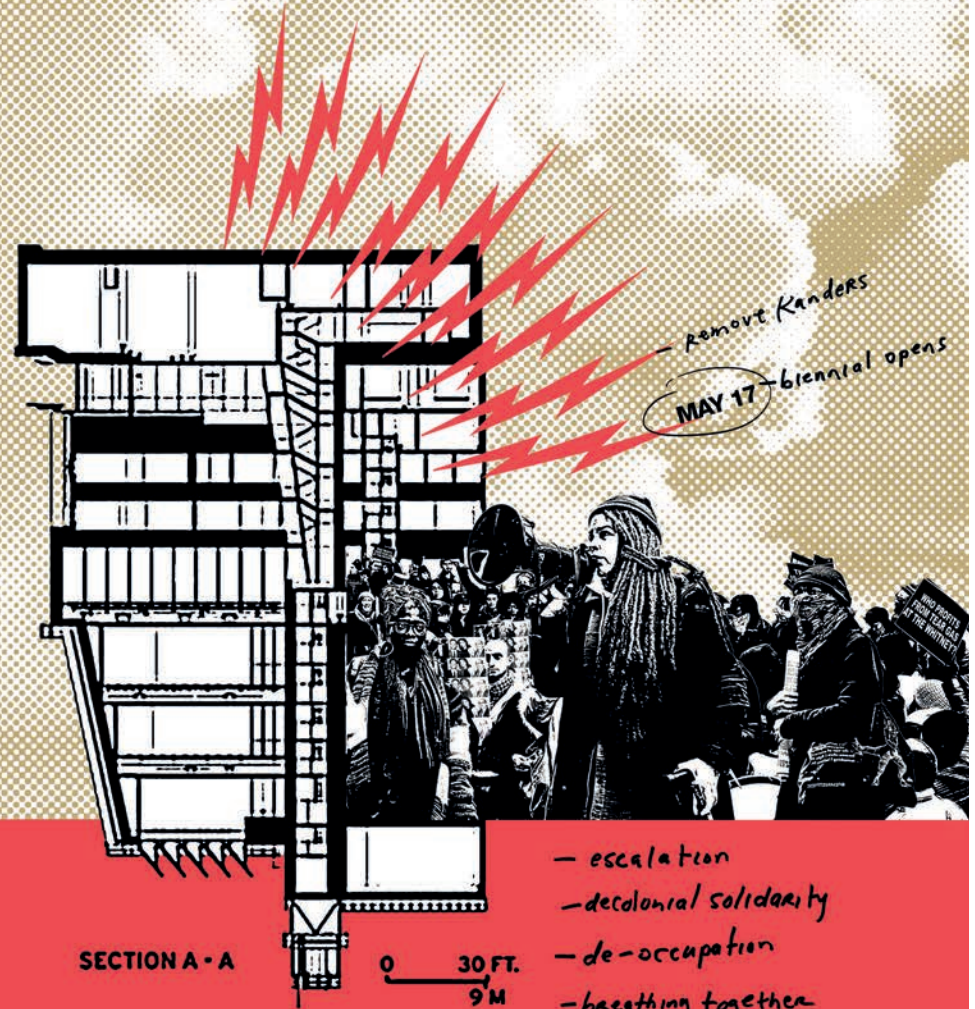


THE CRISIS OF THE WHITNEY

9 WEEKS OF ART AND ACTION, A DIVERSITY OF STRATEGIES AND TACTICS



SECTION A-A

0 30 FT.
9 M

- escalation
- decolonial solidarity
- de-occupation
- breathing together
- intervention
- transgression
- conversation
- singing/poetry

BEGINS MARCH 22

WARREN B. KANDERS MUST GO

NO SAFE SPACE FOR PROFITEERS OF STATE VIOLENCE



Decolonize
This Place

Summary

On February 16, we met for the first of two Direct Action (DA) trainings in preparation for actions aiming to pressure the Whitney Museum to remove Safariland CEO Warren B. Kanders from its board. At that meeting, a 9 Weeks of Action escalation calendar was announced, beginning on Friday, March 22 and extending through to Friday, May 17: the opening day of the Whitney Biennial. A media collective and a research collective were formed, and groups began to sign up on the calendar, which is printed below in this

document. Stay informed about developments by following us on IG at @decolonizethisplace / Twitter at @decolonize_ this / FB Page at @decolonizethisplace

2 Next Meeting

The second DA Training is Sunday March 3, 20 Cooper Sq, 4th Floor, at 1:00 - 4:00 pm. Those who came to the first training are already organizing, planning, and researching, and will meet and work on their actions at this meeting. We have additional

rooms and space for the groups. We will facilitate newcomers plugging in to this process, and we will collectively meet at the end to report back and answer any questions. We intend to offer Know Your Rights training that are specific to potential action scenarios at the Whitney. Overall, we aim to continue populating the escalation calendar with actions, and to build solidarity between groups and formations in the process. **IMPORTANT:** Come with actions (and friends and affinity group) to workshop plans.



