

**Betye Saar**  
***Black White***

September 10 – December 17, 2016

Opening Reception: Saturday, September 10th, 6-8pm

Roberts & Tilton is pleased to announce Betye Saar's *Black White*, an exhibition of mixed media works from 1966-2016. The first chapter of a two-part survey spanning both gallery spaces, *Black White* reflects on how specific ideas are expressed through the descriptive qualities of black and white, affecting the relation of race within linguistic uses.

Saar's preoccupation with language – of its varying complexity applied via control, of its chaos and curiosity, the abstraction in both its use and unuse – is evident through her various methodologies. The works on view shift between being executed in monochromatic palettes, directly referencing either color in the title of the work, or interpreting the symbolism inherent within black or white categorization.

*Black White* is an introduction, not a summary. An attitude, one characterized not by the tightness of an organizing principle, but by the looseness of its interpretation. The exhibition title fearlessly announces its defining ethos: the dimensional exploitation residing in the distinction drawn between white and black, and the prejudices attached to each condition. The employment of black, or white, connotes vivid associations, specifically emphasizing positive or negative designations: white light; white heat; white knight; white collar; whitewash; white flag; black humor; blacklist; black sheep; black magic; black death. Saar deconstructs the sociolinguistics of race as performance: illuminating how for many, language is used to disguise oneself, controlling how white or black one sounds. Additionally, the looseness characterizing the cultural borrowing of language implies an easy permissiveness, though only from one direction; even those who do not directly participate are implicated in this shared and shifting ownership.

Spanning over four decades, *Black White* brings together a wide array of work in the materiality Saar is known for: prints, cages, assemblages, collages, scales and drawings. The exhibition will predominantly feature wall-based works alongside floor-based sculptural pieces. Installed inside an achromatic space, painted in alternating shades of white and black, the end result is that of an immersive experience within a powerful environment.

The preface of a two-part exhibition, *Black White* opens on September 10<sup>th</sup> in the project room, and will remain on view through December 17<sup>th</sup>. *Blend*, the final installment resolving the concerns and questions raised by *Black White*, opens on October 15<sup>th</sup> in the main exhibition space and will also remain on view through the end of 2016.



Betye Saar *Game of Fate*, 2016  
Mixed media assemblage  
24 x 10 x 10 in (61.0 x 25.4 x 25.4 cm)

Betye Saar (b.1926) is one of the most important artists of her generation, playing a seminal role in the development of Assemblage art. Since the 1960s, her work has reflected on African-American identity, spirituality and the connectedness between different cultures.

Saar's work can be found in the permanent collections of more than 60 museums, including Museum of Modern Art, New York; The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.; Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; and Los Angeles County Museum of Art, to name a few.

Forthcoming solo exhibitions include "Betye Saar: Uneasy Dancer" Fondazione Prada, Milan, curated by Elvira Dyangani Ose (September 2016); "Betye Saar" Craft & Folk Art Museum, Los Angeles, curated by Holly Jerger (May 2017); "Betye Saar: Ritual" Art Basel Miami Beach, Survey and Film Sectors (December 2016); and group exhibitions "Soul of a Nation: Art in the Age of Black Power", Tate Modern, London, England, curated by Mark Godfrey, Zoe Whitley and Julia Bailey (July 2017); "We Wanted A Revolution: Black Radical Women, 1965-1985" Brooklyn Museum, NY, curated by Catherine Morris and Rujeko Hockley (April 2017); "Visual Art and the American Experience" Smithsonian National Museum of African American History & Culture, Washington, D.C., organized by Lonnie Bunch III (September 2016).

Recent exhibitions include "Betye Saar: Still Tickin'" Museum De Domijnen, Sittard, The Netherlands, curated by Roel Arkesteijn (2015) traveling to the Scottsdale Museum of Contemporary Art, Arizona, curated by Sara Cochran, PhD (2016); "Take an Object" Museum of Modern Art, New York, organized by Cara Manes (2016); "A Constellation" The Studio Museum of Harlem, New York, (2016) organized by Amanda Hunt; "America Is Hard to See" Whitney Museum of American Art, New York (2015).

Saar received her Bachelor of Arts from the University of California, Los Angeles in 1949, with graduate studies at California State University at Long Beach, the University of Southern California and California State University at Northridge. She has been awarded honorary doctorate degrees by California College of Arts and Crafts, California Institute of the Arts, Massachusetts College of Art, Otis College of Art & Design, and San Francisco Art Institute.

For additional information, please contact Mary Skarbek: 323.549.0223 and [mary@robertsandtilton.com](mailto:mary@robertsandtilton.com)  
Gallery hours are Tuesday – Saturday, 11:00am – 6:00pm.  
Roberts & Tilton is located between Fairfax Avenue and La Cienega Boulevard.  
Parking is available on the street and at Dunn Edwards located 1/2 block east of the gallery.