

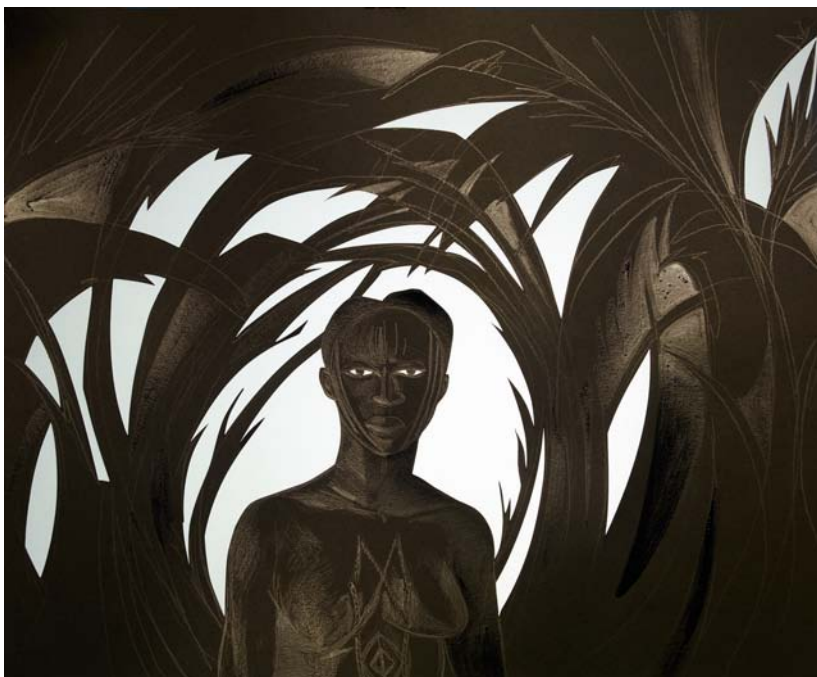
## KARA WALKER

### Norma

**Private View 6 – 8pm, Thursday 12 November**

Exhibition runs 13 November 2015 – 16 January 2016

Victoria Miro Mayfair, 14 St George Street, London W1S 1FE



Kara Walker, *Norma*, 2015

**Victoria Miro is delighted to present the second of two exhibitions at the gallery this autumn by the celebrated American artist Kara Walker.**

Often provocative and humorous, Kara Walker's work explores the tensions and power plays of racial and gender relations. Walker's work engages with historical narratives and the ways in which these stories have been suppressed, distorted and falsified. This exhibition extends her exploration of the brutalising histories of colonialism and slavery, and the political and psychological consequences that accompany identity formation in contexts of oppression and violence.

Drawing from art historical and literary sources, she creates and deconstructs scenarios that expose biases and prejudices, exploring the power struggles underlying personal and political relationships. Her work proposes alternative mythologies, and new ways of engaging with traumatic historical material. Walker uses historical decorative styles including the silhouette to create complex and sophisticated narratives, emphasising and undermining the ways in which images and narratives can be subject to stereotyping.

For her exhibition at Victoria Miro Mayfair, Walker is showing a selection of preparatory drawings, sketches and models related to the production of Vincenzo Bellini's two-act opera *Norma* she directed and art directed for Teatro La Fenice. This production, staged for six performances between May and June 2015, was a special project commissioned by Okwui Enwezor to coincide with the 56<sup>th</sup> Venice Biennale. Walker directed the opera and designed the sets and costumes. Her production moved the action from Roman Gaul to an unnamed west or central African colony under European subjugation in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. The drawings and other studies show the artist's detailed working process. The selection includes a number of works in pastel and watercolour, and demonstrates Walker's facility with colour as well as line.

**The exhibition will be accompanied by a fully illustrated catalogue featuring texts by the artist and by Hilton Als.**

**Biographical details:** Walker was born in Stockton, California in 1969. She currently lives and works in New York. In 2014 the public art commissioning agency Creative Time presented the artist's large-scale public project *A Subtlety* at the Domino Sugar Factory, New York; in the same year, Walker curated the group exhibition *Ruffneck Constructivists* at the Institute of Contemporary Art, University of Pennsylvania. Recent major solo exhibitions include presentations at the Camden Arts Centre, London (2013); Art Institute of Chicago (2013); Center for Contemporary Art Ujazdowski Castle, Warsaw (2011); Fondazione Merz, Turin (2011); Cincinnati Art Museum (2010); Centro de Arte Contemporáneo de Málaga (2008); and Museum Dhondt-Dhaenens, Deurle (2008). In 2007-2008 the artist was the subject of the major retrospective *Kara Walker: My Complement, My Enemy, My Oppressor, My Love* at the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis; the Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris; the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles and the Museum of Modern Art, Fort Worth. Her work is in the collections of major museums including the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; the Museum of Modern Art, New York; the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago; Tate, London; Museo Nazionale delle Arti del XXI Secolo, Rome and Mudam, Luxembourg. Walker received a MacArthur Foundation Fellowship in 1997, the Deutsche Bank Prize in 2000, and the United States Artists Eileen Harris Norton Fellowship in 2008.

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