

# BLUM & POE

Los Angeles, New York, Tokyo

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Mohamed Bourouissa**

*Pour une poignée de Dollars*

**Blum & Poe, Los Angeles**

**September 14-October 26, 2019**

**Opening reception: Saturday, September 14, 6-8pm**

Blum & Poe is pleased to present Paris-based Algerian artist Mohamed Bourouissa's first solo exhibition in Los Angeles, and his first with the gallery. *Pour une poignée de Dollars* offers an expansion of his project *Horseday*, first presented at the Barnes Foundation and thereafter across Europe, made with and about the community of the Philadelphia Fletcher Street Riders. With film, sculpture, drawings, and photography, this project explores a distortion and fragmentation of shared reality, making visible the story of the American Black cowboy, while probing questions of representation.

Initially driven to capture his own community and generation of immigrant youth living in the outskirts of Paris, in recent years Bourouissa's focus has expanded to the US, the UAE, and beyond. In 2014 the artist spent nearly a year in North Philadelphia, PA living among the young men of the Fletcher Street Urban Riding Club, a non-profit established over 100 years ago by African American cowboys. This area increasingly struggles with unemployment and drug abuse, economic and social conditions from which the center attempts to provide a refuge—rescuing horses and mentoring boys who may otherwise find support hard to come by. Bourouissa instigated a collaboration with the community of riders and local artists—a riding competition and pageant called "Horse Day" in which equestrian participants arrived clad in decadent regalia, costumes including linked blank CDs, streamers, fake flowers, or fabric Pegasus wings. Using the cowboy as an emblem of a narrative of domination, the critical documents Bourouissa and the Fletcher Street community produced—sculptures, costumes, drawings, photography, and a video mixing tropes of westerns, documentaries and hip-hop—explore social injustice as it relates to geographical space, spotlight contemporary America's culture of segregation, and intend to forge a new creative space for marginalized groups. Within a new body of sculptural work, the artist integrates images of riders and/or horses into the body parts of automobiles, as curator Okwui Enwezor once put it: "Bringing together two myths, the cowboy and the urban lowrider with his customized car, a sort of collision of the frontier and Compton." This 3-D montage connects representations of domination and power, as well as industries and communities facing crisis.

Bourouissa's work focuses on rituals of friendship, an exploration of alterity and the role images play in channels of distribution, investigations into the politics of representation and subjectivity. Seeking to humanize his community as social subjects, Bourouissa engages all sorts of imagery, initiating agency where it is often deprived. Bourouissa's

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work is a hybrid of documentation and formal composition, collaborative choreographed representations of reality on the margins, channeling a wide range of historical precedents from Caravaggio and Delacroix to Fanon, rap music, and the Harlem Renaissance.

Blum & Poe will present a limited edition of 100 compilation CDs and posters by Bourouissa at Printed Matter's NY Art Book Fair, in conjunction with the exhibition. This edition is connected to his multi-faceted project *Si Di Kubi*—exhibitions, concerts, and albums created in collaboration with musicians, photographers, and artists, correlating to language, gentrification, and economy. All albums are signed and numbered.

Bourouissa (b. 1978, Blida, Algeria) lives and works in Paris, France. Recent solo exhibitions include presentations at the Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, Paris, France (2018); Centre Pompidou, Paris, France (2018); Musée National Eugène Delacroix, Paris, France (2017); Barnes Foundation, Philadelphia, PA (2017); Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, Netherlands (2016); Savannah College of Arts and Design, Atlanta, GA (2011); Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia, PA (2011); FotoRio, Centro Cultural Correios, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (2009); and the Finnish Museum of Photography, Helsinki, Finland (2009); among many more. His work is represented in notable public collections worldwide including the Burger Collection, Hong Kong, China; Centre Pompidou, Paris, France; Galerie du Château d'Eau, Toulouse, France; Finnish Museum of Photography, Helsinki, Finland; Fondation Louis Vuitton, Paris, France; Fonds National d'art contemporain, France; FRAC Bretagne, Rennes, France; FRAC Franche-Comté, Besançon, France; Fondation Sindika Dokolo; International Art Fund, Grande-Bretagne, France; Kadist Art Foundation, Paris, France; Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles, CA; Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, Paris, France; Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia, PA; Pinault Collection, Paris, France; Sammlung Philara, Düsseldorf, Germany; Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, Netherlands; Weng Collection, Krefeld, Germany, among many more. Bourouissa's work has been commended with numerous prizes including the Nomination for the Prix Pictet, UK; Prix Fondation Blachère, France; Prix Studio Collector, Fondation Antoine de Galbert, France; CNAP - Aide à la première exposition; First Prize - Rencontres Internationales de la Photographie d'Arles, France.