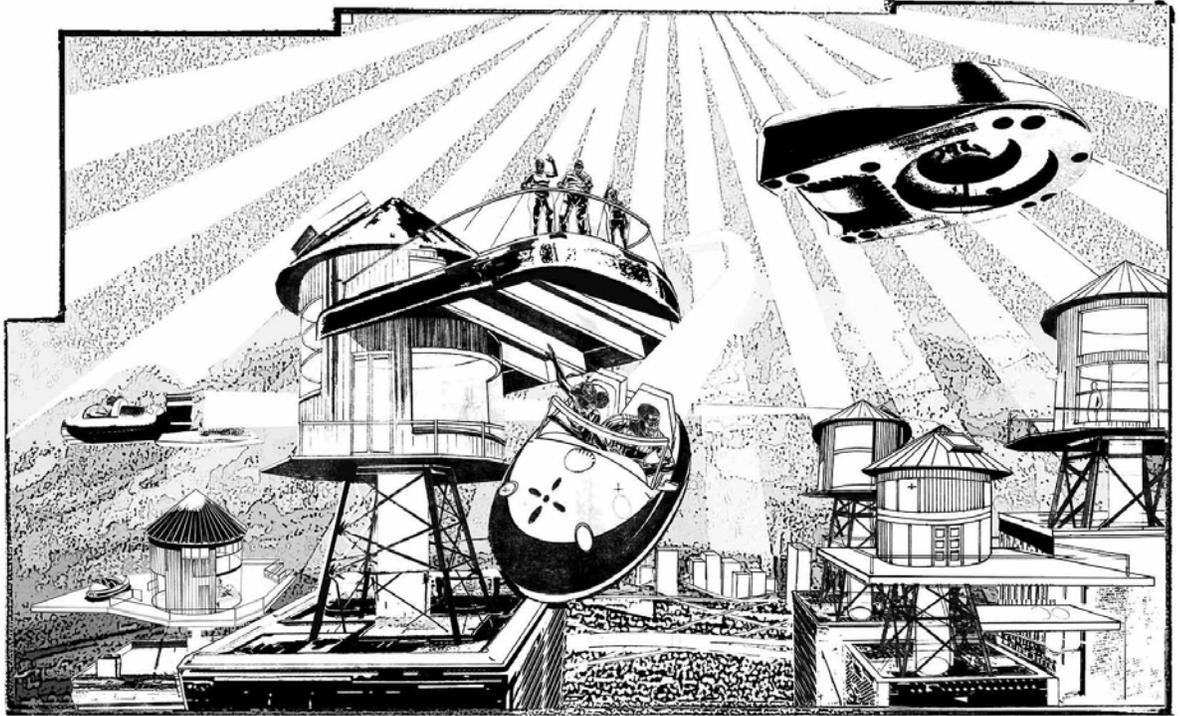




FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



Kerry James Marshall, *Above the Line*, 2015. Courtesy the artist, David Zwirner, London, and Friends of the High Line.

HIGH LINE ART PRESENTS

KERRY JAMES MARSHALL *ABOVE THE LINE*

THE ARTIST'S FIRST PUBLIC COMMISSION IN NEW YORK CITY

**HAND-PAINTED MURAL COVERING LARGE WALL NEXT TO THE HIGH LINE
AT WEST 22ND STREET**

JUNE 2015 – MAY 2016

New York, NY (May 5, 2015) – Presented by Friends of the High Line, High Line Art is pleased to announce the upcoming High Line Commission by renowned artist Kerry James Marshall. Titled *Above the Line*, this new work will be Marshall's first public commission in New York City. This large-scale mural will be hand-painted by a professional sign company on the wall of a building overlooking the High Line at West 22nd Street, and will be visible from the park as well as the street below. Previously, this location presented Ed Ruscha's celebrated mural *Honey, I Twisted Through More Damn Traffic Today, 1977/2014*. Marshall's *Above the Line* will be on view from June 2015 to May 2016.

