The New York Times

What to See This Spring at Museums Across the Country

The season includes a Duchamp retrospective at MoMA, a window on Etruscan civilization at the Legion of Honor in San Francisco and a fashion celebration at the Phoenix Art Museum.



The fashion designer Iris van Herpen is known for blending technology and haute couture to create organic designs that seem to be living, breathing forms. Her "Morphogenesis Dress" can be seen in "Iris van Herpen: Sculpting the Senses" at the Brooklyn Museum. David Ụzochukwu

By Morgan Malget

Published April 15, 2026 Updated April 24, 2026

This article is part of our Museums special section about how institutions are commemorating the past as they move into the future.

This spring, museums across the country are presenting flourishing displays that offer visitors a chance to consider nature through an artistic lens.

The seasonal scene in the Impressionist Berthe Morisot's painting "Reading" from 1873, on display in Cleveland, evokes a breath of fresh air with its tranquil green pastures, and in Brooklyn, the Dutch fashion designer Iris van Herpen delights the senses with sculptural, environmentally inspired works that explore the body's place in space.

"Nature Deficit Disorder," an installation in Baltimore, encourages visitors to disconnect and experience the outdoors — while indoors. At an alfresco arts center in New York State, fresh exhibits will transform grassy fields into art galleries, while spring showers flood a show in Worcester, Mass., that traces the evolution of meteorology.

Here is a selection of exhibitions from around the nation.

New York

NEW YORK CITY

"Hujar:Contact"

The New York photographer Peter Hujar immortalized downtown life in the 1970s and '80s with his striking black-and-white images of artists and writers, including Susan Sontag, John Waters and Andy Warhol. Before he was capturing celebrities of the city's underground art scene, he worked as a studio assistant and later as a freelancer in fashion, music and advertising. This exhibition traces the evolution of his work through more than 110 contact sheets, pictorial diaries that offer an intimate look at a community and an era. *May 22 through Oct. 25; Morgan Library & Museum, themorgan.org*

"Iris van Herpen: Sculpting the Senses"

The Dutch fashion designer Iris van Herpen is known for blending technology and haute couture to create organic designs that seem to be living, breathing forms. Drawing on biomimicry and neuroscience, her pieces are displayed in conversation with contemporary artworks and natural specimens of things like coral and fossils. This is the show's North American debut, having premiered at the Musée des Arts Décoratifs in Paris in 2024. *May 16 through Dec. 6; Brooklyn Museum, brooklynmuseum.org*

"Marcel Duchamp"

This comprehensive exhibition, the first retrospective of Marcel Duchamp's work in the United States in over 50 years, offers audiences the chance to view the artist's projects from 1900 to 1968. Featuring 300 objects across mediums such as painting, sculpture, film and drawing, the exhibition highlights many of his seminal works, including a 1950 replica of "Fountain," his scandalous "ready-made" from 1917. It comes to a close with his Cubist masterpiece, "Nude Descending a Staircase, No. 2." *Through Aug. 22; Museum of Modern Art, moma.org*

"Self-Made: A Century of Inventing Artists"

Self-taught artists who work outside formal training, gallery and museum systems have long been overlooked and undervalued. This exhibition aims to flip the narrative and put these artists at the foreground of their works. Featuring American makers from the early 20th century to today, this show lets the artists speak for themselves through self-portraits, alter egos and autobiographies. *Through Sept. 13; American Folk Art Museum, folkartmuseum.org*

CORNING

"Tough Stuff: Women in the American Glass Studio"

The American studio glass movement of the 1960s and '70s was brought on by a desire to move away from traditional factory production and push the boundaries of glassmaking. The movement and its pioneers changed the perception of glass as an art form. This is the first survey exhibition highlighting the influential women engaged in glassmaking during that time, and examining their historical and artistic impact. *May 16 through Jan. 10; Corning Museum of Glass, cmog.org*

NEW WINDSOR



A glass column filled with organic matter from "Anicka Yi: Message from the Mud," an installation opening at Storm King Art Center in May. via Storm King Art Center

