

Market Street Poster Series Reveals Untold Stories behind Iconic Golden Gate Park Monuments

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Robert Minervini's *Invisible Reflections: A Narrative of Six Monuments* poster series on view March 20 through May 29, 2015 between the Embarcadero and 8th Street.



William McKinley Monument

SAN FRANCISCO, March 20, 2015 – According to local artist Robert Minervini, “The John McLaren Statue is a memorial to a man who didn’t want one.” The interesting backstory behind this homage to Golden Gate Park’s creator is one of six forgotten histories revealed in Minervini’s Art on Market Street Poster series, *Invisible Reflections: A Narrative of Six Monuments*. Commissioned by the San Francisco Arts Commission (SFAC), the series investigates the intersection of nature and culture by showcasing six very different monuments from the City’s Civic Art Collection. Minervini was attracted to Golden Gate Park because of its collective ownership, and he selected the statuary located in the park for their rich history and relevance to our contemporaneous San Francisco.

“Robert Minervini’s poster series demonstrates how historic works of art can continue to provoke inquiry about the influence of the past on the present,” says Director of Cultural Affairs Tom DeCaigny. “At a time when the city is experiencing such rapid change, this body of work is an especially poignant reminder of our shared history and of those individuals whose influence is still felt in San Francisco.”

In addition to the John McLaren statue (ca. 1944), the other five monuments in the series include *Portals of the Past* (1909), the *Sara B. Cooper Memorial* (1939), *The Ball Thrower* (1889), *Poeme de la Vigne* (1877-1878) and the *William McKinley Memorial* (1904), all of which were selected because they feature

an historic figure who helped make San Francisco the city it is today. All of the artworks are located in Golden Gate Park with the exception of the *William McKinley Memorial*, which is located in the Panhandle. Executed in Minervini's painterly style, the posters are unified through the use of silkscreened line work, in which the artist hints at overlooked details, inspiring the public to look more inquisitively. Minervini states, "The city's history is written on its layered architecture, public and private spaces, and the monuments are part of this story."

In preparation for the commission, Minervini spent time with the Civic Art Collection and became well versed in the intricate histories of the monuments as evidenced in his interpretation of the John McLaren statue: "McLaren created Golden Gate Park and dedicated his life to the advocacy and development of the 1,017-acre park—one of the largest in the world. It has been noted that he never liked statues in parks and attempted to hide them behind shrubbery. This includes his own statue, which was made against his wishes. The statue is positioned directly on the ground (without a pedestal) to signify McLaren's connection to nature; in his lifetime, he planted two million trees. For this design, I have superimposed a map of Golden Gate Park over the image of his statue, which I have designed to be partially obscured by greenery."

The series will be on view from March 20 until May 29, 2015 along Market Street between the Embarcadero and 8th Street.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Robert Minervini (b. 1981, Secaucus, New Jersey, USA) is an artist who examines spatial environments and notions of utopia in large-scale, multi-layered acrylic works. Through utopian and dystopian cityscapes, landscapes, and floral still life arrangements, his work addresses the ecological impact of humanity on the landscape.

He received his MFA from the San Francisco Art Institute, and his BFA from Tyler School of Art. His work has been exhibited nationally, including solo shows with Marine Contemporary, Electric Works, Eleanor Harwood Gallery, a two-person exhibition with Johansson Projects, Littman Gallery, and group exhibitions with Waterhouse and Dodd, Schneider Museum of Art, Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, the Bedford Gallery, the The Brooklyn Historical Society, and the San Francisco Arts Commission Gallery. He is a recipient of the Murphy and Cadogan Fellowship by the San Francisco Foundation, the Edwin Austin Abbey Mural Fellowship by the National Academy of Fine Arts, and the Carmela Corso Scholarship by Tyler School of Art. He has completed multiple murals and public art works nationally. He has been a resident artist at the Bemis Center for Contemporary Arts, the Headlands Center of the Arts, the Vermont Studio Center. His art has been published in *New American Paintings* (No. 91 and No. 109), *Beautiful Decay*, and *Mural Art: Large Scale Art from Walls around the World*. Minervini's work has been reviewed in the *LA Times*, *Modern Painters*, *San Francisco Chronicle*, *Art Ltd.*, and featured in *ArtWeek LA*, *7x7 Magazine*, and *The Huffington Post*. In 2012, his work *The Fruitful Lands of Multitudes of Worlds (Behind the Surface of a Mirror)* was acquired by the Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego. He currently lives and works in Oakland and San Francisco.