



The Top Emerging Artists of 2016

by Artsy Editors
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Among the more pervasive art-world narratives of 2016 was the downturn in the market for works by emerging artists. Market contractions may have limited the sheer number of new names bubbling up to surface this year in comparison to the last few. But this tempered pace also allowed for greater attention to be placed on the emerging artists of true quality and depth who gained traction in 2016—and it allowed a number of artists who have been working actively and slowly gaining recognition over several years to step up and strongly stake their claim as among those defining contemporary art today. Surveying this landscape, Artsy’s editors consulted a number of data sources, including UBS’s art news app Planet Art, and the insight of influential individuals to see who among these new and newly essential names proved a cut above the rest. Here, in no particular order, are the top emerging artists of this year.

Lucy Dodd

B. 1981, Garden City, New York • Lives and works in Kingston, New York



Photo courtesy of David Lewis Gallery.

Dodd’s paintings resemble stormy galaxies and writhing seas. They are made from such sundry materials as fermented walnuts, kombucha mold, and river water, and give off smells that suggest the fumes of magic potions and ancient elixirs. It’s no wonder, then, given their sensory power, that the artist’s large-scale canvases have grabbed the attention of the art world. While Dodd has received a good amount of attention over the last five years, this year was particularly momentous for the artist, whose paintings took center stage in solo presentations at Frieze London, the Power Station in Dallas, and in one of the most mesmerizing and critically acclaimed exhibitions by an emerging artist of 2016, at the Whitney Museum of American Art.

The show brandished some of Dodd’s strongest works yet, tilted forms that were rooted on the floor throughout the space. The paintings’ swirling surfaces of yellows, grays, and sea greens felt like vortexes of pure expression, tapping into the mystical power of painting that great artists like Sigmar Polke espoused—but with a new quality of openness and warmth. “She created an intimate space—an inviting, warm environment that didn’t shy away from ambitious scale,” explains Whitney curator Christopher Y. Lew, who organized the show. “Her paintings pack so much energy; they are a tempest of color and texture that bring in a world of ingredients and materials.