"Anicka Yi: Message from the Mud," "Liz Glynn: Open House" and "Outlooks: Saif Azzuz"

Every winter, Storm King Art Center goes into hibernation, and every spring it blossoms anew with vibrant installations. For this year's displays, Anicka Yi will present a large-scale, site-specific work that resembles an archaeological dig; Liz Glynn will turn a grassy field into a Gilded Age ballroom, which New Yorkers may recognize from a 2017 installation in Central Park; and Saif Azzuz will display a giant sculptured sturgeon as part of the center's "Outlooks" series, which highlights emerging artists. *May 17 through Nov. 9; Storm King Art Center, stormking.org*

West Coast

PALM SPRINGS, CALIF.

"A Queer Arcana: Art, Magic, and Spirit"

This exhibition takes a look at how queer artists have drawn on the worlds of magic and spirituality as a source of inspiration and connection throughout the 20th and 21st centuries. The work featured here reflects a wide range of spiritual practices, including Western occultism, witchcraft, goddess worship, Christian mysticism and shamanism, and explores the ways queer artists have used them to imagine a world beyond repression, reclaim their sexuality and build community. *Through Oct. 18; Palm Springs Art Museum, psmuseum.org*

SAN DIEGO

“Cafés and Cabarets: The Spectacular Art of Toulouse-Lautrec”

The French artist Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec was known for his enchanting illustration and printmaking, which immortalized the cabaret culture of late 19th-century Paris. One of his most notable works was an advertisement he created for a nightclub in the bohemian Montmartre neighborhood, the Moulin Rouge. Drawing from the San Diego Museum of Art’s extensive collection, this exhibition brings together about 50 of his works, many of which have rarely been displayed, and offers a glimpse into this lively, flourishing era. *Through Sept. 20; San Diego Museum of Art, sdmart.org*

SAN FRANCISCO

“The Etruscans: From the Heart of Ancient Italy”

From around 900 to 100 B.C., the Etruscans thrived in what is now central Italy. The civilization eventually succumbed to the Roman Empire, and its culture has largely been overshadowed by ancient Greece and Rome. But many innovations, including togas, temple design, winemaking and even Roman numerals, share Etruscan origins. This exhibition reveals the Etruscan legacy through around 200 ancient objects, including sculptures, jewelry and architectural objects. *May 2 through Sept. 20; Legion of Honor, famsf.org*

SEATTLE

“Monochrome: Calder and Tara Donovan”



Tara Donovan’s work elevates mass-produced industrial materials into mesmerizing installations. In “Monochrome: Calder and Tara Donovan,” at the Seattle Art Museum, she chose Alexander Calder’s “Mountains (1:5 intermediate maquette)” from 1976 as a point of connection. Tara Donovan, via Louisiana Museum of Modern Art; Photo by Kim Hansen

For this exhibition, the American sculptor Tara Donovan chose Alexander Calder's "Mountains (1:5 intermediate maquette)" from 1976 as a point of connection. Calder's use of black in that piece resonates with Donovan's practice; she likens black to a neutralizer that flattens sculpted shapes. Her own works feature another monochromatic aspect: the material. She transforms individual industrial materials, like tar paper or mylar, into large-scale pieces that are brought to life by the glint of light. *May 13 through Jan. 17; Seattle Art Museum, seattleartmuseum.org*

Mid-Atlantic

BALTIMORE

"Rachel Lee Hovnanian: Nature Deficit Disorder"



At "Rachel Lee Hovnanian: Nature Deficit Disorder," visitors can disconnect, slow down and experience nature, all within the four walls of the Spring House at the Baltimore Museum of Art. Connor Cassidy

