

Hyperallergic Staff. "Best of 2016: Our Top 15 Exhibitions Across the United States," *Hyperallergic*, December 29, 2016

HYPERALLERGIC

Best of 2016: Our Top 15 Exhibitions Across the United States

Here's a small taste of what this vast country had to offer in art this year.



(photo of Hélio Oiticica: To Organize Delirium at Carnegie Museum of Art by Elisa Wouk Almino/Hyperallergic)

This year, Hyperallergic writers and editors combed Philadelphia, Denver, Miami, Pittsburgh, and many other US cities to get a taste for what the country had to offer in its museums, galleries, and performance spaces. We found a number of retrospectives that revealed surprising or unexplored aspects of familiar artists, as well as surveys that revised art history as we know it. And, of course, there were the exhibitions timed for the election that in hindsight seemed to already know we were headed for doom.

15. R. Luke DuBois: Now at Bowdoin College Museum of Art (Brunswick)



R. Luke Dubois's exhibition has been traveling around the US for the past few years but I finally got to see it at Bowdoin College in Maine and boy am I glad I did. By mining dating data, Facebook info, Playboy centerfolds, and Presidential speeches (among other things) Dubois creates sophisticated infographics that approach the scope of a new type of history painting, one that steps back to allow the subject to reveal itself through data sets and the eyes of others. But the piece that really set this show apart for me was his "SSB" (2008), which is a generative sound work that uses a recording of soprano Lesley Flanigan singing the US national anthem and stretches it to last four years — one US Presidential cycle. It had a haunting effect in the grandeur of the room that houses the Bowdoin Murals, which commemorate four great classical cities in the Western tradition (Athens, Florence, Rome, and Venice). "SSB" evokes many auditory comparisons, including the adhan, the Islamic call to prayer, but I saw it as a type of cry for help. It sounded like a wailing voice confused at the state of America today. —HV

The hall that houses the Bowdoin Murals and R. Luke Dubois's "SBB" (2008) sound work (photo by Hrag Vartanian/Hyperallergic) March 31–September 4