

PAULA COOPER GALLERY

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Non-Vicious Circle

524 W 26th Street

July 8 — August 16, 2019

NEW YORK — “Non-Vicious Circle,” Paula Cooper Gallery’s summer show will present a selection of sculptures and installations by Sam Durant, Liz Glynn, Walid Raad, Kelley Walker, and Meg Webster. The exhibition takes its title from one of the works on view, a 2014 mobile by Sam Durant.

The works on view address the notion of recurrence, conceived as a catalyst to question the concepts of historical linearity, narrative or progression. **Sam Durant**’s sculptures use war-related paraphernalia (missile and bullet shells, in particular) to explore the relationship between Surrealism and World War I, as well as the echoing of the past in the present. **Liz Glynn**’s vibrant spiral, *Eternal Return II*, 2017, from her recent major exhibition at MASS MoCA, is made from contemporary materials and industrial detritus that translate theories of historical progression—often visualized as graphs or charts—into three-dimensional forms scaled to the human body. And with his “recycling sign” works, **Kelley Walker** alludes to the continual transformation and re-use of “raw” cultural matter.

In a separate room, illuminated by bold spotlights and casting long shadows, **Walid Raad**’s monumental work *Section 88_Act XXXI: Views from outer to inner compartments*, 2010, recreates existing museum architecture (in this case, doorways from the Metropolitan Museum of Art) in a flattened and spectral fashion, as if the very architecture of the institution were suddenly emptied of volume and substance. With this and other works from his ongoing project, *Scratching on Things I Could Disavow*, Raad reflects on the current emergence of museums and other institutions for the arts in the Arab world – a development in many ways similar to the Gilded Age that saw the advent of the Met.

Comprised of five large glass orbs, **Meg Webster**’s *Largest Blown Sphere*, ostensibly the most devoid of historical content in the exhibition, seems aglow in a poetic glory of translucence and form. In a review for *The New York Times*, Roberta Smith wrote: “handsome spheres in clear handblown glass that crowd the floor here are attractive but inexplicable, although they suggest a sculptural fusion of the clear water of the falls and the massive stones.” Yet the work is rooted in the traditions of Land Art of the 1970s and influenced by Minimalist artists like Donald Judd, Carl Andre and Robert Morris. Webster creates works that directly engage the body and its senses, and often act as containers for living matter. Drawing from the rigorous formal vocabulary of her predecessors, she proposes a new way for sculpture, one that invites life and accident back in.