



Berlin, 4 September 2024

PRESS RELEASE

Hamburger Bahnhof – Nationalgalerie der Gegenwart

Invalidenstraße 50/51, 10557 Berlin, Germany

Tue, Wed, Fri 10 a.m. – 6 p.m., Thu 10 a.m. – 8 p.m., Sat + Sun 11 a.m. – 6 p.m.

Mark Bradford. Keep Walking

6 September 2024 – 18 May 2025

A special exhibition of the Nationalgalerie – Staatliche Museen zu Berlin

Opening: Thursday, 5 September 2024, 7 p.m.

GENERALDIREKTION

PRESS – COMMUNICATION – SPONSORS

Stauffenbergstraße 41
10785 Berlin

MECHTILD KRONENBERG

HEAD OF DIVISION

FIONA GEUSS

PRESS OFFICER NATIONALGALERIE

Tel: +49 30 3978 34-16

Mobile: +49 151 527 51 565

presse@smb.spk-berlin.de

www.smb.museum/presse

Renowned American artist Mark Bradford launches his much-anticipated first solo exhibition in Germany, marking the reopening of the historic Rieckhallen at the Hamburger Bahnhof. This bold showcase, entitled "Mark Bradford: Keep Walking", features 20 dynamic works spanning two decades, including paintings, sculptures, expansive installations, and videos. The exhibition, which runs from September 7, 2024, offers an immersive exploration of race, gender, and economic inequality, presenting a compelling narrative that engages both the mind and the senses. One of the exhibition's highlights is the monumental hanging sculpture "Spoiled Foot", originally created for the US Pavilion at the 2017 Venice Biennale. Also featured are the multimedia installation "Pinocchio Is On Fire" (2010/2015), which confronts the AIDS crisis of the 1980s, and the walkable floor painting "Float" (2019/2024), specifically adapted for this exhibition. Visitors are invited to physically engage with these works, becoming aware of their own movement through space and reflecting on the resilience of marginalised communities in the face of systemic violence and oppression.

Mark Bradford (*1961, Los Angeles, California) is an artist whose work encompasses painting, sculpture, installations, and videos. Bradford's work is deeply rooted in socio-political issues, often reflecting the lived realities of Black Americans and drawing from his own experiences growing up in Los Angeles. His distinctive abstract compositions are crafted from found objects and everyday materials like posters and newspaper clippings, many of which are sourced from his hometown. This exhibition draws a powerful parallel between the journeys depicted in Bradford's work and the history of the Hamburger Bahnhof, originally a 19th-century train station symbolising arrival and departure—key themes that resonate throughout Bradford's oeuvre.

"Mark Bradford: Keep Walking" opens with the striking paintings "You Don't Have to Tell Me Twice" (2023), which reference train schedules from the era of the Great Migration—a period when millions of Black Americans fled the southern United States between 1910 and 1970. The exhibition also delves into the role of media in shaping stereotypes, as seen in "Pinocchio Is On Fire", which features a sound tunnel, 27 vinyl records, and the poignant video "Spiderman" (2015). This installation addresses a 1982 media incident involving R&B singer Teddy Pendergrass and a trans dancer, with each of the 27 vinyl covers designed by Bradford representing an acquaintance of the artist who died from AIDS.

Taking photographs is solely permitted for the current press coverage of the exhibition/event. For any further use of photos you are required to clarify issues of copyright and usage rights independently in advance. You are responsible for obtaining further rights (e.g. copyrights for works of art portrayed, personal rights etc.).



From 2006-2010, Bradford created the first **Merchant Posters** using advertising posters from Leimert Park in Los Angeles. The colorful posters were originally targeted at low-income communities. The large-scale canvases of the "**End Paper**" (2024) series, created for the exhibition, are made from rectangular paper sheets of the same name, used in hair salons to protect hair from heat. Bradford is familiar with these from his work as a teenager in his mother's salon. Another significant work is "**Death Drop**" (2023), a sculpture that captures Bradford's own larger-than-life figure in a pose that references a dance move from the ballroom scene, which emerged in Black and Latin American LGBTQ+ communities in 1960s New York. This powerful piece underscores the physicality and presence central to Bradford's work. To reach the last room of the exhibition, visitors walk over the floor painting "Float" (2019/2024) made from hundreds of strips of canvas, paper, and ropes.

The exhibition culminates with the video "**Niagara**" (2005), displayed on a suspended canvas. This piece reinterprets Marilyn Monroe's iconic walk from the 1953 film "Niagara", replacing Monroe with Bradford's former neighbour Melvin, who strides confidently down a Los Angeles boulevard. The video challenges viewers to reflect on their own perceptions of space and race, as Melvin, a young Black man, asserts his right to move freely despite societal prejudices.

Mark Bradford, a graduate of the California Institute of the Arts, has held major solo exhibitions at institutions such as Tate, the Whitney Museum of American Art, and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. In 2017, he represented the United States at the Venice Biennale. Beyond his artistic practice, Bradford is a co-founder of "Art + Practice," a non-profit organisation in Los Angeles that supports foster youth and promotes access to contemporary art.

A **public conversation with Mark Bradford** will be held on **Saturday, 7 September 2024, at 3:00 p.m.** as part of the series "In Conversation," funded by Deutsche Bank. **Admission is free**, and no registration is required.

Accompanying the exhibition is a catalogue published by Silvana Editoriale Milano, part of the Hamburger Bahnhof series. The exhibition is curated by Sam Bardaouil and Till Fellrath, Directors of Hamburger Bahnhof – Nationalgalerie der Gegenwart.

Following its run in Berlin, "Mark Bradford: Keep Walking" will travel to the Amorepacific Museum of Art (APMA) in Seoul in August 2025 (7 August 2025 – 4 January 2026), and will be shown at the Kunstmuseum Bern from February 2026 (13 February 2026 – 5 July 2026).

The exhibition is proudly supported by the Hamburger Bahnhof International Companions e.V.

GENERALDIREKTION
PRESS – COMMUNICATION – SPONSORS

Stauffenbergstraße 41
10785 Berlin

MECHTILD KRONENBERG
HEAD OF DIVISION

FIONA GEUSS
PRESS OFFICER NATIONALGALERIE

Tel: +49 30 3978 34-16
Mobile: +49 151 527 51 565

presse@smb.spk-berlin.de
www.smb.museum/presse