

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**NEW CONTEMPORARY GALLERY MUSEUM AS RETAIL SPACE (MaRS)  
OPENS 6,000 SQUARE FOOT SPACE IN DOWNTOWN LOS ANGELES**

**GALLERY PREVIEW & PERFORMANCE • EMILY MAST • JANUARY 30, 2015**  
**INAUGURAL EXHIBITION • RAÚL DE NIEVES • FEBRUARY 13 - APRIL 1, 2015**



**Los Angeles, CA** - Museum as Retail Space (MaRS), a new contemporary art gallery located on the East Bank of the L.A. River at 649 South Anderson Street, will launch its 6,000-square-foot-space on Friday, January 30, 2015 at 8:30pm with a one-night only performative exhibition with Emily Mast and an inaugural six-week long exhibition of Raúl de Nieves will open on February, 13, 2015.

MaRS is founded by first-time gallery owner Robert Zin Stark. The historic 1923 facility, located adjacent to the Sixth Street Bridge, was purchased by Stark in 2013. The renovation of the space was based on his study of ancient temple architecture.

**The gallery's January 30 debut will also serve as the premier of a performance piece by Emily Mast, *The Stage is a Cage*.** The performance will produce a series of drawings and a sculptural set that will be included in Mast's upcoming solo exhibition at La Ferme du Buisson in France. MaRS will present the only public performance of the work; *The Stage is a Cage* is the first commercially available performance piece by Mast. Her work has been exhibited at LACMA, the Hammer Museum and Night Gallery in Los Angeles, Performa, Robert Rauschenberg Foundation Project Space and Simone Subal Gallery in New York, and Galeria Luisa Strina in São Paulo. The press release with further details about *The Stage is a Cage* is forthcoming.

***I'm in A Story* will be the inaugural exhibition, presenting the first extensive show of Raúl de Nieves's work in Los Angeles, opening on Friday, February 13, 2015.** De Nieves is a New York City based artist whose work spans intricate, figurative sculpture and painting, ornamental shoes and garments, multimedia performance and live music, with frequent references to high fashion, nightlife, Catholic symbolism, Mexican folklore, and fairy tales. De Nieves has shown at The Whitney Museum, MoMA PS1, MoMA San Francisco, MAD Museum, Performa, as well as appearing in Ryan Trecartin's films. The press release with further details about *I'm in A Story* is forthcoming.

**The second exhibition (dates TBA) will present the work of Jibade-Khalil Huffman in collaboration with American poet and author Claudia Rankine.** The exhibition will feature large-scale collaborative video and performance based work along with a number of individual video, photographic and sculptural works. Rankine is a chancellor of the Academy of American Poets and was recently short-listed for the National Book Award for her work chronicling everyday racism and the violence inherent in language. Huffman's work has been exhibited at the Hammer Museum, MOCA, MoMA/PS1, LA><ART, Machine Project, Public Fiction, Night Gallery, and the Museum of Contemporary African Diasporan Arts.

MaRS' programing will focus on immersive solo exhibitions of regional and international contemporary artists, scheduling seven to eight shows annually. MaRS is placing an importance on solo shows to encourage gallery visitors to be subsumed by an artist's respective aesthetic and conceptual arguments.

The gallery's curatorial practice will follow a consumer-constructivist model, positing that one creates meaning in present society through consumptive participation, intended to empower collectors and future collectors as being intrinsic to the canonization of art. This is a synthetical curatorial practice to founding MoMA director Alfred Barr's belief in pedagogy for "the educated consumer" and collective spectatorship promoted by El Lissitzky and other founders of the Bauhaus.

MaRS will start as an ongoing exhibition space and will announce a limited roster of represented artists in its second year of programming.

#### Architecture and Building History

The brick structure was built in 1923 in "the Flats" (the floodplain below Boyle Heights) as an alcohol bottling and distillery plant in prohibition-era Los Angeles. The last occupant, before purchase by MaRS, was an illegal marijuana nursery - which became known after a heat lamp fire which burned down everything but the brick walls in 2012. The renovation of the space retained the fire-scarred floors, only refinishing them to provide an even surface.



The exhibition space is maximized by a mitochondrial layout, creating five distinct spaces, as well as a front gallery room that becomes a window display visible from the street. The lighting was engineered with moonlight-balanced (4100 Kelvin) arrays, but designed with a reference to basic supermarkets. A 700-square-foot-succulent garden was added to the gallery's outdoor space using a non-sequitur architectural cinder block design.

The location of the gallery, pocketed underneath the largest bridge in Los Angeles, is meant to be detached from everyday societal dynamics, requiring a sort of necessary pilgrimage. The gallery door is a thousand-pound, ten-foot-by-eight-foot single-pane of glass, balanced on a central pivot axis, requiring the enterer to compare their body weight against it. The antechamber of the gallery is designed to disorient the participant, with stark black bars that project and recess into the white space - a reference to ancient processions sharply using light and shadow for the same purpose. This antechamber will further be occupied by Shop!; a curated bookshop with a constellation of ideas and cultural references. Finally, there are a series of broad steps that lift the traveler into the expansive vaulted exhibition space, intending to concurrently open them to a state of receptivity.

#### Shop! - a curated retail shop

The entrance of the gallery will house a book and object retail space named "Shop!". The shop will consistently offer 72 titles and pieces, selected for their relative disparate paradigms, with an emphasis on highly produced publications. An international range of publishers such as Phaidon, MIT Press, Ridinghouse, Sternberg Press, Gestalten, Prestel, Distanz, and Artbook will be available.

#### About the Owner

Robert Zin Stark was born in Los Angeles and raised as a dual-citizen of Brazil. He is a graduate of Art Center College of Design. A sales wunderkind, Robert has produced record sales numbers for several high-end design and objet d'art dealers in Los Angeles including Twentieth, DIVA Group, and Alexandre Ferucci. Prior to his career in sales, Robert worked in the production of cinema and music videos, most notably as a supporting producer on *Little Joe*, the feature length documentary about Andy Warhol superstar Joe Dallesandro which premiered at the Berlin Film Festival in 2009. Robert's impetus for Museum as Retail Space started in 2011 as a pop-up concept intended to exhibit the work of friends. The pop-up concept further evolved into a fixed gallery location. Robert discovered 649 South Anderson Street in early 2013 and Museum as Retail Space was founded.

Image credit: Museum as Retail Space

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Media Contact:

Jessica McCormack

jessica@marsgallery.net

646.385.6108