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Rollercoasters, Crumbling Walls, and Dead Seagrass: A Few Highlights from the 2018 New Museum Triennial

This morning, the fourth edition of the New Museum Triennial opened to press in New York. Titled "Songs for Sabotage" and organized by New Museum curator Gary Carrion-Murayari and Institute of Contemporary Art, Miami deputy director and chief curator Alex Gartenfeld, it focuses loosely on how art and politics can be reconciled in our chaotic times. Below, a few first impressions from the show. —The Editors



Wilmer Wilson IV, *Nev*, 2017, staples and pigment print on wood.
MAXIMILIANO DURÓN/ARTNEWS

Staples Like Crazy

Shiny and dramatic and disquieting once they pull you in, seven large wall works by **Wilmer Wilson IV** feature what have to be tens or maybe even hundreds of thousands of staples slammed into planks of wood. The silver in the staples shimmers in the bright light from above, like prairie grass swaying, but the effect of so many together suggests a kind of violence and interjection that is anything but glamorous or serene. (Just imagine the sound of so many shots from a staple gun. Oh, the sounds!)

Peeking out from beneath the dense layers of metal are intimations of portraiture with differing degrees of clarity; one has a pair of shoes at the bottom, while others focus on just a set of hands or maybe a face or fingers holding a microphone. Each piece, the wall text says, is sourced from flyers and pamphlets found on the streets of West Philadelphia, where Wilson lives and works. In their ordinary habitat, they announce "parties, church services, or business openings" and serve "a type of community building and self-representation that relies on alternative and analog means." In the museum, they take on a sense of specters having been punctured and pinned to the wall. —*Andy Battaglia*