Through compelling portraiture and both intimate and disquieting scenes of domestic life, Kerry James Marshall comments on contemporary and art historical depictions of black identity. Born in Birmingham, Alabama, raised in South Central Los Angeles in the 1970s, and currently based in Chicago, Marshall is acutely sensitive to his own social responsibility as an artist. The artist plunges his work into an exploration of race-consciousness, painting "unequivocally, emphatically black figures," through whose depiction he articulates his intention to "reclaim the image of blackness as an emblem of power." Marshall has been commissioned to complete numerous permanent public works at locations including the Legler Branch Library in Chicago, The Print Center in Philadelphia, and the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art's Haas Atrium.





For the High Line, Marshall presents a large-scale, hand-painted mural adapted specifically for the High Line. Titled *Above the Line*, the mural is an extension of the artist's *Dailies* series, specifically the cartoon strip "Rhythm Mastr," an epic narrative of the struggle between tradition and modernity within the Afro-diasporic worldview. The works address the lack of black superheroes found in American comics, and raise historical and philosophical questions in black vernacular English. This particular comic painting, *Above the Line*, imagines the redevelopment of rooftop water tanks as luxury homes and condominiums. The mural is installed on a wall adjacent to the High Line at West 22nd Street, visible both from the park and the street below.

Cecilia Alemani, the Donald R. Mullen, Jr. Director & Chief Curator of High Line Art says, "We are thrilled to be commissioning Kerry James Marshall's first public artwork in New York City. With *Above the Line*, Marshall continues his commitment to rewriting genres and hierarchies within the history of art and mainstream culture. In this work, he imagines a future that is both optimistic and dystopian. I look forward to seeing it in the context of the High Line and the fast, ever-changing skyline of New York City."

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Kerry James Marshall (b. 1955, United States) lives and works in Chicago. In 2016, the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago will host the first major American museum survey of Marshall's work which is co-organized with The Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles. Recent solo exhibitions include the National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C. (2013); Secession, Vienna (2012); Vancouver Art Gallery, Canada (2010); and the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, CA (2009). Previous traveling solo exhibitions include those organized by the Museum van Hedendaagse Kunst Antwerpen, Belgium (2013); Camden Arts Centre, London (2005); Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago (2003); and The Renaissance Society at the University of Chicago, IL (1998). Marshall's work will be included in the upcoming 56th Venice Biennale (2015) and featured in major biennials such as the 7th Gwangju Biennale, South Korea (2008); the 50th Venice Biennale (2003) as well as the Whitney Biennial, New York (1997). Marshall has been the recipient of numerous prizes, awards, and fellowships, including grants from the MacArthur Foundation (1997) and the National Endowment for the Arts (1991).

ABOUT HIGH LINE ART

Presented by Friends of the High Line, High Line Art commissions and produces public art projects on and around the High Line. Founded in 2009, High Line Art presents a wide array of artwork including site-specific commissions, exhibitions, performances, video programs, and a series of billboard interventions. Curated by Cecilia Alemani, the Donald R. Mullen, Jr. Director & Chief Curator of High Line Art, and produced by Friends of the High Line, High Line Art invites artists to think of creative ways to engage with the uniqueness of the architecture, history, and design of the High Line and to foster a productive dialogue with the surrounding neighborhood and urban landscape.

High Line Art is presented by Friends of the High Line and the New York City Department of Parks & Recreation. Major support for High Line Art comes from Donald R. Mullen, Jr. and The Brown Foundation, Inc. of Houston, with additional support from Vital Projects Fund, Inc. High Line Art is supported, in part, with public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the New York City Council and from the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew Cuomo and the New York State Legislature.

ABOUT THE HIGH LINE AND FRIENDS OF THE HIGH LINE

The High Line is an elevated freight rail line transformed into a public park on Manhattan's West Side. It is owned by the City of New York, and maintained and operated by Friends of the High Line. Founded in 1999 by community residents, Friends of the High Line fought for the High Line's preservation and transformation at a time when the historic structure was under the threat of demolition. It is now the non-profit conservancy working with the New York City Department of Parks & Recreation to make sure the High Line is maintained as an extraordinary public space for all visitors to enjoy. In addition to overseeing maintenance, operations, and public programming for the park, Friends of the High Line works to raise the essential private funds to support more than 90 percent of the park's annual operating budget, and to advocate for the transformation of the High Line at the Rail Yards, the third and final section of the historic structure, which runs between West 30th and West 34th Streets.

For further information on High Line Art, please visit art.thehighline.org.

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