



by ARTINFO

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What are the most resonant works of art from the recent past? From among the thousands of individual works that pass through galleries and museums, which have affected the conversation in some significant way? Amid all of contemporary art's chaotic installations and ephemeral gestures, which images have some staying power? These are the questions that **ARTINFO** set out to answer with its list of "100 Most Iconic Artworks From the Last 5 Years."

How did we put together our ranking?

First, we asked a broad group of colleagues

to submit their nominations for artworks, from 2007 or later, that they considered to be in some way "iconic." Then we asked members of our staff and a few distinguished outsiders to give the works on the resulting list a score of 1 to 10. Adding our scores together, we came up with a ranked list of 100 artworks from the last half-decade.

Contributing to our ranking were **Ben Davis** (art editor, ARTINFO), **Daniel Kunitz** (editor-in-chief, Modern Painters), **Coline Milliard** (editor, ARTINFO UK), **Madeleine O'Dea** (editor, ARTINFO China), **Jen Graves** (critic, The Stranger), **Walter Robinson** (critic/editor, Art-Rite, Artnet Magazine), **Martha Schwendener** (critic, New York Times, Village Voice), and **Christian Viveros-Faune** (critic, ArtReview, Village Voice).

What do we learn from this exercise? Well, for one thing, despite all the chatter about the triumph of the art market, it is actually not necessarily the center of the action here. **Christian Marclay's** "The Clock" was produced for a gallery, as was **Damien Hirst's** "For the Love of God" and **Urs Fischer's** "You." But a great number of the memorable works on our list were conceived for museum shows, biennials, or as public art works of various kinds. Street art, or works that found an audience through relatively unconventional channels, like **Jon Rafman's** "9 Eyes of Google Street View" (which gained notoriety as [a photo essay on Art Fag City](#)) or **William Powhida's** "How the New Museum Committed Suicide With Banality" (which [took fire as a cover for the Brooklyn Rail](#)), were as likely, if not more likely, to leave a mark as conventional gallery fare.

Another thing that stands out in the list is the high number of works that are participatory mass spectacles, and the low number that are old-fashioned painting. It's not that contemporary painting is incapable of creating an "iconic" image: one work that many of our contributors suggested as being "iconic" was **Luc Tuymans's** "[The Secretary of State](#)" — but that was from 2005, outside of our date range. Nevertheless, to speak of general trends, it looks like the artist as image-maker is out; [the artist as stage manager is in](#).

It also seems to help to penetrate the collective mind if you draw on the energy of politics in some way — though that way can vary greatly, from the straight-forward idealism of **Shepard Fairey's** "HOPE" poster, to the gonzo activism of **Voina's** "A Dick Captured by the FSB."

Works as diverse as **Ai Weiwei's** "Remembering" and **Paul Chan's** "Waiting for Godot in New Orleans" become particularly evocative in the way that they resonate with their social background (the Chinese artist's own outspoken politics or the recent tragedy of Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans, respectively).

Finally, more than one "iconic" artwork on our list has become resonant in its failure as much as its success, from **Christoph Büchel's** "Training Ground for Democracy," whose vast ambition famously resulted in it never being completed, to **Richard Prince's** "Canal Zone," which has become a symbol, in a way, of the battles over the use of appropriated imagery — hardly its intended effect. At any rate, it seems clear that "iconic" doesn't necessarily mean "successful," though it does mean that the work in question throws off some kind of charge that is bound to have larger effects.

Here it is then, ARTINFO's "100 Most Iconic Artworks of the Last 5 Years" (***to see our illustrated commentary on the Top 25 Most Iconic Artworks, click on the slide show:***):

- 1) Christian Marclay, "[The Clock](#)," 2010
- 2) Marina Abramovic, "[The Artist Is Present](#)," 2010
- 3) Tino Sehgal, "[This Progress](#)," 2010
- 4) Ai Weiwei, "[Sunflower Seeds](#)," 2010
- 5) Damien Hirst, "[For the Love of God](#)," 2007
- 6) Mark Wallinger, "[State Britain](#)," 2007
- 7) Voina, "[A Dick Captured by the FSB](#)," 2010
- 8) Shepard Fairey, "[HOPE](#)," 2008
- 9) Pussy Riot, "[Christ the Savior Cathedral performance](#)," 2012
- 10) Allora & Calzadilla, "[Track and Field](#)," 2011
- 11) Jayson Musson, "[Art Thoughtz](#)," 2010-present
- 12) Antony Gormley, "[One and Other](#)," 2009
- 13) Jon Rafman, "[9 Eyes of Google Street View](#)," 2009
- 14) Michael Heizer, "[Levitated Mass](#)," 2012
- 15) Paul Chan, "[Waiting for Godot in New Orleans](#)," 2007
- 16) Superflex, "[Flooded McDonald's](#)," 2009
- 17) Maurizio Cattelan, "[L.O.V.E.](#)," 2010
- 18) Anish Kapoor, "[ArcelorMittal Orbit](#)," 2012
- 19) Olafur Eliasson, "[The New York City Waterfalls](#)," 2008
- 20) Teresa Margolles, "[¿De qué otra cosa podríamos hablar?](#)," 2009
- 21) Urs Fischer, "[You](#)," 2007

