

MARK KELNER

Solaris

SHELTER FOR THE NEXT COLD WAR

WE LIVE IN A MOMENT of cultural, social and political inflection, where past prescriptions for constructing a perfect world are crumbling in what feels like permanent emergency. Yet, the replacements for archaic ideas remain unclear; a bright future often feels, at best, tenuous. New media fuels an ever-increasing proliferation of messages promising a better life and greater connection with others, but which do little more than present conflicting pictures of what is real, fact, and truth. Amidst this din, how do we distinguish truth from the empty promises of politics, consumerism, and entertainment?

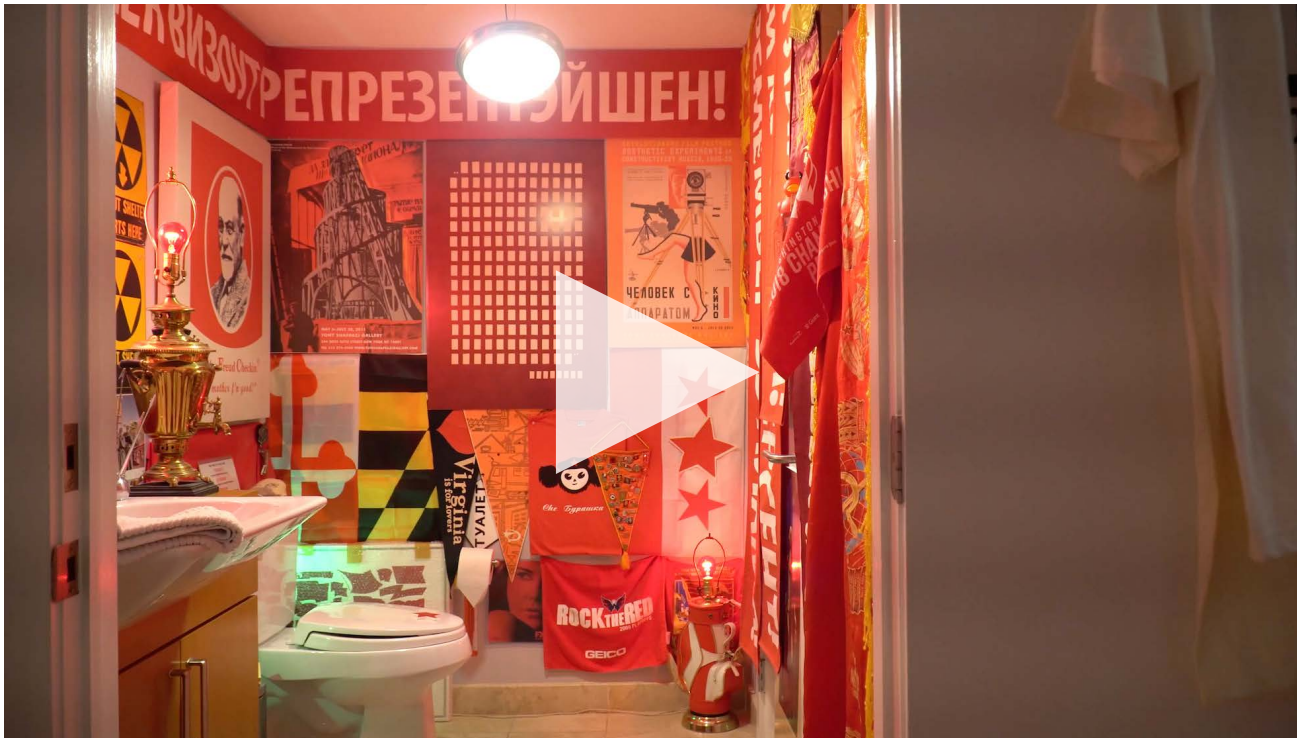
This is an emergency. But whereas past crises threatened physical destruction—the Red Scare, the Cuban Missile Crisis, global nuclear proliferation, and the successive implosions of the Soviet and Russian economies – today’s emergency is the assault on the foundational ideas that define our communities and our ability to maintain an individual identity. How should an individual respond? Where do we find shelter and solace amidst contemporary cacophony? What must we retain to sustain our sense of self?

Mark Kelner explores these questions by amplifying and blending the imagery and messages swirling across daily life that tell us how to think and act. Conceived in Moscow, born in Ohio, and raised by television, Kelner

draws on his experience as an émigré child of the Cold War to contemplate the sources of individual identity in what feels like a renewed Cold War between Russia and the United States. What does it mean to be American, Russian, or anything when Russia’s attacks on our democracy call into question the values that bind us as a country? Within these emerging divisions between America and Russia, Kelner imagines stark similarities. His paintings, sculptures and media pieces mix familiar images from advertising and corporate branding, and pop culture with symbols from Russian and Soviet visual culture and art history to satirize and critique our own concepts of what is American, what is right, and what is real.