We respect and appreciate the artists and curators of the biennial, along with the staff who have spoken out against Kanders. We also appreciate Michael Rakowitz's decision to boycott the Biennial. We stand in solidarity with all artists who make a similar decision in the coming months.

We are organizing and in conversation with biennial artists on how we can pressure the museum to do the right thing, which begins with the removal of Warren Kanders.

It is important to note that Warren Kanders is just the start of the crisis at the Whitney. There is no safe space for profiteers of state violence.

As we move forward separately and together, we seek to supplement the work in the biennial, which exhibits the work of Indigenous, Black, and Brown artists also thinking through these issues. When we take creative actions in the coming months, and apply a diversity of tactics and strategies, it will be an extension of the issues raised in this biennial beyond representation to examine the funding and structural complicity of the museum in state violence against communities of color. We will do so with respect for the participants of the biennial, the curators, and the staff of the museum.

#decolonizethisplace



SETTLER-COLONIALISM IS A STRUCTURE NOT AN EVENT



3 We operate in solidarity and within a Decolonial Framework

As we take on the Whitney Museum and pressure the administration to do the right thing our actions and formations must not unwittingly reproduce the structures of oppression we are fighting against. We must actively seek to incorporate into our thinking and analysis, our actions and messaging, our organizing and

participation the following points: how do we decenter whiteness? How do we avoid reinforcing narratives of victimization? How do we use privilege strategically? How do we address the issues at stake in the crisis of the Whitney at a structural level? Decolonization begins by acknowledging that we are on stolen Indigenous land, and living in a city founded on the stolen labor of enslaved African people. Our actions must stand in solidarity with Indigenous sovereignty and reparations. Solidarity



is not about charity or helping others. It flows from a recognition that our liberation must be collective or it will be non-existent..

We offer the following resources to orient people as we build power together:

- E. Tuck and K. Yang, "Decolonization is Not a Metaphor," Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education, and Society (2012)
- "Land of the Lost: MTL in Conversation with Jasbir Puar about Decolonization," Artforum (Summer 2018)
- MTL Collective, "From Institutional Critique to Institutional Liberation," October (Fall 2018)

4 Strategy, Tactics, Research

Our actions should escalate, exacerbate, and expand the crisis at the Whitney. The action logic is as follows: by pushing the crisis to a tipping point, we force the director, Adam Weinberg, and the board of trustees to change their calculation regarding Warren Kanders, as well as to address the demands for accountability articulated by the Whitney staff in their original letter. This could be the starting point for a decolonization process.

Museum trustees bear the ultimate responsibility for the operation of museums. The trustee's

duty is to have the museum run, not run it. Recent court cases, however, demonstrate that trustees are required to oversee the operation of museums and ensure that proper management levels are maintained. While trustees must not remain too aloof from the policies and practices of the museum, they must keep their distance in other ways to avoid conflicts of interest and self-dealing."

Hence, our **research and actions** should consider how to get the attention and trigger the fiduciary duties of their board of trustees. One idea, and this has been done to the trustees of the Guggenheim in 2016, is to research the trustees, find out where they live, and pay them a friendly, aesthetic visit. Said differently, consider putting them on blast, or something else that gets their attention and to let them know they should get involved

OUR UPRISINGS ARE QUEER TRANS BLACK BROWN PALESTINIAN IMMIGRANT INDIGENOUS AND GLOBAL

WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE ARTIST?

THE COLLISION EMERGES OUT OF YOUR RECOGNITION THAT IT'S FUSED UP FOR YOU IN THE SAME WAY THAT WE'VE ALREADY RECOGNIZED THAT IT'S FUSED UP FOR US. I DON'T NEED YOUR HELP. I JUST NEED YOU TO RECOGNIZE THAT THIS SHIT IS KILLING YOU TOO, HOWEVER MUCH MORE SOFTLY, YOU STUPID MOLLUSK, YOU KNOW?" - Fred Moten

INDIAN LAND

ASSEMBLE AT THE WHITNEY: NO SAFE SPACE FOR PROFITEERS OF STATE VIOLENCE

5

Workers and Staff

We want to encourage everyone to make a concerted effort to reach out to museum workers, to speak with them and make connections. Do the legwork and research to get familiar with their material and work conditions and concerns. For example, are they unionized? Are they subcontracted? Do they have stable employment? A living wage? Are interns paid? What are the differences between the

front and back office of the museum? Additionally, in warm and mindful conversations, it should be explained that what we are doing is not intended as any disrespect to them, and that as long as the museum administration sides with Kanders, they should expect actions and interventions to continue happening. One idea would be for those who take action to create thank you cards or other thoughtful gestures that make the above points



