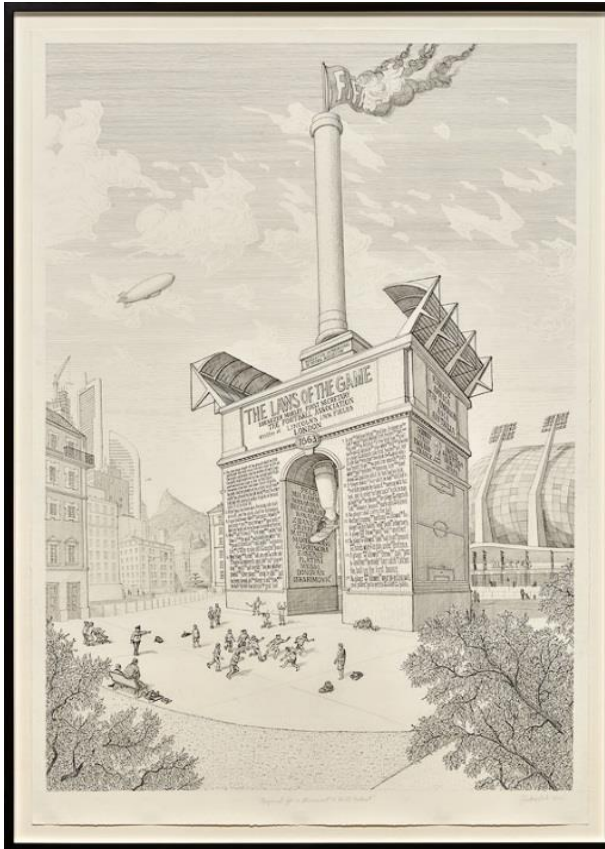


## Sadow Birk

### *Imaginary Monuments*

October 24, 2015 – January 2, 2016

Join us for an opening with the artist  
on Saturday, October 24  
from 3 - 5 pm



Sadow Birk, *Proposal for a Monument to World Football*, (2015). Ink on paper, 60 x 42 inches.

**San Francisco, CA:** Catharine Clark Gallery presents *Imaginary Monuments*, a solo exhibition of new work by Sadow Birk. On view October 24, 2015 – January 2, 2016, the exhibit features several new drawings and one new direct gravure print in Birk's on-going *Imaginary Monuments* series, in which the artist combines foundational and iconic texts with fantastical and imagined architecture in large scale works on paper. Birk will be present for the exhibition opening on Saturday, October 24, from 3-5 pm.

Since debuting the series in 2007 with the drawing *Monument to the Constitution of the United States* (now in the permanent collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art), Birk has created numerous drawings and three large scale gravures as part of this project over the last eight years. Subjects of his latest drawings tend towards broader themes, incorporating the text of multiple seminal documents in one work in an effort to portray the complex history behind topics germane to current events and consciousness. True to form, Birk unabashedly portrays controversy. In *Proposal for a Monument to the Prison Industrial Complex* (2015), and *Proposal for a Monument to the NYPD* (2015), Birk addresses head-on the firestorm of current events and polarized opinions concerning law enforcement, the use of force, and criminal legislation in the United States. Birk takes a lighter tone with work created in the past year: *Proposal for a Monument to the Free Sea* (2015), *Monument to the National Parks* (2015), and *Proposal for a Monument to World Football* (2015), laud the historical efforts that crafted enduring access to and preservation of these internationally beloved treasures and shared experiences.

This exhibit marks the debut of Birk's latest etching, *Excavating the Foundation of the Unfinished Temple of Human Rights*, the third gravure in the *Imaginary Monuments* series. The work contains text from various

iterations of the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) a proposed bill to the United States Constitution designed to guarantee equal rights for women. Originally written in 1923, the amendment was proposed under several different names until it passed both houses of Congress in 1972, but failed to be ratified by enough of the states to become law. Co-published by Catharine Clark Gallery and Paul Mallowney, the print is a direct gravure etching from two plates on handmade gampi paper, backed with sekishu kozo paper, and is available for acquisition at a pre-publication price, through the opening night of the exhibition. Pricing and more information: [cclarkgallery.com/exhibitions/birk-imaginary-monuments-2015](http://cclarkgallery.com/exhibitions/birk-imaginary-monuments-2015)

On November 21, 2015, Catharine Clark Gallery celebrates the book launch of *American Qur'an*, a W. W. Norton publication of the 427 full color, to-scale reproductions of Birk's original gouache *suras*. Now appearing in full for the first time, this lavishly designed volume melds past with present and East with West, like nothing before it. The result, hailed by Reza Aslan as, "a great favor, not only to Muslims, but also to Americans," is one of the most original art books to appear in decades. Signed copies of the book available for purchase at the event for \$100. For more details and a timetable of events please check: [cclarkgallery.com/events/birk-book-launch-holiday-party-2015](http://cclarkgallery.com/events/birk-book-launch-holiday-party-2015).

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Sandow Birk | *Imaginary Monuments*

*October 24 – January 2, 2016*

**Saturday, October 24** : Opening reception with the artist 3:00 - 5:00 pm

Artist talk and exhibit walk-thru 3:30 pm

*This event is free and open to the public.*

Media inquiries contact Allison Stockman: [marketing@cclarkgallery.com](mailto:marketing@cclarkgallery.com)

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Save the Date: Nov 21

*American Qur'an*

Book signing &

Holiday Party

5 – 7 pm

**Sandow Birk** was born in Detroit, Michigan and raised on the beaches of Orange County, California. He is a graduate of the Otis Art Institute of Parsons School of Design, Los Angeles, and resides in Southern California. Subjects of his work include Dante's Divine Comedy, the Iraq war, the Qur'an, gang violence, graffiti culture, prisons, surfing, water rights, and skateboarding. Birk creates monumental series developed over the course of many years, often working across media to support his ideas through a multi-disciplinary approach—painting, drawing, printmaking, writing, film, video, and sculpture. Birk has exhibited in dozens of museum and galleries, and his work is in many public and museum collections including: SFMOMA and the Fine Art Museums of San Francisco; the Los Angeles County Museum of Art and The Getty Center in Los Angeles; the New York Historical Society and the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York; Harvard University Art Museum in Cambridge, Massachusetts; Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale di Roma, Italy; and Städtisches Kunstmuseum in Reutlingen, Germany. Birk has received an NEA grant, a Guggenheim Fellowship, a Fulbright Fellowship, a Getty Fellowship, and a City of Los Angeles Fellowship. In 2014, Birk was named a United States Artist Knight Fellow. Most recently, Birk's work has been the subject of several solo exhibition including at The Andy Warhol Museum (2011); McKinney Avenue Contemporary and the San Jose Museum of Art (2012); Arizona State University Library and Millersville University Winter Center Gallery (2013); and The University of Puget Sound Kittridge Gallery (2014). In November 2015, W.W. Norton published *American Qur'an*, a book of Birk's complete series of paintings on this subject. The book release coincides with solo exhibitions at the Orange County Museum of Art (November 7, 2015 – February 28, 2016) and the Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art at University of Oregon, Eugene (January 21 – March 19, 2017). Birk has collaborated with his wife, Elyse Pignolet, who is also a practicing artist, most notably in a series titled *The 99 Names of God*. Birk is represented by Catharine Clark Gallery, where he has exhibited his work since 1994.