



## SAN FRANCISCO

### Robert Minervini: "Invisible Reflections" at Rena Bransten Projects

"Invisible Reflections: A Narrative of Six Monuments," a series by SF-based Robert Minervini, combines the real with the imagined, the series focusing on monuments located in Golden Gate Park. Minervini is equally interested in sharing the background story behind their creation, providing a kind of visual history lesson. This series was initially installed in the city's MUNI bus kiosks, part of the Art on Market Street poster series supported by the SF Arts Commission. Recently the original artwork was on view at Rena Bransten's new, scaled-down interim location on Market St., pending their eventual move to the up-and-coming Dogpatch district.

Each of the vertically-oriented acrylic paintings on paper features a deeply saturated background in intense colors that make a bold chromatic shift, a foil for the silkscreened overlays of symbolic imagery traced in white paint. The haunting *Portals of the Past (with Original Home)* (2014) focuses on a marble portico that was all that remained of the Nob Hill home of the A.N. Towne family after the 1906 earthquake and fire; the façade was since relocated to Golden Gate Park, at the edge of Lloyd Lake. Composed of six columns supporting a marble top, the portal is the only monument commemorating the earthquake. It appears to dissolve into the ghostly mansion sketched out around it, while graceful groves of eucalyptus trees are abstracted into a flattened pattern. If these layered compositions are more printlike than painterly—the layers thin and surface flat—their considerable strength resides largely in the clever way that the artist uses color and disrupts space, along with the works' conceptual underpinnings. *The Sarah B. Cooper*

*Memorial (with The Sarah B. Cooper Elementary School)* (2014), on a background ranging from gray violet to hot pink, portrays this early champion of women's rights in SF. Notably, it is one of few such monuments to a female figure. A solemn portrait of Cooper, who had a tragic life, is inserted on the right, while a large branch crosses the image near the center, breaking up the composition in a lively manner. Other works, invented cityscapes, were inspired by a construction boom in Minervini's neighborhood. *In the Dust of the Future* (2015) is a striking large work on canvas, light coral outlines of absent trees hover and drip on a desolate, marshy landscape. These rather bleak and dystopian works suggest that man's presence in nature is adversarial, the sterile architectural elements vying with vaguely sinister foliage for ascendance.

—BARBARA MORRIS

"IN THE DUST OF THE FUTURE," 2015

Robert Minervini

ACRYLIC ON CANVAS, 50" x 60"

PHOTO: COURTESY RENA BRANSTEN PROJECTS