

LaToya Ruby Frazier and Nari Ward Among 16 Artists Participating in Creative Time’s Political ‘Pledges of Allegiance’



Installation view of “Resist” by Marilyn Minter. | Photo by Guillaume Ziccarelli via Creative Time

FLAGS HAVE PROVEN to be a powerful medium in contemporary art, from David Hammons’s [“African American Flag”](#) (1990), which sold at Phillips auction for more than \$2 million, to Dread Scott’s [“A Man Was Lynched by Police Yesterday”](#) (2015) displayed last summer at Jack Shainman Gallery, and Nu Barreto’s [“Desunited States of Africa”](#) (2010) flag on view last month at the 1:54 Contemporary African Art Fair in Red Hook, Brooklyn.

The banners are moving works of art and powerful symbols of cultural pride, protest, and resistance. They also serve as vehicles for engagement. A new Creative Time project capitalizes on these attributes. [“Pledges of Allegiance”](#) is a series of flags commissioned from 16 contemporary artists, including **LaToya Ruby Frazier**, **Jayson Musson**, and **Nari Ward**.

“We realized we needed a space to resist that was defined not in opposition to a symbol, but in support of one, and so we created a permanent space. The flag seemed an ideal form to build that space around both practically and symbolically,” said Nato Thompson, artistic director of Creative Time.

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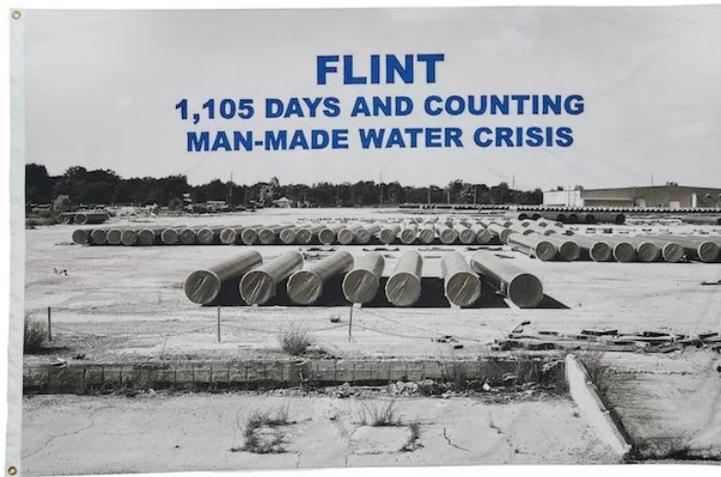
EACH ARTIST DESIGNED a flag referencing a cause or issue they care deeply about and wish to draw attention and resources to. The project was borne out of America’s divisive political climate and “aims to inspire a sense of community among cultural institutions, and begin articulating the urgent response our political moment demands.”

Based on the Lower East Side in Manhattan, Creative Time commissions innovative, ambitious public art projects. Its latest project was launched on June 14, Flag Day, with a work by Marilyn Minter emblazoned with the word “Resist.” Her flag was raised atop Creative Time’s headquarters at 59 East 4th Street and will be on view through the end of June. Each month a new flag by another artist will fly above the organization’s building.

In addition to Frazier, Musson, Ward, and Minter, artists Tania Bruguera, Alex Da Corte, Jeremy Deller, Ann Hamilton, Robert Longo, Josephine Meckseper, Vik Muniz, Ahmet Öğüt, Yoko Ono, Trevor Paglen, Pedro Reyes, and Rirkrit Tiravanija, are also participating in “Pledges of Allegiance.” **CT**

BOOKSHELF

Photographer LaToya Ruby Frazier has built her practice around images of her mother, grandmother and great-grandfather “gramps,” as well as self portraits using their generational story in Braddock, Pa., to convey a larger narrative about social and economic conditions in post-industrial communities around the country. Her first book, [“The Notion of Family.”](#) captures these images. Published to accompany Nari Ward’s mid-career retrospective, the largest-ever survey of his work, [“Nari Ward: Sun Splashed”](#) documents the artist’s work since the 1990s, an innovative series of sculptures, videos, works on paper, and installations.



Creative Time: LaToya Ruby Frazier asks for justice and accountability for the communities in Flint, Michigan, with a flag that is also a clock. The number 1,105 was the exact amount of days Flint residents had lived without new pipes between when lead leaching first took place in Flint and the unveiling of Frazier's flag on May 3rd, 2017. | Photo by Nicholas Prakas via Creative Time



Creative Time: Musson works in the productive gap between high and low culture. Musson's flag is text-based art, forcing the viewer to engage in an all too real comment on our political present. | Photo by Nicholas Prakas via Creative Time



Creative Time: The flag designed by Nari Ward references Marcus Garvey's Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA) flag combined with an African prayer symbol known as a Congolese Cosmogram, representing birth, life, death and re-birth. Several of these hole patterns are drilled into the floorboard of one of the oldest African American churches in the United States (The First Baptist Church, Savannah Georgia). It is believed that the pattern functioned as breathing holes for runaway slaves hiding under the floor, awaiting safe transport north. Ward writes, "the union of that moment and of Garvey's black nationalist flag acknowledge the resilience of the human spirit to survive even as we continue the need to remind America that Black Lives Matter." | Photo by Nicholas Prakas via Creative Time