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**NEW MUSEUM PRESENTS THE FIRST
NEW YORK MUSEUM SURVEY BY NARI WARD,
ONE OF THE MOST HIGHLY REGARDED AND
INFLUENTIAL SCULPTORS WORKING TODAY**



Nari Ward, *We the People*, 2011. Shoelaces, 96 x 324 in (243.8 x 823 cm). Speed Art Museum, Gift of Speed Contemporary. Courtesy the artist and Lehmann Maupin, New York, Hong Kong, and Seoul

New York, NY... The New Museum is pleased to present “**Nari Ward: We the People,**” on view from February 13 to May 26, 2019. The first museum survey in New York of the work of Nari Ward (b. 1963, St. Andrew, Jamaica), the exhibition brings together works spanning Ward’s twenty-five-year career, installed across the three main floors of the Museum. “Nari Ward: We the People” is curated by Gary Carrion-Murayari, Kraus Family Curator; Massimiliano Gioni, *Edlis Neeson Artistic Director*; and Helga Christoffersen, Associate Curator.

The exhibition features over thirty sculptures, paintings, videos, and large-scale installations from throughout Ward’s career, highlighting his status as one of the most important and influential sculptors working today. Since the early 1990s, Ward has produced his works by accumulating staggering amounts of humble materials and repurposing them in consistently surprising ways.

His approach evokes a variety of creative acts of recycling and folk traditions from Jamaica, where he was born, as well as the material textures of Harlem, where he has lived and worked for the past twenty-five years. Yet Ward also relies on research into specific histories and sites to uncover connections among geographically and culturally disparate communities and to explore the tension between tradition and transformation.

This presentation highlights the continued importance of New York, and Harlem in particular, to the material and thematic content of Ward's art. Many of his early sculptures were created with materials scavenged from buildings and streets in Harlem. These items—baby strollers, fire hoses, baseball bats, cooking trays, bottles, and shopping carts—were chosen for their connection to individual lives and stories within the neighborhood. The exhibition includes several key early works, such as the large-scale environments *Amazing Grace* and *Hunger Cradle* (both 1993), which Ward made and exhibited in an abandoned firehouse. That same year, Ward had his first institutional solo exhibition at the New Museum where he exhibited a dramatic, large sculpture, *Carpet Angel* (1992).

In his more recent work, Ward directly addresses complex political and social realities that resonate on both a local and a national level, reflecting the profound changes gentrification has brought to Harlem and the increasingly fractured state of democracy in the United States. He uses language, architecture, and a variety of sculptural forms to reflect on racism and power, migration and national identity, and the layers of historical memory that comprise our sense of community and belonging. "Nari Ward: We the People" brings together many of Ward's most iconic sculptures alongside a number of works that have not been seen in New York since they were originally created. The exhibition demonstrates Ward's status as a key bridge between generations of American sculptors and a vital advocate for art's capacity to address today's most urgent issues.

A fully illustrated catalogue copublished by the New Museum and Phaidon Press accompanies the exhibition. The catalogue includes an interview with Nari Ward conducted by Lowery Stokes Sims, a conversation between Okwui Enwezor and Massimiliano Gioni, and newly commissioned essays on the artist's work by Gary Carrion-Murayari, Lauren Haynes, and Bennett Simpson.

ABOUT NEW MUSEUM

The New Museum is the only museum in New York City exclusively devoted to contemporary art. Founded in 1977, the New Museum is a center for exhibitions, information, and documentation about living artists from around the world. From its beginnings as a one-room office on Hudson Street to the inauguration of its first freestanding building on the Bowery designed by SANAA in 2007, the New Museum continues to be a place of experimentation and a hub of new art and new ideas.

SUPPORT

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