

MARIANNE BOESKY GALLERY

509 West 24th Street, New York, NY 10011

**Artist Sanford Biggers to Present *Selah*,
His First Solo Exhibition at Marianne Boesky Gallery
Featuring New Sculpture, Paintings, and Installations**

**On View September 7 - October 21, 2017
Opening Reception September 7, 6:00-8:00 PM**

Marianne Boesky Gallery is pleased to present Sanford Biggers' *Selah*, the artist's inaugural solo exhibition with the gallery. Taking inspiration from American History and the human form, Biggers will create an experience that highlights often overlooked cultural and political narratives through symbolic gestures and imagery. *Selah* will be on view from September 7 to October 21, 2017 in the gallery's 507 W. 24th Street space, with a special installation presented in one of the gallery's viewing rooms.

Biggers' expansive body of work encompasses painting, sculptures, textiles, video, film, multi-component installations, and performance. His syncretic practice positions him as a collaborator with the past, adding his own voice and perspective to those who made and used the antique quilts, African sculptures, and cultural imagery his work references. Biggers cuts, paints, reshapes, and alters objects and images—both found and created by himself—leveraging their formal and conceptual qualities to reimagine and amplify certain narratives and perspectives. His works speak to current social, political, and economic happenings as well as to the historic context that bore them. The interrelated components and aesthetic diversity of Biggers' works provide a multifaceted platform for dialogue and debate.

Selah – Anchoring the exhibition is *Seated Warrior*, a new figure from his *BAM* series, which includes videos and bronze works made from wooden African sculptures that the artist collected, dipped in wax, and transmogrified with piercing bullets and subsequently cast in bronze as a response to recent and ongoing occurrences of police brutality against Black Americans. *Seated Warrior*, punctured by a single gunshot, expands the series beyond the recognition and remembrance of these tragedies into an exploration of the human condition and the desire for transcendence. *Seated Warrior* will be presented in the gallery's viewing room in a meditative environment that allows for contemplation.

Of the work Biggers said, "Central to the theme of this exhibition is the potential of objects to transform our experience and understanding of the human condition. This includes a cycle of life and death, and within it a relationship between the living and the dead. Veneration both honors those who have passed and seeks their guidance and perspective. In this way, *Seated Warrior* acts as a gatekeeper to the rest of the exhibition, allowing visitors to meditate on both the experiences of the dead and on the path forward for those of us still here."

Among the other works in the exhibition are several multi-panel paintings composed of framed and unframed antique quilt segments that Biggers has organically pieced together. Drawn to respond not only to the patterns and colors of the textiles, but to their deeper meanings, Biggers paints and draws—using acrylic and spray paint, tar, charcoal and oilstick—on the quilts themselves as well as on the glass under which he places them.

As with the *BAM* series, the body is a critical component of these works. The antique quilts serve as signifiers of bodily protection, presence and absence, and the conflated histories that are sewn onto each surface. The quilts provide warmth; hold the legends of their use as signposts on the Underground Railroad; and contain the presence of the original makers' hands in the stitches, appliques, and patterns. These are among the various narratives Biggers responds to when working with them.

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“These quilts in most cases are over hundreds of years old. Some have already been altered and re-contextualized by subsequent owners and I see myself as a late collaborator, contributing to their history and function in this present moment. Perhaps decades from now, this work will also be re-contextualized, creating an ongoing narrative over time,” said Biggers. “It’s very much like history itself, a patchwork of experiences, perspectives, and reportage that attempt to construct a single narrative but these works recognize that history is always subject to time itself, and subsequently unfixed.”

More About Sanford Biggers

Biggers’ practice has been celebrated through solo exhibitions nationally and internationally, including at the Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit, Massimo de Carlo Gallery, Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art, Brooklyn Museum, and Sculpture Center, among numerous others. His works have appeared in venues worldwide, including the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Barnes Foundation, Tate Britain and Tate Modern, Whitney Museum, and the Studio Museum in Harlem, New York as well as institutions in China, Germany, Hungary, Japan, Poland and Russia. He has participated in notable exhibitions such as Prospect 1 New Orleans Biennial, Illuminations at the Tate Modern, Performa 07 in New York, and the Whitney Biennial. His works are also included in the collections of the Museum of Modern Art, Walker Art Center, Whitney Museum, Brooklyn Museum and Bronx Museum. In winter 2017, Biggers was awarded the prestigious Rome Prize in Visual Arts by the American Academy in Rome. He is Associate Professor and Director of Sculpture at Columbia University's Visual Arts program. Originally from Los Angeles, Biggers has been based in New York since 1999.

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For more information about Sanford Biggers, please contact Gallery Partner Serra Pradhan at serra@boeskygallery.com or 212.680.9889. For exhibit press inquiries, please contact Alina Sumajin, PAVE Communications and Consulting, at alina@paveconsult.com or 646-369-2050. For Sanford Biggers press inquiries, please contact Angella Forbes, Forbes PR at angella@forbespr.com or 917-213-4934.

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