- 22) Ai Weiwei, "Remembering," 2009
- 23) Bruce High Quality Foundation, "Bruce High Quality Foundation University," 2009-present
- 24) Ryan Trecartin, "I-Be Area," 2007
- 25) Dash Snow & Dan Colen, "Nest," 2007
- 26) Elmgreen & Dragset, "The Collectors," 2009
- 27) JR, "Women Are Heroes," 2008-2009
- 28) Christoph Büchel, "Training Ground for Democracy," 2010
- 29) Theaster Gates, "The Dorchester Project," 2009
- 30) William Powhida, "How the New Museum Committed Suicide With Banality," 2009
- 31) Mike & Doug Starn, "Big Bambu," 2008
- 32) Mike Kelley, "Mobile Homestead," 2011
- 33) Doug Aitken, "Sleepwalkers," 2007
- 34) Ashley Hunt, Andrea Geyer, Sharon Hayes, Katya Sander & David Thorne, "9 Scripts for a Nation at War," 2007
- 35) Doug Fishbone, "Elmina," 2010
- 36) Gilbert & George, "London Pictures," 2011
- 37) Ai Weiwei, "Zodiac Heads," 2010
- 38) Mark Bradford, "Mithra," 2008
- 39) Martin Creed, "All the Bells in a Country Rung as Quickly and Loudly as Possible for Three Minutes," 2012
- 40) Francesco Vezzoli, "Trailer for a Remake of Gore Vidal's Caligula," 2009
- 41) Liz Magic Laser, "I Feel Your Pain," 2011
- 42) Mike Kelley & Michael Smith, "A Voyage of Growth and Discovery," 2009
- 43) Nina Berman, "Marine Wedding," 2007
- 44) Swoon, "Swimming Cities of the Switchback Sea," 2008
- 45) Chris Burden, "Urban Light," 2008
- 46) Christian Boltanski, "Personnes," 2010
- 47) Paul Chan, "Sade for Sade's Sake," 2009
- 48) Pipilotti Rist, "Pour Your Body Out (7354 Cubic Meters)," 2008
- 49) Taryn Simon, "Contraband," 2009
- 50) Allora & Calzadilla, "Stop. Repair. Prepare," 2008

- 51) Cao Fei, "[RMB City](#)," 2009
- 52) Cecilia Gimenez, [Restored version of Elias Garcia Martinez's "Ecce Homo."](#) 2012
- 53) Damien Hirst, "[The Complete Spot Paintings](#)," 2008
- 54) Tom Sachs, "[Space Project: Mars](#)," 2012
- 55) Alec Soth, "[The Last Days of W](#)," 2009
- 56) An-My Lê, [Photo series on US forces around the world](#), 2010
- 57) Shirin Neshat, "[Women Without Men](#)," 2010
- 58) Christian Jankowski, "[Casting Jesus](#)," 2010
- 59) Marc Quinn, "[Siren](#)," 2008
- 60) Marlene Dumas, "[Blindfolded Man](#)," 2007
- 61) Maurizio Cattelan, "[All](#)," 2011
- 62) Guido van der Werve, "[Nummer acht: Everything is going to be alright](#)," 2007
- 63) Marilyn Minter, "[Green Pink Caviar](#)," 2009
- 64) Michael Landy, "[Art Bin](#)," 2010
- 65) Ragnar Kjartansson, "[The End — Venice](#)," 2009
- 66) Roger Hiorns, "[Seizure](#)," 2008
- 67) Clifford Owens, "[Anthology](#)," 2011
- 68) Duke Riley, "[After the Battle of Brooklyn](#)," 2007
- 69) Jonah Freeman & Justin Lowe, "[Black Acid Co-Op](#)," 2009
- 70) Mitch Epstein, "[American Power](#)," 2009
- 71) Takashi Murakami, "[Oval Buddha](#)," 2007
- 72) Richard Prince, "[Canal Zone](#)," 2007
- 73) Adrian Villar Rojas, "[A Person Loved Me](#)," 2012
- 74) Andrea Fraser, "[There's No Place Like Home](#)," 2012
- 75) Cory Arcangel, "[Photoshop Gradient](#)" series, 2008-present
- 76) Glenn Ligon, "[Untitled \(America\)](#)," 2009
- 77) Hiroshi Sugimoto, "[Lightning Fields](#)," 2009
- 78) Philip Lorca diCorcia, "[Thousand](#)," 2007

- 79) Charles Atlas, "[143652](#)," 2012
- 80) Grayson Perry, "[The Walthamstow Tapestry](#)," 2009
- 81) Paul McCarthy, "[Peter Paul Chocolate Factory](#)," 2007
- 82) David Hockney, "[iPhone Drawing](#)," 2009
- 83) Isa Genzken, "[Rose II](#)," 2007
- 84) James Turrell, "[Twilight Epiphany](#)," 2012
- 85) Qiu Zhijie, "[Breaking through the Ice](#)," 2009
- 86) Richard Serra, "[Promenade](#)," 2008
- 87) Assorted street artists, "[The Underbelly Project](#)," 2009-10
- 88) Lisa Yuskavage, "[Pie Face](#)," 2008
- 89) Tara Donovan, "[Untitled \(Mylar\)](#)," 2011
- 90) Catherine Opie, "[Football Landscape #1](#)," 2007
- 91) Ryan McGinley, "[Tracy \(Red, White & Blue\)](#)," 2010
- 92) Aernout Mik, "[Schoolyard](#)," 2009
- 93) Kate Gilmore, "[Through the Claw](#)," 2011
- 94) Liang Shaoji, "[Mending Sky](#)," 2011
- 95) Carter, "[Erased James Franco](#)," 2008
- 96) Jennifer Rubell, "[Creation](#)," 2009
- 97) Rob Pruitt, "[The Andy Monument](#)," 2011
- 98) Ryan McNamara, "[Still](#)," 2012
- 99) Barry X. Ball, "[Envy](#)" series, 2008-11
- 100) Amanda Ross-Ho, "[White Goddess 16 \(La Côte\)](#)," 2009

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