



U.S. Pavilion Launches New Website Dedicated to Artist Simone Leigh

Site Includes Additional Project Details and Behind-the-Scenes Images of the Artist Preparing for the U.S. Pavilion Presentation at the Biennale Arte 2022



*Still from a short video of the artist at work, available at www.simoneleighvenice2022.org.
Image by Shaniqwa Jarvis.*

November 4, 2021, Boston MA— The Institute of Contemporary Art/Boston (ICA) in cooperation with the U.S. Department of State’s Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, is pleased to announce the launch of a new website dedicated to internationally renowned artist Simone Leigh and her exhibition at the forthcoming Venice Biennale. Leigh will represent the U.S. at the 59th International Art Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia, on view from April 23 to November 27, 2022. The 2022 U.S. Pavilion is co-commissioned by Jill Medvedow, the Ellen Matilda Poss Director, and Eva Respini, the Barbara Lee Chief Curator at the ICA, and curated by Respini.

For the U.S. Pavilion, Leigh has created a new series of figurative sculptures in bronze and ceramic that furthers her commitment to highlighting the labor and resilience of Black women across global histories. Drawing upon artistic traditions from within Africa and the African diaspora, Leigh uses a strategy that she terms “the creolization of form,” merging disparate cultural languages linked through histories of colonization. With these works, Leigh weaves together references to 19th century West African art, the material culture of early Black Americans, and the colonial history of international expositions.

The new website features a short video of the artist at work by acclaimed visual creator Shaniqwa Jarvis. The video offers a brief glimpse behind-the-scenes as Leigh creates new artworks for the Biennale.

The website also offers an overview of the robust educational initiatives that accompany the 2022 U.S. Pavilion. The ICA has partnered with Spelman College in Atlanta, Georgia, on a two-semester long seminar to engage students with Leigh's practice and the history of the U.S. Pavilion in Venice. In Italy, the ICA is working with the Peggy Guggenheim Collection in Venice to organize a professional development program for middle and high school educators in the Veneto region. This workshop, modeled after the ICA's nationally recognized teen arts education program, provides educators the tools to explore the work of Simone Leigh and create curriculum designed to inspire, empower, and educate their students.

Please visit the U.S. Pavilion's newly launched website for more information about the artist, the ICA, and the Biennale Arte 2022: www.simoneleighvenice2022.org.

To stay updated on the 2022 U.S. Pavilion on social media, follow @icaboston on Instagram, @ICA.Boston on Facebook, and @ICAinBoston on Twitter and look for the hashtags: #SimoneLeighVenice #SimoneLeigh #BiennaleArte2022.

ABOUT SIMONE LEIGH

Over the past two decades, Simone Leigh (b. 1967, Chicago, IL) has created an expansive body of work in sculpture, video, and performance that centers Black femme interiority. Inflected by Black feminist theory, Leigh's practice intervenes imaginatively to fill gaps in the historical record by proposing new hybridities. Leigh's sculptural works join forms derived from vernacular architecture and the female body, rendering them via materials and processes associated with the artistic traditions of Africa and the African diaspora. The collaborative ethos that characterizes Leigh's videos and public programs pays homage to a long history of Black female collectivity, communality, and care.

In 2019, Leigh was the first artist commissioned for the High Line Plinth, New York. Recent exhibitions include *The Hugo Boss Prize 2018: Simone Leigh, Loophole of Retreat* at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York (2019); the *2019 Whitney Biennial*; *Trigger: Gender as a Tool and a Weapon* (2017) at the New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York; *Psychic Friends Network* (2016) at Tate Exchange, Tate Modern, London; *Hammer Projects: Simone Leigh* (2016–17) at the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles; *inHarlem: Simone Leigh* (2016–17), a public installation presented by The Studio Museum in Harlem at Marcus Garvey Park, New York; *The Waiting Room* (2016) at the New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York; and *Free People's Medical Clinic* (2014), a project commissioned by Creative Time. Leigh's work is in the collections of the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; the Art Institute of Chicago; Cleveland Museum of Art; Hammer Museum, Los Angeles; and the ICA/Boston, among others.

The works that comprise Leigh's exhibition for the U.S. Pavilion will be featured in her first museum survey exhibition at the ICA in 2023, which will subsequently tour to museums throughout the United States. The exhibition will be accompanied by the first comprehensive monograph dedicated to Leigh's work.

ABOUT THE ICA/BOSTON

Since its founding in 1936, the ICA has shared the pleasures of reflection, inspiration, imagination, and provocation that contemporary art offers with its audiences. A museum at the intersection of contemporary art and civic life, the ICA has advanced a bold vision for amplifying the artist's voice and expanding the museum's role as educator, incubator, and convener. Its exhibitions, performances, and educational programs provide access to the breadth and diversity of contemporary art, artists, and the creative process, inviting audiences of all ages and backgrounds to participate in the excitement of new art and ideas. The ICA is located at 25 Harbor Shore Drive, Boston, MA, 02210. For more information, call 617-478-3100 or visit our website at icaboston.org. Follow the ICA on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#).

ABOUT LA BIENNALE DI VENEZIA

Established in 1895, La Biennale di Venezia is acknowledged today as one of the most prestigious cultural institutions. La Biennale stands at the forefront of research and promotion of new contemporary art trends and organizes events in its specific sectors of Arts (1895), Architecture (1980), Cinema (1932), Dance (1999), Music (1930), and Theatre (1934), alongside research and training activities. The International Art Exhibition is considered the most prestigious contemporary art exhibition in the world, introducing hundreds of thousands of visitors to exciting new art every two years. The [59th International Art Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia](#) (April 23–November 27, 2022) is directed by Cecilia Alemani.

ABOUT THE U.S. PAVILION

The United States Pavilion, a building in the neoclassical style in the Giardini della Biennale, Venice, opened on May 4, 1930. Since 1986, the U.S. Pavilion has been owned by the Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation and managed by the Peggy Guggenheim Collection in Venice, which works closely with the U.S. Department of State and exhibition curators to install and maintain all official U.S. exhibitions presented in the Pavilion. Every two years, museum curators from across the country detail their visions for the U.S. Pavilion in proposals that are reviewed by the National Endowment for the Arts' Federal Advisory Committee on International Exhibitions (FACIE), a group comprising curators, museum directors, and artists, who then submit their recommendations to the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. Past exhibitions can be viewed on the Peggy Guggenheim Collection's website at <https://www.guggenheim-venice.it/>.

ABOUT THE BUREAU OF EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

The U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) builds relations between the people of the United States and the people of other countries through academic, cultural, sports, professional, and private exchanges, as well as public-private partnerships and mentoring programs. These exchange programs improve foreign relations and strengthen the national security of the United States, support U.S. international leadership, and provide a broad range of domestic benefits by helping break down barriers that often divide us, like religion, politics, language, and ethnicity, and geography. ECA programs build connections that engage and empower people and motivate them to become leaders and thinkers, to develop new skills, and to find connections that will create positive change in their communities. For more information, please visit <https://exchanges.state.gov/us>.

SUPPORTERS:



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