From the beginning of her career in the mid-1990s, Fernanda Laguna (b. 1972, Buenos Aires) charted her own artistic path, making artworks through a feminist lens and with a distinct visual style. Fernanda Laguna: The Path of the Heart features more than seventy works that span her entire career. Highlighting Laguna’s understanding of art as a language that communicates emotions, The Path of the Heart will foreground the role of drawing in an oeuvre that includes Laguna’s work as a visual artist, and also as a writer, curator, activist, and cultural agitator. Fundamental to Laguna’s multifaceted practice is the sharing of emotional bonds and the cultivation of community. In her words, “Art manifests in people; if there are no people, there is no art.”

Since the turn of the century, Laguna has initiated projects that connect art and community, including the widely influential Belleza y Felicidad, an art gallery, DIY publishing space, and...
art supply store that was the meeting ground for Buenos Aires’s artistic community. Collective initiatives like Belleza y Felicidad will be highlighted in The Drawing Center’s lower level gallery, where the artist will install a site-specific archive of hand-drawn murals, ephemera, videos, photos, objects, booklets, and magazines that chronicles her collective practice and activism.

Organized by Rosario Güiraldes, Associate Curator

**Drawing in the Continuous Present**
March 10–May 22, 2022

Featuring more than 90 drawings by thirteen international artists, *Drawing in the Continuous Present* will explore how a new generation of artists is placing drawing at the center of contemporary art discourse. The exhibition will bring together works on paper by some of today’s most significant artistic voices, including Michael Armitage, Javier Barrios, Jesse Darling, Maren Karlson, Christine Sun Kim, Helen Marten, Jean Katambayi Mukendi, Julien Nguyen, Sanou Oumar, Walter Price, Florencia Rodriguez Giles, Johanna Unzueta, and He Xiangyu.

*Drawing in the Continuous Present* takes its title from Gertrude Stein’s coinage of the term “continuous present,” which the artist Amy Sillman used to describe a key element of drawing. The notion of the “continuous present” provides a metaphor for the ways in which the featured artists employ drawing’s immediacy to mediate their relationships with the world. Guided by The Drawing Center’s long-standing support of contemporary drawing practices and practitioners, *Drawing in the Continuous Present* will highlight modes of drawing that reflect a multiplicity of experience and a diversity of artistic production.

Organized by Rosario Güiraldes, Associate Curator

**The Clamor of Ornament: Exchange, Power, and Joy from the Fifteenth Century to the Present**
June 15–September 18, 2022

Bringing together more than 200 objects produced over the past five centuries, *The Clamor of Ornament: Exchange, Power, and Joy from the Fifteenth Century to the Present* will explore ornament in architecture, art, and design through the lens of drawing. The exhibition will foreground ornament’s potential as a mode of communication, a form of currency, and a means of exchange across geographies and cultures. *The Clamor of Ornament* will seek to address the multilayered complexity of the history of ornament, including the dissonance between the unequal and destructive relationships that mediate its movement between sources, and its irrepressible power to express joy through motifs drawn from both the natural world and the minds of artists and designers.

The exhibition features a broad range of drawings, prints, textiles, and objects, including
eighteenth-century Indian palampores; Pennsylvania Dutch Fraktur drawings; kosode paper designs; Navajo textiles; and Albrecht Dürer’s Islamic-inspired woodblock-print knots. This broad approach to the subject of ornament will also encompass original architectural drawings by Louis Sullivan and Sir David Adjaye, contemporary ornament in the form of logos from luxury fashion brands, and even present-day designs for patisserie. Together, the objects on view will both celebrate and interrogate ornament’s fluidity by making connections between motifs, methods, and intentions.

