

ARTICLES

## Best of 2018: Our Top 20 Exhibitions Across the United States

Art visualizing identity and community took center stage in our top 20 exhibitions across the United States for 2018.

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In 2018, artists and curators across the United States have been crafting brilliant exhibitions across the US, exploring themes of identity and community in innovative ways. Ebony G. Patterson made a maximalist tribute to victims of violence in her home country of Jamaica, while Joel Otterson crafted work recalling his parents' professions as a seamstress and plumber.

Indigenous artists took the stage at the Anchorage Museum's *Unsettled* and Jeffrey Gibson's *This is the Day* at the Wellin Museum. The enthralling official Obama portraits, painted by Kehinde Wiley and Amy Sherald, were revealed at the National Gallery in DC, putting Black fine artists into the national consciousness. This list is an insight into the tastes of our US writers and the shows that moved them.

### ***Scalar, A Solo Exhibition by Torkwase Dyson at the Usdan Gallery***



Installation view of *Scalar, A Solo Exhibition* by *Torkwase Dyson* at the Suzanne Lemberg Usdan Gallery, Bennington College; from left to right: "I Can Feel You Now (Accumulation/ Distribution)" (2018); "1994 (Rate of Transformation #Scale)" (2018); "Up South 3 (Water Table)" (2018); "Up South 4 (Water Table)" (2018) (works on view courtesy Torkwase Dyson; Davidson Gallery, New York; and Rhona Hoffman Gallery, Chicago, photo by Arthur Evans)

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Torkwase Dyson's paintings in *Scalar* crash like waves in the dark, as seismic as they are surreptitious, creating intimate frameworks for rethinking materiality, form, and spatial and environmental politics in the process. Two onyx-black panels, one mounted and the other leaning on a tiny chrome balance beam, make up "I Can Feel You Now (Accumulation/Distribution)" (2018), a 12 by 20-foot diptych painted on site at Bennington College. It both commands the room and draws viewers close with blips of white paint suggesting some code or measurement of scale. The works in *Scalar*, which was curated by Anne Thompson, question how forms in our landscape become subconscious and serialized, and either help or hinder Black bodies moving through it. Dyson's tondos in *Scalar* can also be seen as pipelines through the earth cleaved open, runnels of paint revealing the hand as gesture — but more importantly, the hand as conscious and considerate of what it touches and builds, or destroys and leaves behind.

—*Alex Jen*