

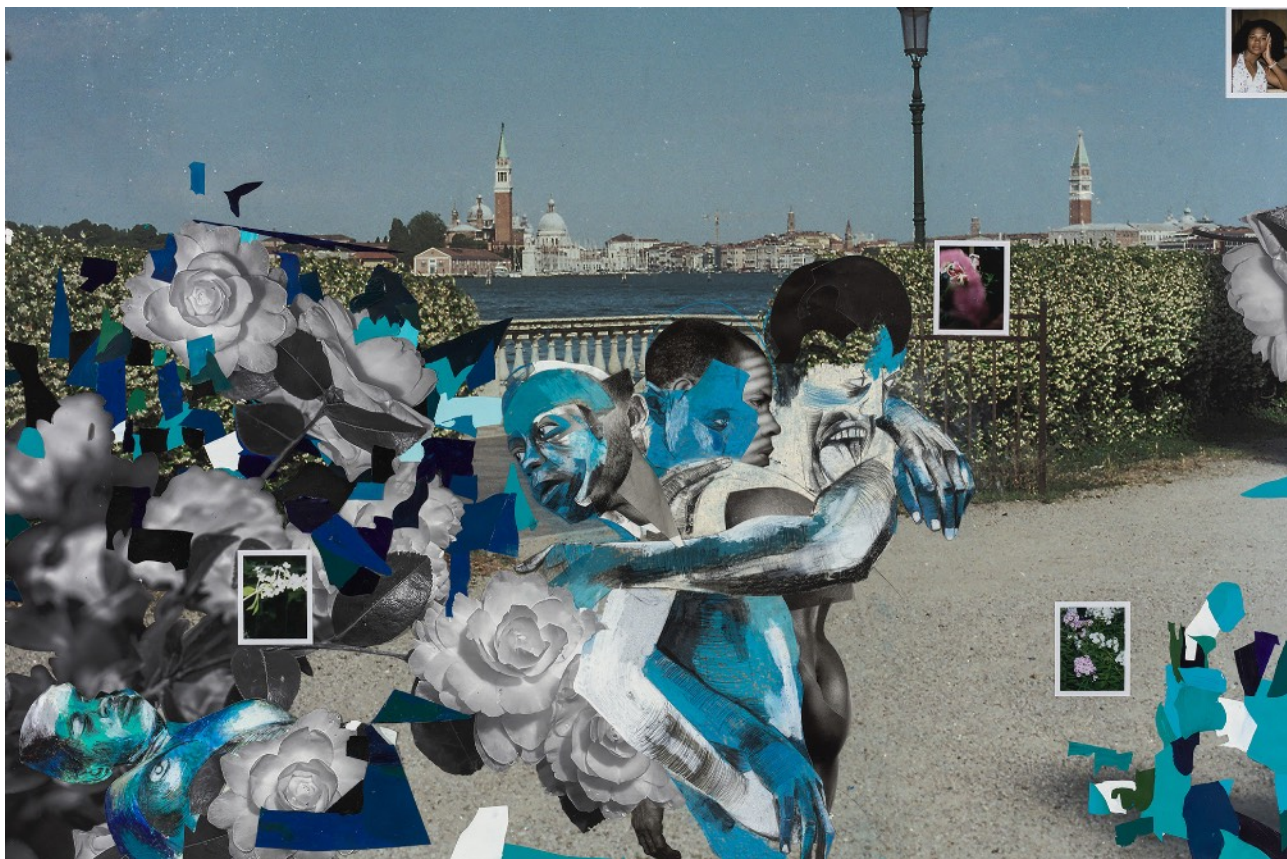
# Fraenkel Gallery

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For immediate release



## **Wardell Milan**

October 29 – December 22, 2020

Fraenkel Gallery is pleased to present new work by **Wardell Milan**. The gallery's second solo show of the New York-based artist will be on view from October 29 to December 22, 2020.

The exhibition features Milan's ongoing series "**Death, Wine, Revolt**," which combines photography, drawing, painting, collage, and sculpture to explore themes of over-indulgence, destruction, and revolution. While earlier series such as "Parisian Landscapes" looked inward, to personal questions of freedom and desire, Milan made the works on view in response to the turmoil of the global moment.

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In several large-scale works, Milan uses enlargements of his own photographs of specific locations—the Lorraine Motel in Memphis, where Martin Luther King was assassinated, or the city of Venice—setting his images in dialogue with historical sites of racist violence or political rebellion. Populating the works are a range of human figures, often nude, whose bodies are pieced together from fractured drawings and photographs, and overlaid with blue and white paint. Some groupings suggest erotic coupling or violent encounters, and many arrangements are based on photographic sources. In *2020, Los Feliz, Los Angeles*, Milan positions five figures in white Ku Klux Klan hoods against his own photograph of the city's hills. The arrangement of bodies is based on a found image of a Klan social gathering, and presents the white nationalists in a bland, contemporary California suburb. In *The Parade*, the arrangement of figures echoes Diane Arbus's *Untitled (7)*, from her final body of work made in a home for the developmentally disabled in New Jersey.

Also on view are a selection of smaller works, including white-on-white cut paper collages depicting hooded Klansmen, and paintings from Milan's ongoing series of tulips. While earlier flower paintings were inspired by the 17th-century Dutch tulip craze, the new works deconstruct the flowers, transforming them into chaotic arrangements of petals and leaves, hinting at the dissolutions the past year has wrought.

Wardell Milan (b. 1977, Knoxville, Tennessee) studied photography and painting at the University of Tennessee and Yale University. His works are in the collections of The Museum of Modern Art, New York; The Art Institute of Chicago; Museum of Contemporary Photography, Chicago; Denver Art Museum; Brooklyn Museum, New York; The Morgan Library & Museum, New York; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; The Studio Museum in Harlem, New York; UBS Art Collection; and Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, among others. Milan's work was the subject of the 2015 monograph *between late summer and early fall*, edited by Cay Sophie Rabinowitz and published by Osmos Books.

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Image: Wardell Milan, *1848, Venice, 2019, 2020*

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