The works on view appropriate symbols of identity – some endogenous and others imposed – to explore broader themes of authority and power in contemporary politics and commerce, individual expressions of national, religious and class identity, and civic agency and power in a radical moment. Together, they reimagine and juxtapose U.S. and Russian political and economic symbols to raise questions about how we might find shelter from the evolving dynamic between the two countries: Who will lead our communities? What do we need to sustain ourselves? What should we believe?

PROJECT CONCEPT (click images to view videos)



EXHIBITION VIEWS: CULTURE HOUSE, WASHINGTON DC



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EXHIBITION VIEWS: CULTURE HOUSE, WASHINGTON DC



EXHIBITION VIEWS: MARTHA'S TABLE, WASHINGTON DC



PRESS (click images to view videos and articles)

The Washington Post

EXPRESS | WEEKEND PASS

Democracy Dies in Darkness

Don't miss this massive art party in a soon-to-be-demolished D.C. building



By [Sadie Dinefelder](#)
April 9, 2019 at 2:05 p.m. EDT



Любимое слово президента США на кириллице, «Сталинбакс» и Тупак Шакур — заключительный выпуск программы Макаревич. Цветков. Кофе

28 Июнь, 2019 07:53

Андрей Цветков Александр Берган



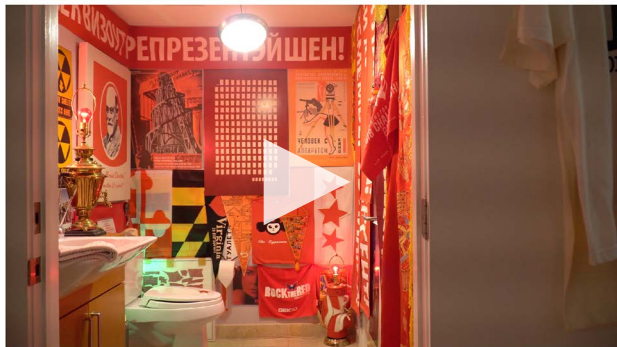
APR 2, 2019, 3:36 PM

9 Art Exhibits To Explore This Month

Pat Padua

[UMBRELLA](#) @ NO KINGS COLLECTIVE

April 12-14 at 2114 14th St. NW. Opening reception April 12, 5 p.m.-midnight. Open April 13, noon-midnight and April 14, noon-8 p.m. FREE



The Washington Post

MUSEUMS

Democracy Dies in Darkness

D.C. artist mixes politics and play in 'Solaris: Shelter for the Next Cold War'

By Michael J. Gaynor

June 19, 2019 at 5:11 p.m. EDT



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



Washington, DC Mayor Muriel Boswer holding up a decorated Home Depot Cup from “Solaris”



Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, (NY) visiting “Solaris” on its opening night

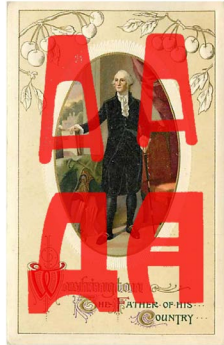


Leadership of DC’s chapter of Black Lives Matter with curator Zachary Paul Levine



“Cruxfix” as part of a lecture introducing students to conceptual art at Virginia Commonwealth University

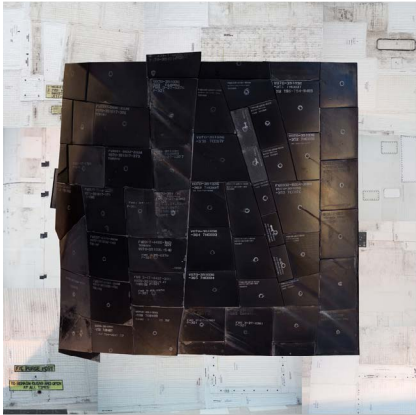
SELECTED MERCH



OBJECTS OF INFLUENCE



SELECTED WORKS



Black Square for Outer Space
31.3 x 31.3 inches, 2016



Shapes of Influence
20.86 x 20.86 inches, 2015



Got Malevich?
31.3 x 31.3 inches, 2015



International Motherfuckers
42 x 42 inches, 2018



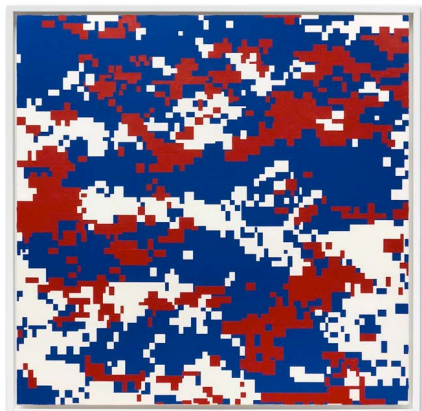
Stalinbucks
36 inches diameter, 2013



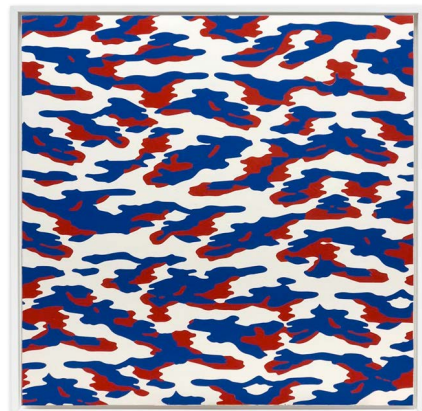
White Album on White
31.25 x 31.25 inches, 2015



