

“Nikita Gale Wins Whitney Biennial’s \$100,000 Bucksbaum Award,” *Artforum*, September 23, 2024.

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NEWS

### NIKITA GALE WINS WHITNEY BIENNIAL’S \$100,000 BUCKSBAUM AWARD

By News Desk 🌐

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Nikita Gale, *TEMPO RUBATO (STOLEN TIME)*, 2023–24, modified player piano, audio, LED lighting system. Installation view, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York. From the 2024 Whitney Biennial. Photo: Ron Amstutz.

New York’s Whitney Museum of American Art has presented its \$100,000 Bucksbaum Award to Los Angeles–based interdisciplinary artist Nikita Gale. Gale was chosen for the honor from among the seventy-one artists and collectives included in the ongoing Whitney Biennial, titled “Even Better Than the Real Thing,” which remains on partial view through September 29

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The Alaska-born Gale is known for a practice centering the relationship between materials, power, and attention. Through installations frequently incorporating such diverse materials as barricades, video, and automated sound and lighting, Gale explores the concept that the structures that shape attention determine who or what is seen, heard, recorded, remembered, and believed. The artist’s contribution to the Biennial was *TEMPO RUBATO (STOLEN TIME)*, 2023–24, a player piano modified to silently play performances by various pop musicians, raising questions around the ways in which labor, performance, authorship, legibility, and sensing are beholden to their technological contexts.

“Nikita Gale has an incredible knack for making work that is both conceptually rigorous and full of emotion, somehow disciplined and mysterious at the same time,” said Whitney director Scott Rothkopf in a statement. “By honoring Gale with the Bucksbaum Award, we continue the Whitney’s longstanding tradition of celebrating artists who demonstrate great achievement and promise for the future.”

The prize was initiated in 2000 by the late Melva Bucksbaum, a patron of the arts and long-time Whitney trustee. Previous prizewinners include Michael Asher, Mark Bradford, Ralph Lemon, Tiona Nekkia McClodden, and Pope.L. The six jury members for this year’s iteration included Rothkopf; Chrissie Iles and Meg Onli, the Biennial’s cocurators; Erin Christovale, a curator at the Hammer Museum in Los Angeles; University of Virginia art history professor David Getsy; and Stamatina Gregory, chief curator of the Leslie-Lohman Museum of Art, New York.

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