Organized by Dr. Emily King, Guest Curator, with Duncan Tomlin and Margaret-Anne Logan

General Idea
October 7, 2022–January 15, 2023

Living and working together as part of the Toronto arts and theater community, AA Bronson (b. Michael Tims, 1946, Vancouver), Felix Partz (b. Ronald Gabe, 1945, Winnipeg; d. 1994), and Jorge Zontal (b. Slobodan Saia-Levy, 1944, Parma, Italy; d. 1994) formalized their collaboration in 1969 into a single entity known as General Idea. From their earliest projects like the staging of The 1970 Miss General Idea Pageant to their late activist initiatives around the AIDS crisis, General Idea explored multimedia, conceptual, and performance work as a tool for engaging with common culture and its repressions. Less well-known are the drawings authored by General Idea between 1985 and 1993, which The Drawing Center, in partnership with Musée d’art moderne et contemporain Geneva (MAMCO), will bring together for the first time in the United States. Investigating motifs in the group’s multimedia works such as poodles, stiletto heels, masks, heraldry, and metamorphosed genitalia, these drawings were primarily produced by Jorge Zontal during group meetings. Seen together, these drawings are a fascinating window into General Idea’s distinct artistic vision as well as their unique notions of collaboration and co-authorship.

Organized by Claire Gilman, Chief Curator, the Drawing Center, and Lionel Bovier, Director, MAMCO

Ibrahim El-Salahi: Pain Relief Drawings
October 7, 2022–January 15, 2023

Born in 1930 in Omdurman, Sudan, Ibrahim El-Salahi is one of the most significant artists in African and Arab modernism. Featuring a hundred drawings from El-Salahi’s latest series, titled Pain Relief, this exhibition will mark the first museum presentation of the artist’s drawings since his 2013 retrospective at Tate Modern. Drafted on the back of medicine packets, pill bottle labels, envelopes, and scraps of paper, El-Salahi’s intricate pen and ink Pain Relief drawings
serve as a form of respite for the 91-year-old artist, who finds diversion from his chronic pain through his daily drawing practice. El-Salahi produced this remarkable collection of nearly 300 drawings over the past two and a half years (100 were made in 2020 during the pandemic).

A British citizen for decades, El-Salahi’s drawings are deeply connected to postwar European modernism, but also are profoundly embedded in a tradition of African and Islamic art history. After studying at the Slade School of Art in London, El-Salahi returned to Khartoum in the late 1950s to become a founding member of the celebrated Khartoum School, a bellwether group of artists that represented the flowering of modernism in the Islamic world. Inspired by Arabic calligraphy, as well as Surrealist figuration and geometric abstraction, El-Salahi created a distinctive visual language that he expresses most prolifically in drawing.

Organized by Laura Hoptman, Executive Director

Catherine Chalmers: We Rule
October 7, 2022–January 15, 2023

Working at the intersection of art and science, New York-based artist Catherine Chalmers has built a multidisciplinary practice that celebrates nature and confronts humans’ often adversarial relationship with the earth. For her exhibition We Rule, Chalmers will create a site-specific drawing installation in The Drawing Center’s lower-level gallery and corridor that depicts the underground labyrinth of an ant colony.

The installation is inspired by Chalmers’ observation of, and engagement with more than one dozen colonies of Leafcutter Ants on the Osa Peninsula in Costa Rica. Over a ten-year period, Chalmers returned annually to the same spot, filming, photographing, and tracking the fate of these colonies. For Chalmers, Leafcutter Ants can be seen as a metaphor for humanity’s life on earth: they farm, communicate, and collaborate; they also colonize, battle, and destroy. Yet the drawings in We Rule will highlight a significant way that the insects diverge from humans—as an integrated part of their ecosystem, the ants carry out their actions in harmony with the earth.

Organized by Olga Valle Tetkowski, Deputy Director

Images

Fernanda Laguna, Sólo veo lo hermoso (I Only See What’s Beautiful) from Set de 12 dibujos (Set of 12 Drawings), 1994–1995. Ink and color pencil on paper, six drawings of 8 7/8 x 6 5/16 inches (22.5 x 16 cm) and six drawings of 8 7/8 x 5 7/8 inches (22.5 x 15 cm). Oxenford Collection. Photograph by Bruno Dubner.