Do Not Center
36 x 36 inches, 2015



Militarized Self-Portrait
40 x 80 inches, 2014



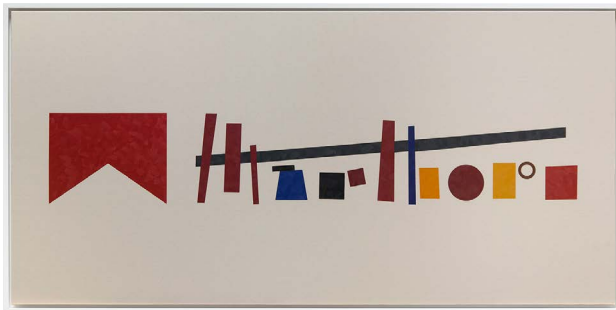
SELECTED WORKS



Sunset, (After Roy Rogers)
24 x 57.25 inches, 2017



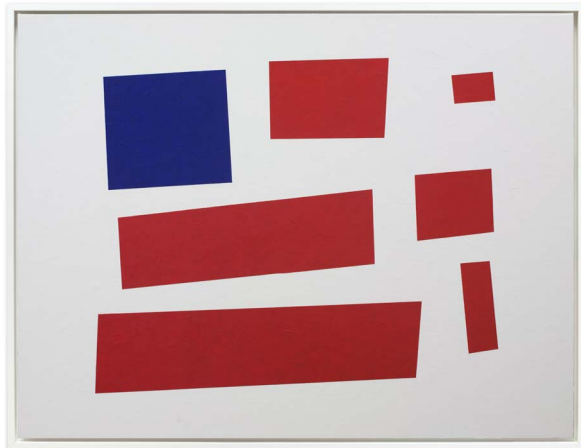
Mob, (Dedicated to Hans Haacke)
31 x 57 inches, 2015



Marlboro by Malevich
38 x 78 inches, 2015



McDonalds by Malevich
38 x 78 inches, 2015

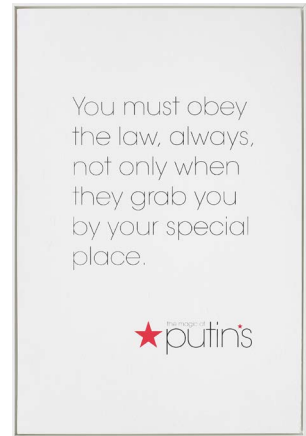
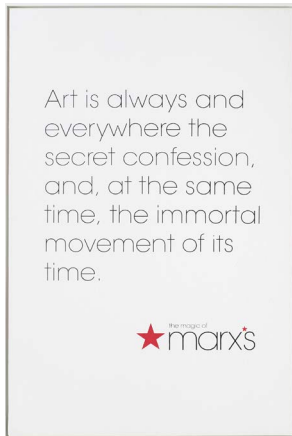


Russian American Flag, I
35 x 46 inches 2016



Three Maryland Flags, (after Jasper Johns)
31 x 45.5 inches, 2016

SELECTED WORKS



Psalms, (Macy's Triptych)
32 x 96 inches, 2013



XXX
40 x 36 inches, 2015



Hero
32 x 48 inches, 2013



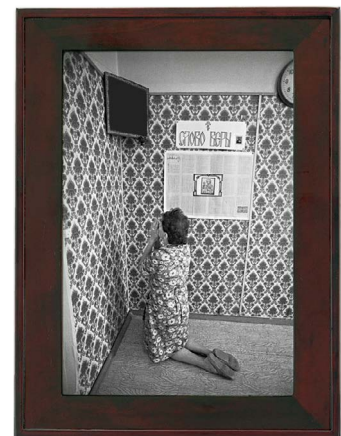
Jasper Johns for Target
29.75 x 26 inches, 2016



Post-Soviet Man
13.5 x 10.5 inches, 2014



PR_G__S_, (after Shepard Fairey)
19.5 x 15.5 inches, 2013



Ikon of an Ikon
2.25 x 3.25 inches, 2014

SELECTED WORKS



Three Pennants
15 x 41 inches, 2014



Budweiser by Brancusi
31 x 24 inches, 2016



Crucifix
65 x 55.25 inches, 2012



400 Years of American Sloganism
35 x 55 inches, 2011



Levi's by Lissitzky
17 x 38 inches, 2016



Black Square Skateboard
8.5 x 8.5 x 3 inches, 2014