

Sheets, Hilarie. "Hidden Lights: Art-World Professionals Answer a Question – Who Are the Most Underrated Artists Today?" *Artnews*, 21 March 2017, p. 60.

# ARTNEWS

## Hidden Lights: Art-World Professionals Answer a Question—Who Are the Most Underrated Artists Today?

BY **Hilarie M. Sheets** POSTED 03/21/17 7:45 AM

For the third time in two decades, *ARTnews* approached a cross section of museum directors and curators to opine about one of their favorite subjects: Who are the most underrated artists today, both living and dead?

While the names may have changed, some trends are consistent. Women artists remain vastly overlooked both in terms of their achievements and their market, with Nancy Spero and Joan Semmel cited repeatedly. Artists whose base is peripheral to art-world hubs still suffer from underexposure, such as Mathias Goeritz from Mexico and Brazilian modernist painter Tarsila do Amaral. Native American sculptor Jimmie Durham, who received an underrated-artist nomination in 2000, made the survey again this year—though his current retrospective at the Hammer Museum may help remedy that

What follow are the considered and uninhibited responses of an authoritative and eclectic group of art world professionals.

## CONNIE BUTLER, Chief Curator, Hammer Museum, Los Angeles

Marisa Merz, now 90, is an artist who is well known in Europe but has never had a one-person exhibition in a U.S. museum until her current retrospective at the Met Breuer. She worked closely with her partner Mario Merz, often putting her own career in the background as she intermittently participated in the larger Arte Povera exhibitions. Mark Grotjahn is another artist in this category—a painter whose reputation has been made in the market but who deserves much greater attention from curators.

Jimmie Durham, whose retrospective is on view at the Hammer through May 7, is an artist little collected in this country, so he's underrated in terms of the market, but he's arguably the most influential artist of the 1990s generation. That is a decade full of rediscoveries like this: Anne Chu, Byron Kim, Liz Lerner, Alix Pearlstein, Beverly Semmes. These are artists who have been showing regularly but are under the radar in some sense. Other artists just under the radar are Sarah Lucas, Paul Sietsema, and Paul Chan, who has taken himself out of the limelight of international exhibitions but continues to work as a publisher and online activist.