for a project

called "Sweet Streets."

"There are at least three works that viewers are encouraged to touch," says Napier, citing a series of mannequin figures made by pop artist Rica Takashima, designed for viewers to put their faces into. "We actually had to make signs that say TOUCH and DON'T TOUCH."

Thirty-six people are accepted to the AIM program each year (600 to 800 apply) and are provided with seminars on everything from grant writing to art criticism. For you young artists out there, the next deadline is September 1.

"Everyone's a serious artist, and everyone's work is really strong," says project-based artist Christine Wong Yap of her peers. Yap's piece



Threat Assessment

is also interactive: She created 24 flags representing character strengths from principles of positive psychology, including creativity, kindness and gratitude. Viewers can raise flags they identify with on seven-foot flagpoles.

"This is a space for people who need opportunities and are deserving of them but aren't necessarily rewarded by the market," she says.

This year marks the first time work from all artists in the biennial is being shown in one place (past shows were divided among three locations). The Bronx Museum is always free to the public, and for the most immersive look at the show, visit the open house from 6 to 9pm on Wednesday 15, where there will be a DJ, snacks and performances from three of the exhibit's participants. Your new favorite artist could be a short train ride away. —Dana Varinsky

**"Bronx Calling: The Third AIM Biennial" is at the Bronx Museum of the Arts through Sept 20 (bronxmuseum.org).**