

# ARTNEWS

## **The Name of This Issue Is Not Queer Art Now: An Introduction to the Spring 2019 Issue of ARTnews**

BY Maximiliano Durón POSTED 03/14/19 9:31 AM



Thomas Lanigan-Schmidt, *Allegory of the Stonewall Riot (Statue of Liberty) Fighting for Drag Queen, Husband and Home*, 1969.

COURTESY THE ARTIST AND PAVEL ZOUBOK GALLERY, NEW YORK

**A**s the world has changed over the past half-century, one of the most profound

shifts within our society is the way in which queer people have come out, empowered themselves, created communities and families, fought for civil liberties and rights, cared for one other in times of crisis, and celebrated life—proudly and with conviction. That is not to say that America—and the world at large—is safe for the many who identify with the LGBTQ+ community. Amid all the celebrations and the victories are brutal murders and mass shootings, the rolling back of hard-fought wins for justice, and moments of alienation and othering. We all live, as the artist Lyle Ashton Harris characterized it to me recently, in “a simultaneity.”

Many trace the current state of queer liberation back to the early hours of June 28, 1969, and a New York City bar that would become synonymous with Gay Liberation: the Stonewall Inn. When a police raid that night turned patrons into protestors against harassment that had gone on too long, the legend of the Stonewall Rebellion was born.

On the occasion of that night’s 50th anniversary, we at *ARTnews* turned our attention to the movement’s history and its legacy in the art of today. No single issue of a magazine could cover the whole of contemporary queer art, a designation that is itself highly problematic, which, as Editor-in-Chief Sarah Douglas writes in her [Editor’s Letter](#), accounts for the name of this issue. But we aimed to focus on some of the many who have impacted the ways we understand identity, queerness, race, gender, and their intersections in the present.

Among the profile subjects, Nayland Blake has long created spaces of comfort for everyone regardless of how they might identify. Lyle Ashton Harris explores the ways in which his blackness and queerness coexist, conflict, and converge. Wu Tsang aspires to a state “in-between,” where labels are recognized as the barriers they can all too often be.

In a roundtable discussion inspired by the momentous “Art After Stonewall: 1969–1989” exhibition opening this spring at the Leslie-Lohman Museum of Gay and Lesbian Art and the Grey Art Gallery at NYU in New York, Vaginal Davis, Michela Griffo, and Jonathan Weinberg discuss Stonewall’s influence on the art world. Also in the issue, “[The ARTnews Accord](#)” features Justin Vivian Bond discussing the legacy of queer performance with Stuart Comer, chief curator of media and performance art at the Museum of Modern Art. In “Perspectives,” artist and gallerist Francis Ruyter tells his personal truth about transitions in his life and work. And in the print edition, the queer artist collective fierce pussy, as part of their ongoing series “Transmissions,” relays a letter from the future to all of us in the present—the “dearest beings of 2019.”