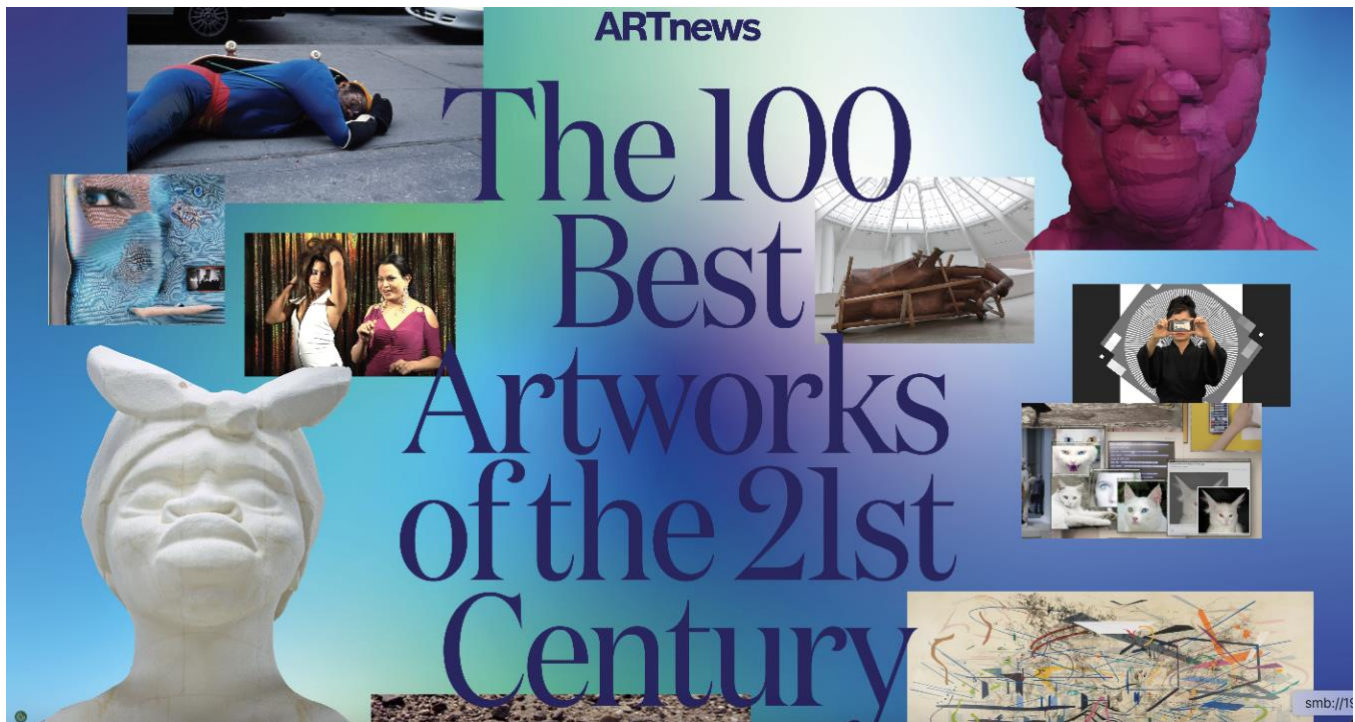


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Teresa Margolles, *What Else Could We Talk About?*, 2009



Teresa Margolles: *Limpieza (Cleaning)*, 2009.

Photo : Courtesy the artist and James Cohan, New York

With this piece staged for the Mexican Pavilion at the Venice Biennale, Teresa Margolles transformed the grisly residue of death into art. Known for addressing violence fueled by Mexico's narcotics trade, Margolles here used materials like bloodstained cloths and shattered glass to expose the human cost of systemic inequities. The piece included fabric soaked in blood from murder sites, along with an accompanying performance that impressively—and grotesquely—involved a man mopping the floor with fluid from the dead acquired from morgues in Mexico. For even greater effect, Margolles distributed cards that doubled as cocaine cutters, suggesting that global consumer culture itself was complicit in sustaining the very carnage she highlighted. It was all unsettling and deeply uncomfortable because it offered material proof of violence that is sometimes tough to see. —D.C.