This installation by the conceptual artist Rachel Lee Hovnanian offers visitors the opportunity to disconnect, slow down and experience nature, all within the four walls of the Spring House at the Baltimore Museum of Art. Hovnanian has transformed the building into a nighttime forest, complete with leaves that crunch and a flickering campfire. She encourages visitors to linger in the "forest" for at least five minutes, and to reflect on what is lost when digital distractions overtake real-life experiences. *Through May 31; Baltimore Museum of Art, artbma.org*

PITTSBURGH

"If the word we"

This is the 59th edition of the Carnegie International, an exhibition hosted every four years that showcases contemporary art from around the world. This year's presentation is centered on an essay by the writer Haytham el-Wardany. "What if the word we becomes a space for listening?" el-Wardany wrote. The global scope of this show gives a voice to wide-ranging social, political and cultural experiences. And the many mediums — including painting, sculpture, installation and theater — highlight the forms and processes shaping contemporary art today. *May 2 through Jan. 3; Carnegie Museum of Art, carnegieart.org*

WASHINGTON

"Beneath the Surface: Mining and American Photography"

For nearly two centuries, photographers have been revealing the underground or otherwise out-of-sight scenery of resource extraction. With around 150 photos by more than 100 artists, this exhibition looks at the scale of mining, drilling and other related industries in the United States, confronts their impact on people and the environment, and examines the challenges artists face in depicting these activities. *May 23 through Aug. 23; National Gallery of Art, nga.gov*

Midwest

CHICAGO

"Dancing the Revolution: From Dancehall to Reggaetón"



"Dancing the Revolution: From Dancehall to Reggaetón" highlights key histories and themes within the musical movements through contemporary media at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago. Above: "Singer Gregory Isaacs in front of his record shop, African Museum, on Chancery Lane, Kingston, Jamaica," 1984, by Beth Lesser. Beth Lesser, via Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago

This celebration of Caribbean music and dance considers dance hall and reggaeton not only as musical genres and cultures, but also as forms of collective resistance and emancipation. This exhibition highlights key histories and themes within these musical movements through contemporary art. Paintings, installations, photographs and videos illustrate how artists have drawn inspiration from these genres to create their own visual histories. *Through Sept. 20; Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, mcachicago.org*

CLEVELAND

"Manet & Morisot"

The French painter Berthe Morisot was the only woman among the founders of the Impressionist movement. She and Édouard Manet had a close relationship as friends and colleagues, and later as family after Morisot married Manet's younger brother. This show traces their professional and personal relationship over about 15 years, from 1868 to 1883. It features 36 paintings and six drawings and prints by the pair, including some by Manet that depict Morisot. *Through July 5; Cleveland Museum of Art, clevelandart.org*

DETROIT

"Caravaggio's Models"

Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio, the Italian Baroque-era artist known for his dramatically lit paintings and hot temper, often used friends, lovers and even ordinary people as models. He depicted their unique and sometimes irregular faces within religious-inspired works set against contemporary backdrops. This is the first exhibition to focus on the people behind Caravaggio's work, examining the artist's practice through his models' complex, and sometimes tragic, lives. *March 21, 2027, through July 18, 2027; Detroit Institute of Arts, dia.org*

KANSAS CITY, MO.

"Timeless Mucha"

The Czech painter and graphic artist Alphonse Mucha transformed the art of posters and advertising with his Art Nouveau work. Featuring over 100 pieces on loan from the Mucha Trust Collection, this exhibition honors Mucha's lasting influence on illustration and design, which can be seen in the psychedelia of the 1960s, Japanese manga and American comics. Looking for more Mucha? Another exhibition running through January at the museum highlights the relationship between Mucha and his greatest muse, the French actress Sarah Bernhardt. *Saturday through Aug. 30; Nelson Atkins Museum of Art, nelson-atkins.org*

Mountain West

BIG HORN, WYO.

