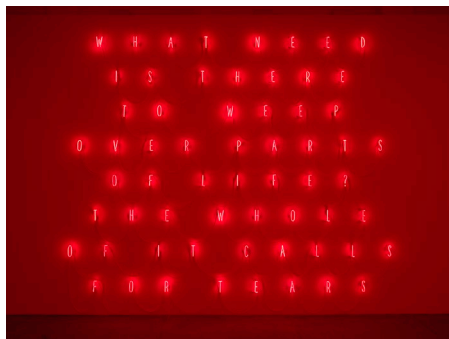


**ALFREDO JAAR**  
***THE TEMPTATION TO EXIST***

May 13 – June 25, 2022

Opening Friday, May 13, 2022, 6:00pm – 8:00pm

[Artist-led exhibition walkthrough](#) with Carlos Basualdo, Saturday, May 14, 4:00pm in the gallery



Alfredo Jaar, *What Need is There to Weep Over Parts of Life? The Whole of it Calls for Tears*, 2018.

Galerie Lelong & Co., New York is pleased to announce *THE TEMPTATION TO EXIST*, a solo exhibition by Alfredo Jaar. For over four decades, Alfredo Jaar (b. 1956, Santiago, Chile) has used photography, film, installation, and new media to create compelling works that examine complex socio-political issues and the ethics and limits of representation. The exhibition is constructed in two moments with two major installations, both presented in the U.S. for the first time. A newly commissioned work by the artist is concurrently on view in the Whitney Biennial (through September 5, 2022).

The exhibition's title makes a reference to a book by Emil Cioran, one of the artist's favorite writers. A dark, subversive thinker, Cioran was the poet of pessimism. A philosopher who was always on the verge of suicide, he once said: "If I didn't write, I could have become an assassin. Writing is a matter of life and death. Human existence, at its core, is endless anguish and despair, and writing can make things a bit more bearable. A book is a suicide postponed." For Cioran, failure permeates everything. Great ideas can be stained by failure, and so can art and the human condition. "No longer wanting to be a man, he is dreaming of another form of failure," he wrote. "The universe is one big failure, and not even poetry can succeed in correcting it."

For Jaar, art is the impossible answer to an impossible question: how do we make art when the world is in such a state?

In the gallery's main space, an immersive experience is created with a large, red neon work. The words of the stoic philosopher Seneca take center stage—"WHAT NEED IS THERE TO WEEP OVER PARTS OF LIFE? THE WHOLE OF IT CALLS FOR TEARS." Seneca strongly believed that if we have the essentials and a strong inner spirit, we can radically accept and endure any circumstances. Eschewing the presence of other objects, the room is entirely illuminated with a dense red light, building an atmosphere of poetic uncertainty, mirroring the unease of contemporary times. The philosopher's emblematic phrase glimmers in the space, reacting to the tyranny of the white box space and filling it with an idea—a model for thinking about the world.

Jaar's second installation in the exhibition fills the second, smaller gallery space with more than 100 works from a diverse group of artists as well as a small selection of his own works. Here, the artist has tried to create what he calls "a space of resistance, a space of hope."

In juxtaposition to Jaar's own work that was primarily created in resistance to Pinochet's dictatorial regime in Chile (1973-1989), he has selected works from 72 artists who have sought to resist and change the world since the 1950s.

The list of artists includes Art Workers' Coalition, Claudio Abate, Bas Jan Ader, Claudia Andujar, Fred Baldwin, Letizia Battaglia, Adolfo Bernal, Dawoud Bey, Frédéric Bruly Bouabré, Marcel Broodthaers, Stanley Broun, Paulo Bruscky, Giovanna Calvenzi, Pier Paolo Calzolari, Luis Camnitzer, Vija Celmins, Lygia Clark, Hanne Darboven, Gino de Dominicis, Juan Downey, Valie Export, LaToya Ruby Frazier, Felix Gonzalez-Torres, Hans Haacke, David Hammons, Lyle Ashton Harris, Mona Hatoum, Jenny Holzer, Emily Jacir, Joan Jonas, Birgit Jürgenssen, On Kawara, Seydou Keïta, Yves Klein, Joseph Kosuth, Jannis Kounellis, Glenn Ligon, Anna Maria Maiolino, Piero Manzoni, Gordon Matta-Clark, Cildo Meireles, Ana Mendieta, Marisa Merz, Marzia Migliora, Daido Moriyama, Zanele Muholi, Shirin Neshat, Yoko Ono, Adam Pendleton, Giuseppe Penone, Michelangelo Pistoletto, Gerhard Richter, Lotty Rosenfeld, Doris Salcedo, Carolee Schneemann, Tomatsu Shomei, Malick Sidibé, Regina Silveira, Dayanita Singh, Nancy Spero, Diamond Stingily, Atsuko Tanaka, Hank Willis Thomas, Mierle Laderman Ukeles, Cecilia Vicuña, Kara Walker, Carrie Mae Weems, Lawrence Weiner, Amanda Williams, Ernest Withers, Francesca Woodman, and Raúl Zurita.

