

PAULA COOPER GALLERY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

JONATHAN BOROFSKY, MANDY HARRIS WILLIAMS

529 W 21st Street

February 13—March 10, 2018

Opening Reception: Tuesday, February 13, 6-8pm

NEW YORK – Paula Cooper Gallery is pleased to present *Jonathan Borofsky, Mandy Harris Williams* opening February 13 at 529 West 21st Street. This is the third in a series of two-person presentations at Paula Cooper Gallery's 529 West 21st Street space curated by Laura Hunt, the gallery's archivist. There will be an opening reception on Tuesday, February 13 from 6 to 8pm.

Jonathan Borofsky and Mandy Harris Williams are both artists whose practice involves an intentional cultivation of self-awareness. This exhibition examines self-awareness as it relates to the public good.

Of his work *Running Man*, an iconic figure the artist painted on the Berlin Wall in 1982, Borofsky has said, "It's me, I guess, but it's also humanity."¹ This flickering between the self and the universal applies to all of Borofsky's artwork. He uses the labor of his particular mind and body to explore what it means to be a person.

On view by Borofsky is his 1995 sculpture *Truth (binary computer code)*, 40 units of steel wire zeros and ones powder-coated with orange enamel. The sculpture physically translates the noun (and the greater concept of) "truth" into numerical form. Numbers have been a central theme in Borofsky's work throughout his long career. The first work he showed at Paula Cooper Gallery was *Counting* (1969), 20 computer printouts of typed numbers laid on the floor. The artist has stated, "numbers are like god, they connect us all together."

Mandy Harris Williams, an artist, writer, and educator, is exhibiting a large-scale vinyl wall text that takes the form of a prayer to "a concept people call God." Her words urge viewers to be willing to expose their participation in the suffering perpetuated by our current society, and, significantly, clarifies that this exposure is not "sacrifice" but "primer and prelude." Williams conveys to her generation the wisdom originally given at great risk by American thinkers such as Audre Lorde and James Baldwin: that willing self-reflection and by extension self-awareness is the first step towards social progress. In another artwork in the show, an audio piece projected outside the gallery into the street, Williams' voice speaks about love, "not romantic love... the sort of love where you prefer me, think I'm human..."

Jonathan Borofsky (b. 1942, Boston, Massachusetts) received a Bachelor of the Arts degree from the Carnegie Institute of Technology in 1964 and an MFA from Yale University in 1966. He taught at the School of Visual Arts in New York City from 1969-1977 and at CalArts from 1977-1980. The artist has had major one-person exhibitions at the Wadsworth Atheneum, Hartford (1976), Museum of Modern Art, New York (1978), Halle für Neue Kunst, Zurich (1979), Whitney Museum of American Art (1981), Contemporary Arts Museum, Houston (1981), Institute of Contemporary Art, London (1981), Museum Boymans-Von Beuningen, Rotterdam (1982), Kunstmuseum Basel (1983), Moderna Museet, Stockholm (1984), Whitney Museum of American Art (1983), and Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles (1986), Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum (1987), Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

¹ Joan Simon, "An Interview with Jonathan Borofsky," *Art in America*, 69 (November 1981), 164.

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(2001) and the Carnegie-Museum, Pittsburgh (2006). Since 1995, Borofsky has focused primarily on creating large public sculptures in cities around the world, including Seoul, Seattle, Dallas, Los Angeles, Berlin, Frankfurt, Munich, Kassel and Strasbourg. In 2008, he created the 64-foot- tall *People Tower* for the Beijing Olympics. Borofsky lives and works in Ogunquit, Maine.

Mandy Harris Williams (b. 1988, New York, NY) is an artist, writer, and educator currently living in Los Angeles. She has recently collaborated with *Third Magazine* on a limited edition #brownupyourfeed pamphlet, participated in the lit series “Hard to Read: Body Language” (Los Angeles) and contributed multiple articles to *MEL Magazine*. On Wednesday, February 28th she will host a “Getting Fed by Your Feed” workshop at Women’s Center for Creative Work (Los Angeles). Follow her on Instagram at @idealblackfemale.

For more information and images, please contact the gallery: (212) 255-1105;
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