

The Paula Cooper Gallery is pleased to present *Invisible Surrealists*, an exhibition of new work by Sam Durant. The show, on view from September 12 to October 18 at 521 West 21st Street, will include intricate graphite drawings alongside mixed-media sculpture.

Inspired by Robin D.G. Kelley's essay, "Keepin' it (Sur)real: Dreams of the Marvelous," Durant's new body of work revisits the history of Surrealism, casting light on lesser-known members of the movement from the Francophone colonies. Using iconic group photographs of the celebrated Paris-based founders of the movement like André Breton, Man Ray and Leon Trotsky, Durant alters the images, inserting a number of overlooked artists such as Wifredo Lam, René Ménil, Aimé and Suzanne Césaire, Jules Monnerot and Joyce Mansour.

By revising the Eurocentric narrative and creating new archival imagery, Durant's drawings question the photograph's ability to represent history, exposing it instead as an instrument with which collective amnesia and repression are perpetuated.

Durant also seeks to renew the original spirit of Surrealism—oppositional, radical and revolutionary—which came about as a reaction to the cataclysm of World War I. Coinciding with the 100th anniversary of the beginning of the war, *Invisible Surrealists* explores the relationship between combat and art, especially through the phenomena of "Trench Art." In one sculpture, Durant transforms heavy caliber shells into bells for a large wind chime, and in another, he assembles a collection of trench warfare objects on a stage-like platform, highlighting their sculptural qualities.

Durant's method of intertwining historical and cultural events of the past and the present is a recurring theme within his work. He has focused on such pivotal periods as the civil-rights era, the 1968 student riots, and last century's struggle between Native Americans and European settlers. Durant has been the subject of one-person exhibitions at the Museo d'arte contemporanea, Rome; the Getty Center, Los Angeles; the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, Hartford, CT; the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; the Kunstverein Düsseldorf; the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis; and the Massachusetts College of Art, Boston. His most recent group exhibitions include *dOCUMENTA (13)*, Kassel and *See You In The Hague*, Stroom den Haag, The Hague. He has participated in the 2004 Whitney Museum Biennial, New York; the 2002 Venice Biennale, Italy; and *Out of Place: Contemporary Art and the Architectural Uncanny* at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago. Durant's large-scale installation *Proposal for White and Indian Dead Monument Transpositions*, Washington, D.C. is on view at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (August 3 - November 30, 2014) for the first time since entering the museum's collection in 2013. Durant lives and works in Los Angeles.

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