THIS ACTION IS AUTONOMOUS FROM, BUT IN SOLIDARITY WITH, THE EFFORTS OF WHITNEY STAFF TO HOLD THEIR INSTITUTIONAL ACCOUNTABLE

WAGE

2019 WHITNEY BIENNIAL

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Biennial Curators and Artists

We are reaching out to the curators and artists of the biennial to establish channels of communication and solidarity, and to communicate clearly that our actions against the museum leadership and its board of trustees are intended to compliment the work in the upcoming biennial. Our actions do have not and will not shame or call out any

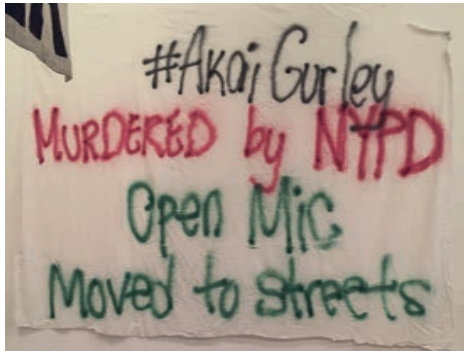
artists for participating in the Biennial, which distracts attention away from those who wield power. We assume without question that each member of our community will do what they can and deem right under the circumstances. Collectively, through a diversity of tactics and strategies, from withholding content pursuant to the call by WAGE, to participating in the Biennial, to carry out direct actions, we will pressure the Whitney to do the right thing and WIN.



7

The Call to Withdrawal

WAGE has a call out to withdraw with pay by participant artists in Whitney Biennial 2019 until staff demands are met, and for other non-participant artists not in this biennial to also withdraw from future biennial in solidarity. Although DTP has not been invited, we intend to withdrawal from future ones, as an act of solidarity.



a



c



c



d



b



c



c

8

Prompts for Actions

When thinking about your action, here are some questions to consider: what scale will your action be? How many people would be involved? Would it be announced publicly on social media, or by word of mouth? Would it take place inside the museum, outside the museum, or some combination of the two? What would be the sequencing of different parts of the action? What roles would be necessary? How is the action transgressive? How do you keep each

other safe? How is it documented? Is there a person liaising with the security? What is the visuality? The messaging?

These are among the questions we will address on March 3rd, which will provide an opportunity to plug in or lead by taking on a day. Finally, we also spoke about decentering whiteness in our actions, and language, so we are here for white allies for any questions or consultations that may arise.

As an additional source of reference and inspiration, we are offering the following here on tactics and actions:

- a. Quick banner making with spray paint and old bed sheets like this.
- b. Mic check-in inside or outside a target as a form of strength and disruption like this.
- c. Smallest group is of 3 people: one person does the action, the second person takes a picture or video, and a third person runs interference or keeps people safe.
- d. An illuminator action always makes sense, e.g. this, to arrange for something.
 - And there are many, many more ideas and things yet not done

REMEMBER:

Think of action and art within a decolonial framework. We are happy to have conversations if you have any questions concerns on March 3 so come ready

9

What Are Actions?

Think of actions for this campaign in the most expansive sense, including -- without permission, i.e. unsanctioned, discomfort, anticipation, disagreement, persuasion, suggestion, trouble -- art, action, performance, op-ed, poetry, and more.

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See 9 Weeks of Action Calendar on the following page.

11

Campaign Hashtags

To connect us, and to collate actions, we will be using #EscalationCalendar #DecolonizeThisPlace #WhitneyMuseum and whatever else you want to add and is relevant.



9 WEEK OF ACTION

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					March 22 DTP +	
					March 29 Moana	
					April 5	
					April 12	
					April 19	
					April 26	
					May 3	
					May 10	
					May 17 Opening of the Whitney Biennial 2019	

RED DATES: Denotes that the Whitney Museum is pay as you wish Fridays from 7:00-9:30 pm. **NOTE:** People can choose days other than Friday to do an action, but it means (a) they must have either pay or have ID cards such NYU student IDs or Whitney ISP cards in which they can get in for free or (b) do actions in the museum lobby, book store, or cafe, or outside the museum like flyer-ing or setting up a decolonial library. This means that smaller actions are possible, but large ones are not. Among us we know people can get in on days other than Friday but it requires organizing and trouble-shooting that challenge, as an FYI.