These works are brought together by Jaar in an examination of memory and political participation from the last 70 years, revealing the intersection between culture and democratic life. Exhibited in close proximity to each other, the resounding voices of the artists invoke a shared history and reclamation of agency—a "we" that urges to change the world.

The artist will hold an [exhibition walkthrough](#) with Carlos Basualdo, Keith L. and Katherine Sachs Senior Curator of Contemporary Art at the Philadelphia Museum of Art, on Saturday, May 14, 2022 from 4:00pm to 5:00pm in the gallery.

This exhibition is dedicated to Letizia Battaglia (b. March 5, 1935 - d. April 13, 2022).

## About the Artist

Alfredo Jaar is an artist, architect, and filmmaker. Using photography, sculpture, and film, Jaar has consistently provoked, questioned, and searched for ways to heighten our consciousness about issues often forgotten or suppressed in the international sphere, while not relinquishing art's formal and aesthetic power. Over his career, Jaar has explored significant political and social issues including genocide, the displacement of refugees across borders, and the balance of power between developing and industrialized nations.

An ongoing solo museum exhibition *Alfredo Jaar: The Structure of Images*, is held at the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago, Illinois (through July 3, 2022).

In addition to the Whitney Biennial 2022, the artist is participating in ongoing institutional exhibitions at the Kunstmuseum, Wolfsburg, Germany; La Bial de Artes Mediales de Santiago, Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Santiago, Chile; and Palazzo Reale, Milan, Italy. In 2019, the artist was awarded the 11<sup>th</sup> Hiroshima Art Prize and his solo exhibition will be held in 2023. The Japanese city gives the award

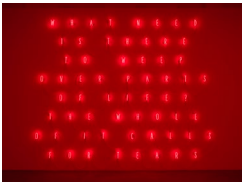
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every three years to an artist who has contributed throughout their career with peace construction. Jaar is the only artist to have received a McArthur Fellowship, the Hiroshima Peace Prize, and the Hasselblad Award.

Jaar's work has been shown extensively around the world. He has participated in the Biennales of Venice, Italy (1986, 2007, 2009, 2013); São Paulo, Brazil (1987, 1989, 2010, 2021); and Documenta, Germany (1987, 2002). In 2020, the artist was awarded the 40th edition of the Hasselblad Foundation International Award in Photography, considered the most prestigious photography prize in the world. Other surveys of his work have taken place at the Musée Cantonal des Beaux Arts, Lausanne, France; Hangar Bicocca, Milan, Italy; Alte Nationalgalerie, Berlinische Galerie and Neue Gesellschaft für bildende Kunst e.V., Berlin, Germany; Rencontres d'Arles, France; and Museum of Contemporary Art Kiasma, Helsinki, Finland. His work can be found in the collections of the Museum of Modern Art, New York; Guggenheim Museum, New York; Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago, Illinois; Los Angeles Museum of Art, California; Philadelphia Museum of Art, Pennsylvania; Tate Modern, London, UK; Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris, France; Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid, Spain; Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, Humlebæk, Denmark; M+, Hong Kong; and dozens of other institutions worldwide.

Jaar was born in Santiago, Chile, in 1956 and has been based in New York City since 1982.

## SELECTED WORKS



Alfredo Jaar  
*What Need is There to Weep Over Parts of Life? The Whole of it Calls for Tears*, 2018  
Neon  
Dimensions variable  
© Alfredo Jaar  
Courtesy Galerie Lelong & Co. and the artist, New York



Alfredo Jaar  
*Other People Think*, 2012  
Lightbox with black and white transparency  
20 x 20 x 5 inches (50.8 x 50.8 x 12.7 cm)  
© Alfredo Jaar  
Courtesy Galerie Lelong & Co. and the artist, New York