

Nina Katchadourian

artnet[®]

Whoever Loses the US Presidential Election Will Be Immortalized in Artist Nina Katchadourian's Graveyard for Political Signs

The artist has enlisted first-time voters to plant lawn signs in her ongoing project, which started in 2008.

SF

248 Utah Street
SF, CA 94103
+ 415 399 1439

NY

313 W 14th Street 2F
New York, NY
By appointment only

WEB

www.cclarkgallery.com

[Sarah Cascone](#), November 3, 2020



Nina Katchadourian, *Monument to the Unelected* (2008—) in Scottsdale, Arizona, 2020. Photo by Charles Darr, courtesy of the artist and the Scottsdale Museum of Contemporary Art.

Last November, the morning after Donald Trump's unexpected presidential victory over Democratic nominee Hillary Clinton, Nina Katchadourian added the latest piece to her ongoing project *Monument to the Election*, a graveyard full of campaign signs for failed presidential candidates.

This year, Katchadourian expects a delay before knowing what will be added to the work due to an increase in mail-in voting and the

subsequent possibility that not enough ballots will have been counted on election night to declare a winner.

But once the results are in, the artist fully intends to plant a 59th sign, bringing the artwork up to date in eight separate installations across the country.

It's the biggest outing for the project since its creation in 2008, and Katchadourian feels there is a new urgency to the work this time around.

“*Monument to the Unelected* has never had the kind of activity around it that it has this election cycle,” she told Artnet News in an email. “I think it indicates how tense this election is, and how much people have had elections on their mind, as well as the question around the peaceful transition of power following an election.”



Nina Katchadourian, *Monument to the Unelected* (2008–) at Pace Gallery, New York, 2020. Photo courtesy of the artist and Pace Gallery.

The piece is installed at art venues, such as Pace Gallery in New York and Catharine Clark Gallery in San Francisco, and on the lawns of private homes in Scottsdale, Arizona, and Madison, Wisconsin, where the Abrahamson Family Trust and Collection has placed it outside the family home of former State Supreme Court Justice Shirley

Abrahamson. Other venues include the Roots Community Health Center in Oakland.

Should Trump lose to former Vice President Joe Biden, a version of his campaign sign designed by Katchadourian would join ads for such historic losers as Thomas E. Dewey, who lost to Harry S. Truman in one of the biggest US presidential upsets in 1948; Alf Landon, who suffered the most lopsided defeats in US history against Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1936; and Aaron Burr, who became Thomas Jefferson's Vice President after receiving the second highest number of electoral votes in 1800.

The display perfectly mimics the real campaign signs you encounter at election time, blending almost seamlessly into its surroundings—until you look closely at the anachronistic names.

At each presentation of the work, a first-time voter will be tasked with adding the new lawn sign. Katchadourian has relied on the five presenting institutions—the Museum of Contemporary Art, Cleveland; Cleveland's Transformer Station; the Scottsdale Museum of Contemporary Art (which first commissioned the work); and the Grand Central Art Center in Orange, California—to connect her with local constituents.

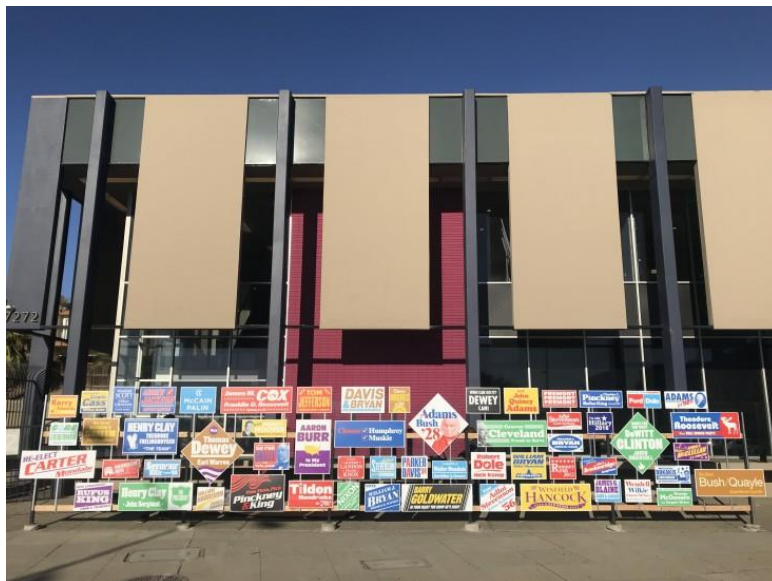
The planting of the signs will take place live on Zoom at 5 p.m. EST the Saturday after a winner is declared. Regardless of what happens on election night, and in the days and weeks to follow, Katchadourian is ready to go, with signs for both Trump and Biden waiting in the wings.

"History," she said, "clearly shows us you can't predict what's going to happen."

See more photos of the project below



Nina Katchadourian, *Monument to the Unelected* (2008–) at the the Grand Central Art Center, Orange, California, 2020. Photo courtesy of the artist and the Grand Central Art Center, Orange, California



Nina Katchadourian, *Monument to the Unelected* (2008–) at Roots Community Health Center, Oakland, 2020. Photo by Billy Davidson, courtesy of the artist and Roots Community Health Center, Oakland.



Nina Katchadourian, *Monument to the Unelected* (2008–) at moCa Cleveland, 2020. Photo courtesy of the artist and moCa Cleveland.



Nina Katchadourian, *Monument to the Unelected* (2008–) at the Abrahamson Family Collection home in Madison, Wisconsin, 2020. Photo by Karl Lang, courtesy of the artist and the Abrahamson Family Collection home.