

FORT GANSEVOORT

artnet

From Immersive Everything to the Rise of Museum Unions, These 7 Trends Defined the Art World in 2021—and Will Shape the Year to Come

A look at the movements that defined 2021 in the art world, and how they may evolve in the year ahead.

Ben Davis - January 3, 2022

3) Reckoning

Even as the for-profit immersive art wave promised razzle-dazzle and NFTs built a new pole of attraction shaped around giddy memes, art museums and biennials have gone hard in the other direction, focusing on somber accounting and progressive sentiment. From Celeste Dupey-Spenser's frenzied nightmare canvas about the January 6 riot (shown with a cycle of other paintings conjuring a sense of U.S.'s dark side at the Prospect New Orleans triennial) to the deserved veneration of Winfred Rembert's autobiographical works about prison labor, police atrocities, and lynching (both at Fort Gansevoort and in a well-received autobiography, *Chasing Me to My Grave*), different versions of historical "Reckoning" were the explicit or implicit theme of so much of the art of this past year, in moving ways (though historian Matt Karp's "History as End," a thoughtful critique of mainstream liberal culture's approach to revisiting historical trauma, seems to me more and more to be essential reading as well).