JUXTAPOZ
Art & Culture

The Amazing Black-Man: Kumasi J. Barnett Revamps Classic Superheros @ Lowell Ryan Projects

Lowell Ryan Projects // July 13, 2019 - August 17, 2019

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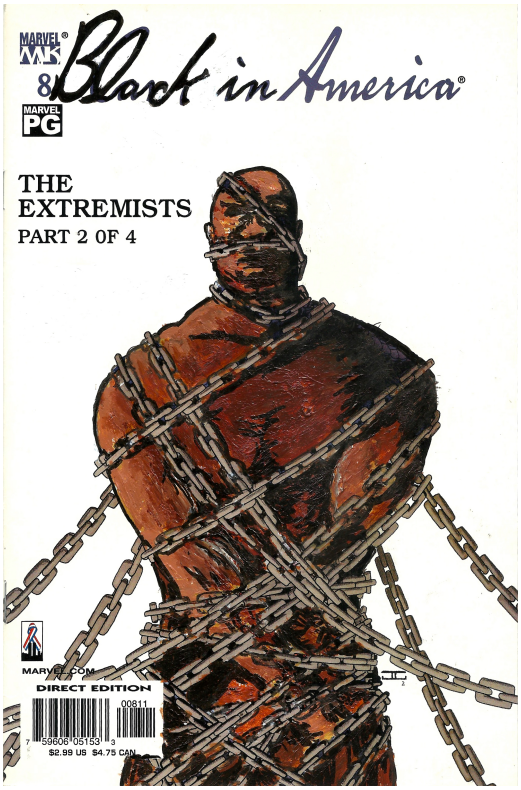

The Amazing Black-Man is opening soon at Lowell Ryan Projects. This exhibition by Brooklyn-based artist Kumasi J. Barnett is the artist's first solo show in Los Angeles. His works riff on classic superhero series including *The Amazing Spider-Man*, *The Incredible Hulk*, *Superman*, *Daredevil* and *Captain America*. The show features several dozen hand-painted comic book works pinned up in their clear plastic sleeves. For each work, Barnett has painted over the cover of an old *Marvel* or *DC* comic book, replacing familiar heroes with characters including "The Amazing Black-Man," "The Media's Thug," "Whitedevil," and "Police-Man."

LOWELL RYAN PROJECTS

In this metamorphic exhibit, Barnett replaces Spider-Man's full-body leotard with a hoodie and jeans, Superman's logo with the stars and bars of the Confederate flag, and turns the supernatural villains into—a no less brutal nemesis—the police. Here, alteration acts as an intervention. By addressing real-world issues through a superhuman genre, Barnett's work dissolves the disconnect between contemporary American narratives and the reality of "justice," making us reexamine cultural conceptions surrounding the Good versus Evil paradigm.

Barnett claims authorship over traditional comic book narratives while complicating the genre and its rigid tropes. His work leaves the narrative open and in doing so, he invites viewers to join in the authorial act and finish writing the story themselves. Be sure to catch this exhibit July 13 through August 17.