

HYPERALLERGIC

Northwestern's Block Museum of Art Presents *A Site of Struggle: American Art against Anti-Black Violence*

This new exhibition in Evanston, Illinois considers how art has been used to protest, process, mourn, and memorialize anti-Black violence for more than a century.

by The Block Museum
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Darryl Cowherd, "Stop White Police from Killing Us – St. Louis, MO" (c. 1966–67), gelatin silver print, image: 15 x 19 inches, mat: 20 x 24 1/4 inches, paper: 16 x 20 inches (© Darryl Cowherd, image courtesy the artist and the Museum of Contemporary Photography)

Through July 10, 2022, Northwestern University's Block Museum of Art presents *A Site of Struggle: American Art against Anti-Black Violence*, exploring how artists have engaged with the reality of anti-Black violence and its accompanying challenges of representation in the United States for over 100 years.

Images of African American suffering and death have constituted an enduring part of the nation's cultural landscape, and the development of creative counterpoints to these images has been an ongoing concern for US artists. *A Site of Struggle* takes a new approach to looking at the intersection of race, violence, and art by investigating the varied strategies American artists have used to grapple with anti-Black violence, ranging from representation to abstraction and from literal to metaphorical.

The exhibition focuses on works created between the 1890s and 2013, situating contemporary artistic practice within a longer history of American art and visual culture. It foregrounds African Americans as active shapers of visual culture and highlights how art has been used to protest, process, mourn, and memorialize anti-Black violence.

A Site of Struggle includes more than 65 works from collections around the nation including works by Laylah Ali (b.1968), George Bellows (1882–1925), Elizabeth Catlett (1915–2012), Darryl Cowherd (b. 1940), Ernest Crichlow (1914–2005), Melvin Edwards (b. 1937), Theaster Gates (b. 1973), Ken Gonzales-Day (b. 1964), Norman Lewis (1909–1979), Kerry James Marshall (b. 1955), Isamu Noguchi (1904–1988), Howardena Pindell (b. 1943), Carl and Karen Pope (b. 1961), Paul Rucker (b. 1968), Alison Saar (b. 1956), Lorna Simpson (b. 1960), Dox Thrash (1893–1965), Carrie Mae Weems (b. 1953), Pat Ward Williams (b. 1948), and Hale Woodruff (American, 1900–1980).

After its debut at The Block, the exhibition travels to the Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts in Montgomery, Alabama, where it will be on view from August 12 through November 6, 2022. The companion publication is currently available through Princeton University Press.