

Showing truth to power

Solo exhibition: 5 October 2017 – 21 December 2017

David Krut Projects (DKP) Chelsea, New York, October 2017



Showing truth to power - lithography on paper, 55 cm x 66 cm

My third solo exhibition opened at DKP in Chelsea, New York, in October 2017. In February of that year, I had travelled to the United States for a print residency and had made works in preparation for the exhibition during that time. The residency took place one month after the inauguration of Donald Trump as the 45th president of the United States and many people were still reeling and outraged at that news. The residency was at the Centre for Contemporary Print (CCP) in Connecticut and, working with master printer Jim Reid, I produced two traditional stone lithographs: *showing truth to power* and *little dystopia*. The works, in which I attempted to look more broadly at the political habit of abuse of power, were made in part as my response to the discussions that were happening at the time around Trump as President.

During this time, I investigated the practice of traditional French lithography with its foundations in social commentary and political ribaldry and the medium's populous early history associated with broadsheet publications. The two works explored the idea of the strength of the individual as eyewitness, and the power of the recorded image as established by social media like YouTube. Documented actions recorded informally have the possibility of acting as a form of public watchdog, the potential of which has not existed before – the ability of an individual, armed with only a simple cell phone camera, to disseminate images that can be used to hold those in power accountable for their

wrongdoings and brutalities previously hidden from public scrutiny. Instances of this are becoming more frequent as evidenced by the recent video clips of the killing of George Floyd that went viral, exposing police brutality and demanding redress through the Black Lives Matter campaign.

The print *showing truth to power* was used by CCP as their collector's mystery print for 2017.



little dystopia – lithograph [drawing on stone] 55 cm x 66 cm

Continuing to investigate the sense of disquiet and disruption, the rest of the show at DKP attempted to examine, more broadly, ideas of suppressed truths, misplaced trust, instability, disharmony and trickery in a less direct and more informal way. Works on the show included lithography, charcoal drawings and smoke drawings as well as a combination of the two. *Elephant in the room* and *circus lives, spinning truths* worked with the elusive and unstable medium of smoke while others, like the *man who lost his head*, and *the long sleep of remorse*, are heavier, more brooding works in the by-products of the burning, the ash and charcoal.

A second, smaller series of smoke drawings, *head cases*, inspired by masks seen in African art collections in New York, was included in the show. The drawings were made in response to particular head pieces I had seen displayed in the Metropolitan Museum's African art collection. These wonderful, surreal head modifications are part of different West African cultural mask traditions and reminded me of contemporary visualisations of psychological disturbances, thus extracting psychological implications from the existing pieces.

The show consisted of 12 works produced entirely while working in the USA on residency and for the show.

Catalogue for Fuir was produced by Foundation Blachere

Supporting images – *head cases*



Second Thoughts [mukenga kuba]
Smoke on paper 61 cm x 45 cm



keeping a stiff upper lip [Benin] queen mother - smoke on paper 61 cm x 45 cm

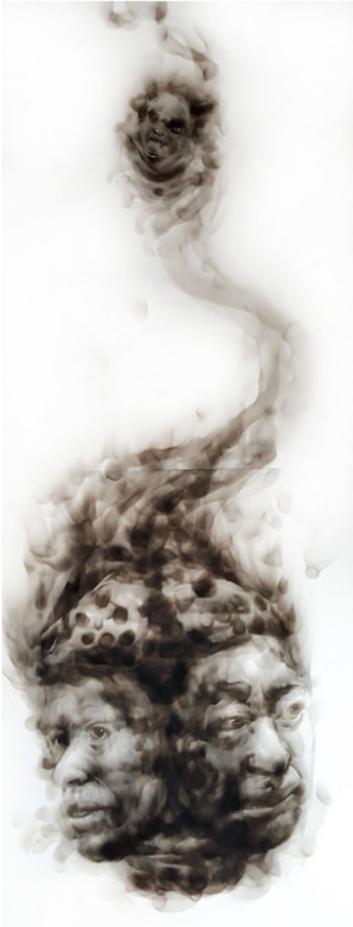




Thinking of you [Yoruba - gelede mask]
Smoke on paper 61 cm x 45 cm



The man who lost his head
Charcoal and smoke 61 cm x 48 cm



Ideas that got away - Janus [nkuambok] Boki
Smoke on paper 122 cm x 49 cm



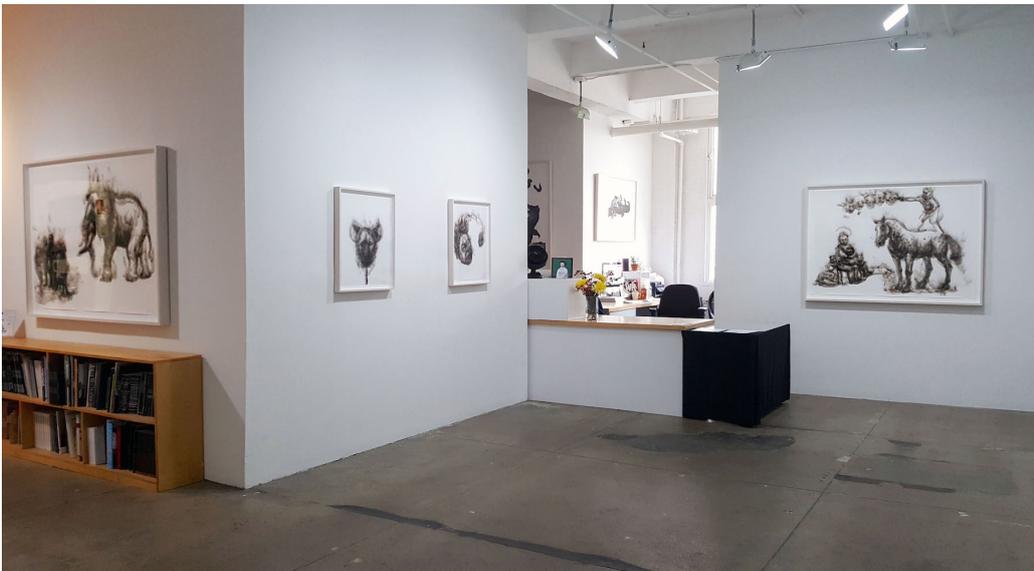
Long sleep of Remorse – charcoal on paper 112 cm x 149 cm



Spinning truths, circus lives .
Smoke on paper 115 cm x 148 cm



A matter ignored
Smoke on paper 115 cm x 148 cm
Installation shots – DKP



<https://davidkrutprojects.com/exhibitions/45651/showing-truth-to-power>