

# PRAZ-DELAVALLADE

SAM DURANT

SEPTEMBER, 10 - OCTOBER, 29 2005

The work of Sam Durant investigates utopia and its failure in relation to protest and countercultures movements in America political history.

In his sculptures, installations, and drawings, Sam Durant connect and overlap several references to the popular, artistic and political history from the 60's and 70's.

Durant re-presents iconic symbols from popular music, art, white student protest, and Black Power, reflecting an intensely utopian yet nihilistic moment, when a counterculture both succeeded and failed at changing the world.

More recently, Sam Durant has focused on the history of civil rights protest from the same period.

In his exhibition in gallery Praz-Delavallade, he will be showing new works that address the problems of representing of political issues in art work through several medium.

The master piece of the exhibition is a bronze sculpture of a wicker chair mounted onto a mirror polished stainless steel plate. This chair is a copy of the one used by Huey P. Newton (founder of the Black Panther Party for Self Defense) in the famous poster for the BPP.

This work takes place in a series of "theoretical monuments" he has been making over the last several years which are monuments' proposal embodying an utopia.

This monument would theoretically be erected on the plaza in front of the Alameda County Courthouse where many of Newton's (and many other Party members) famous trials were located. It was the scene of many rallies and protests for the release of political prisoners during Newton's leadership of the Black Panther Party.

A group of drawings, mirrors and installation come link and extend the territory proposed by the sculpture. The work uses some elements coming from historical and contemporary events (slogans, protests' photographs, trash can lids used like shields by demonstrators...) to implicate the viewer in the field of political struggle with the idea of encouraging participation and engagement.



"Proposal for a Monument to Huey Newt on at Alameda County Courthouse; Oakland, CA", 2004  
bronze, stainless steel,  
concrete  
58" x 48" x 48"