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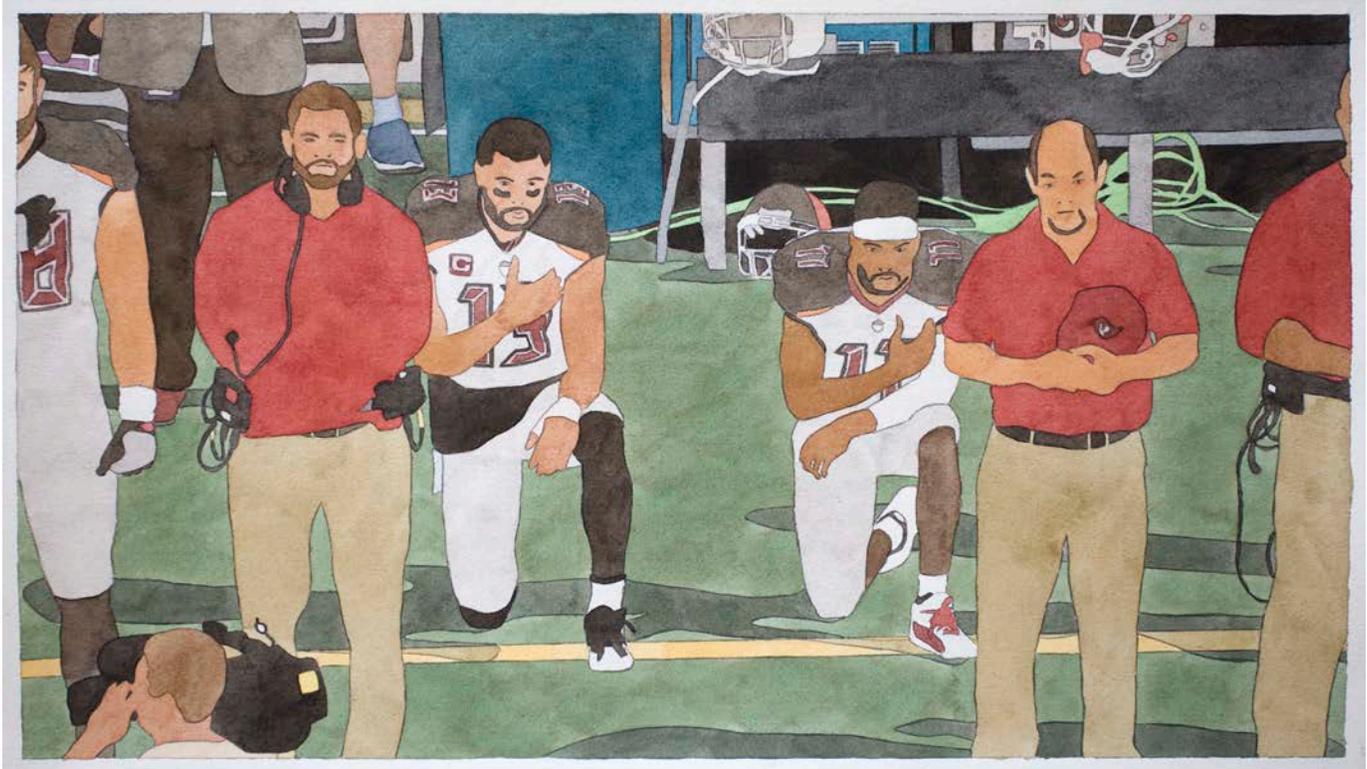
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Haines Gallery presents Kota Ezawa at Frieze New York 2019

Booth C15

May 2-5, 2019

Randall's Island Park, NY



Kota Ezawa, *National Anthem (Tampa Bay Buccaneers)*, 2019
Watercolor on paper, 10.5 x 19 inches, edition variée of 3

Haines Gallery proudly presents the work of multimedia artist **Kota Ezawa** at **Frieze New York 2019**.

Kota Ezawa (b. 1969, Cologne, Germany; lives and works in Oakland, CA and Berlin, Germany) repurposes images appropriated from the news, art history, and popular culture, reducing them to their essential visual elements to reveal intrinsic qualities that might otherwise be concealed. His lightboxes, animated videos, and works on paper explore how the mediated image shapes public perception and our memory of actual events, experiences, and thorny moments of our shared past.

At Frieze, Haines Gallery presents one of Ezawa's best known works, *The Simpson Verdict*, as well as pieces from two recent series: *The Crime of Art*, an animated video and related lightboxes chronicling high-profile museum heists and acts of art vandalism in real life and Hollywood films; and watercolors from his latest series, *National Anthem*. Ezawa's exhibition at Frieze takes place ahead of his participation in the 2019 Whitney Biennial.

The Simpson Verdict (2002) recreates a pivotal segment in the 1995 trial of former NFL player O.J. Simpson, who was infamously charged with the murder of his ex-wife Nicole Brown Simpson and her friend Ronald Goldman. Dubbed the "trial of the century," the

nationally televised courtroom proceeding was one of the most closely watched events in American history, bringing to the forefront the subject of race, justice, class, and celebrity at a time of fermenting racial tensions in Los Angeles and throughout the US.

Ezawa's seminal video animates the moment of Simpson's controversial acquittal. Simpson and his attorneys, prosecutors Marcia Clark and Christopher Darden, Judge Lance Ito and members of the jury, and the families of victims are all rendered in Ezawa's trademark pared down style. The flatness of the animation is sharply contrasted to the unmodified courtroom audio, and draws us to scrutinize each movement: the flicker of an eye, the twitch of a lip. Newly remastered in high definition, *The Simpson Verdict* remains as compelling today as when it was first created over 15 years ago.

The Simpson Verdict is exhibited in conversation with new works on paper from Ezawa's latest series, **National Anthem**, which examines the media spectacle, scrutiny, and national conversations surrounding professional athletes in the NFL kneeling during the national anthem to protest police brutality and the oppression of people of color. Even before this controversial practice, Ezawa has long been fascinated by scenes of the national anthem before sporting events, viewing them as particular moments of stillness and tension like a calm before the storm, a tension that is all the more pronounced when it becomes a site for questions of civil rights and institutionalized violence, patriotism and propriety, sports celebrity and the racialized (and politicized) bodies of black athletes race to play out.

Ezawa uses watercolor to recreate images of athletes from NFL teams including the New York Jets, Oakland Raiders, Tampa Bay Buccaneers, and Miami Dolphins. He often sourced his images from social media, following the ESPN's decision to cease broadcasting the national anthem before televised football games. *National Anthem (San Francisco 49ers)* depicts the watershed moment when former 49ers quarterback Colin Kaepernick took a knee in protest for the first time, on September 1, 2016. Kaepernick's lone kneeling figure is both centralized and viewed from a distance, highlighting his isolation in the early days of his protest. Other images show teammates linking arms in solidarity, creating powerful moments of solidarity and hope.



Video stills from *The Simpson Verdict*, 2002
Single-channel video, color, sound, 3 minutes (looped)



National Anthem (San Francisco 49ers), 2019
Watercolor on paper, 16.5 x 29 inches, edition variée of 3