

Sanford Biggers: *the pasts they brought with them*

February 11 – April 2, 2016

Reception with artist: Thursday, February 11, 5:00-7:30pm



Following *Ago*, the artist's celebrated 2013 on the wall installation at moniquemeloche, Sanford Biggers will have his first solo exhibition in Chicago opening February 11, 2016, with a reception for the artist from 5:00-7:30pm. On a large, horizontal, mounted quilt painting, collaged material buckles underneath Biggers's abstracted motifs. With an emphasis placed on materiality, form, collage, and influences ranging from Miriam Schapiro to Frank Stella, *the pasts they brought with them* will feature this new series of transmogrified quilts alongside bronzed, deconstructed sculptures sourced from street vendors on 125th Street in Harlem. Narrative video works act as accompaniment to each of the sculptures, further elucidating the process Biggers' figurines undergo.

Plans are in the works to present a live performance of Biggers' "Moon Medicin" – an aural and optical experiment conducted by this interdisciplinary artist. This would be another first for Chicago audiences, who got a taste for Biggers' theatrics through *Ghetto Bird Tunic*, a sculpture and costume he created for a 2009 performance that was worn by the late Terry Adkins, which was included in *The Freedom Principle: Experiments in Art and Music, 1965 to Now* (Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago, 2015, travels to the Institute of Contemporary Art at the University of Pennsylvania, Fall 2016). Biggers is spending a year interacting within Detroit's art and music communities in preparation for a seminal exhibition that continues his practice of broadening our understanding of American history. He is a TED2016 Fellow, a group of 21 world-changers working at the very forefront of their fields, representing 12 countries around the world. Biggers is a 2015 recipient of both The Joyce Award from The Joyce Foundation and the NEA Art Works program, to funnel his research into *Subjective Cosmology*, a multidisciplinary exhibition created in collaboration with the Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit, opening Fall 2016. An alumni of The School of The Art Institute of Chicago, Biggers was appointed to their Board of Governors in 2015. moniquemeloche will present a 2 person exhibition by Biggers and Ebony G. Patterson in New York on the Lower East Side during Armory Week March 2016. Please contact the gallery for more details.

A fully illustrated digital catalog with an essay by Matt Morris will accompany the exhibition.

Sanford Biggers (born 1970 Los Angeles, CA, lives and works New York, NY) is an interdisciplinary artist who works in film/video, installation, sculpture, music, and performance. Biggers's art frequently references African American ethnography, hip hop music, Buddhism, African spirituality, Indo-European Vodoun, Jazz, Afrofuturism, urban culture and icons from Americana. An L.A. native, he has lived and worked in New York City since 1999. He received a BA from Morehouse College in Atlanta, Georgia, a MFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, and attended Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture. Biggers has been included in several notable exhibitions such as: *Prospect 1/New Orleans Biennial* (2008), *Illuminations* at the Tate Modern (2007-08), *Performa 07* in NY (2007), the Whitney Biennial of American Art (2002), *The Here and Now* at the Renaissance Society at the University of Chicago (2005), and *Freestyle* at the Studio Museum in Harlem (2001). Solo exhibitions include Ringling Museum, Sarasota FL (2012) (which travels to Virginia Commonwealth University, School of the Arts Anderson Gallery this May); MassMoCA (2012); Brooklyn Museum of Art (2011-12); Sculpture Center NY (2010); Santa Barbara Contemporary Arts Forum (2010); Portland Art Museum (2009); Centre for Contemporary Art Ujazdowski Castle, Warsaw, Poland (2005); Contemporary Art Center Cincinnati (2004); Contemporary Art Museum Baltimore (2004); Contemporary Arts Museum Houston (2002); and the Berkeley Art Museum (2002). He is presently Assistant Professor at Columbia University's Visual Arts program.

Image: Sanford Biggers, *Untitled*, 2015, Cotton textile, fabric treated acrylic, spray paint on repurposed quilt, 24 x 24 inches (detail).

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