"The Unfinished War: The Battle of the Little Bighorn in Native American Art"

This year is the 150th anniversary of the Battle of the Little Big Horn, a clash between the Lakota Sioux, Northern Cheyenne and Arapaho tribes and the men of the 7th Regiment of the United States Cavalry led by Lt. Col. George Armstrong Custer. The event was long referred to as Custer's Last Stand, but this show reframes the battle through Native perspectives and centers on their testimonies, memories and visual histories. Pictographic art, ledger drawings, muslin paintings and contemporary works challenge long-held portrayals of the battle and underscore its complexities. *Friday through Sept. 14; Brinton Museum, thebrintonmuseum.org*

DENVER

"Knife Fork Spoon: Everyday Tools, Extraordinary Design"

Cutlery has long served as an unexpected canvas for artistic innovation and expression. Presented here is a survey of around 150 flatware sets created from 1900 to today that trace the creative evolution of these humble objects. On show are a variety of artistic styles, including Art Nouveau and Streamline Moderne; sets inspired by nature, skyscrapers, animals and the Space Age; and contemporary works that demonstrate new technologies like 3-D printing. *May 17 through May 2028; Denver Art Museum, denverartmuseum.org*

GRAND FORKS, N.D.

"Fawzia Khan: Ubuntu"



"The Broken Truth," 2024, of handwoven wool and cotton, by Fawzia Khan. Through textiles, audio, sculptures and installations, the multidisciplinary artist reflects on the current polarizing political climate at the North Dakota Museum of Art, in Grand Forks. Fawzi Khan, via North Dakota Museum of Art

The South African bishop Desmond Tutu described the concept of ubuntu as "the essence of being human," the idea that "my humanity is caught up and is inextricably bound up in yours." This sentiment is at the core of work by the multidisciplinary artist Fawzia Khan. Through textiles, audio, sculptures and installations, she reflects on the current polarizing political climate and encourages viewers to recognize the commonalities between us and seek compassion and understanding. *May 21 through July 5; North Dakota Museum of Art, ndmoa.com*

New England

BOSTON

"Derrick Adams: View Master"

Presented here is a midcareer survey of the multidisciplinary artist Derrick Adams. His bright, geometric work underscores the richness and complexities of Black American life and celebrates leisure, freedom and the pursuit of happiness. With more than 100 pieces created over 20 years, this show features a wide range of mediums — painting, sculpture and video to name a few — as well as never-before-seen works from Adams's personal archive and the debut of new works. *Thursday through Sept. 7; Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston, icaboston.org*

NEW BRITAIN, CONN.

"John Hitchcock: We Are Defined by the Beat"

John Hitchcock grew up in Medicine Park, Okla., a small town near Kiowa, Comanche, and Apache tribal lands between the sacred Wichita Mountains and Fort Sill, a United States Army post that was established in 1869 during the Indian Wars. Through his work in printmaking, textiles, sound and video, Hitchcock translates the harmony and dissonance of the natural sounds of the land and the percussion of artillery and helicopters into a visual language. *May 16 through Nov. 29; New Britain Museum of American Art, nbmaa.org*

WORCESTER, MASS.

"A Weather Eye: Art and Early Modern Meteorology"



"A Weather Eye: Art and Early Modern Meteorology," at the Worcester Art Museum in Worcester, Mass., traces the shift in America and Europe's understanding of weather from the 16th to 19th centuries. Above, a hand-colored etching with aquatint, 1820. via Worcester Art Museum

It's raining cats and dogs, and more, at this exhibition that traces the shift in America and Europe's understanding of weather from the 16th to 19th centuries. Featuring more than 40 works on paper and an early weather forecasting devices, the show delves into stories of witchcraft and sorcery, as well as the ways weather was predicted through folk knowledge and astrology. It also highlights the pioneers of the scientific revolution in meteorology. *Through June 28; Worcester Art Museum, worcesterart.org*

South

JACKSON, MISS.

"Coulter Fussell: The Proving Ground"

This is the first museum survey of Coulter Fussell's textile-based works. A proving ground is an area used for experimenting with new technologies, methods or theories; the art Fussell has created in the past five years speaks to this idea, as her practice has evolved from traditional quilting forms to increasingly sculptural, mixed-media works. Over 40 pieces are presented here, some incorporating upholstery, photography and digital projection. *Through June 14; Mississippi Museum of Art, msmuseumart.org*

LOUISVILLE, KY.

"Abstract Expressionists: The Women"

This exhibition celebrates the creativity, innovation and influence of the women at the forefront of the post-World War II Abstract Expressionist movement. It features groundbreaking artists, including Helen Frankenthaler, Joan Mitchell and Grace Hartigan, who broke artistic boundaries and helped redefined the painting medium. Also included are archival photographs and historical documents that trace a timeline of these women's artistic practices and provide insight into this pivotal era. The exhibition was organized by the American Federation of Arts, with works from the Christian Levett Collection and Female Artists of the Mougins Museum, France. *May 16 through Aug. 30; Speed Art Museum, speedmuseum.org*

MIAMI

"Harmony Korine: Perfect Nonsense"

The American filmmaker and artist Harmony Korine is known for his gritty, avant-garde style and coming-of-age stories that explore rebelliousness and marginalization, like his 1995 film "Kids," and "Spring Breakers" from 2012. This is the first U.S. survey of Korine's broad career and includes paintings, photographs, collages, zine art and drawings that merge his contributions to cinema, contemporary art and popular culture *Through Oct. 4; Institute of Contemporary Art, Miami, icamiami.org*

ST. PETERSBURG, FLA.

"Ali Banisadr: The Alchemist"



"Queen of the night," 2022, on view in "Ali Banisadr: The Alchemist," at the Museum of Fine Arts in St. Petersburg, Fla. Banisadr was born in Tehran in 1976, and his work is often informed by his childhood during the Iran-Iraq war of the 1980s, as well as his synesthesia. Ali Banisadr via Katonah Museum of Art; Photos by Jason Mandella

The contemporary artist Ali Banisadr was born in Tehran in 1976, and his work is often informed by his childhood growing up during the Iran-Iraq war of the 1980s. It is also shaped by his experiences with synesthesia, a neurological phenomenon that causes a blending of the senses. Aural memories of a war-torn land — the explosion of a bomb, the rumbling skies of an air raid — present themselves in a visual language to Banisadr as he creates complex paintings teeming with colors and shapes. *Through July 12; Museum of Fine Arts, St. Petersburg, mfastpete.org*

Southwest

PHOENIX

"Colorwear: A Kaleidoscope of Fashion"

This exhibition celebrates the 60th anniversary of the Phoenix Art Museum's fashion collection. The show features vibrant pieces by North American and European designers who have used color as a source of inspiration, and includes couture and ready-to-wear garments big and small — from sparkling gowns to accessories like scarves and shoes. *Through Aug. 15, 2027; Phoenix Art Museum, phxart.org*

SAN ANTONIO



"Microhistories of the Andes," at the San Antonio Museum of Art, looks closely at objects from the region and considers them within the context of their creation. Above: "Toro de Pucará," Peru, 1950-1960, painted earthenware. San Antonio Museum of Art

"Microhistories of the Andes"

Studying "microhistories," such as individual events, objects or people, can often shed light on the broader social and cultural structures of the time. This show looks closely at art objects from the Andes region, including textiles, ceramics and metalwork, and considers them within the context in which they were created. It features ancient pieces from Peru and Colombia and more recent works from Bolivia and Ecuador to reveal broad narratives about this diverse region. *May 24 through May 23, 2027; San Antonio Museum of Art, samuseum.org*

SANTA FE, N.M.

"Rooted Strong: Visions of America From New Mexico"

The artwork presented here explores the histories of New Mexico's lands and people, and it honors the many communities and cultures that have shaped the state and helped define its place in the American narrative. Featuring New Mexican artists, including Fritz Scholder, Emmi Whitehorse, Miguel Gandert, Janet Lippincott and Luis Jimenez, this exhibition examines intimate daily life and grand, festive moments. *Through Sept. 7; New Mexico Museum of Art, nmartmuseum.org*