

# UNTITLED SPACE

## SARAH MAPLE, "THOUGHTS AND PRAYERS"

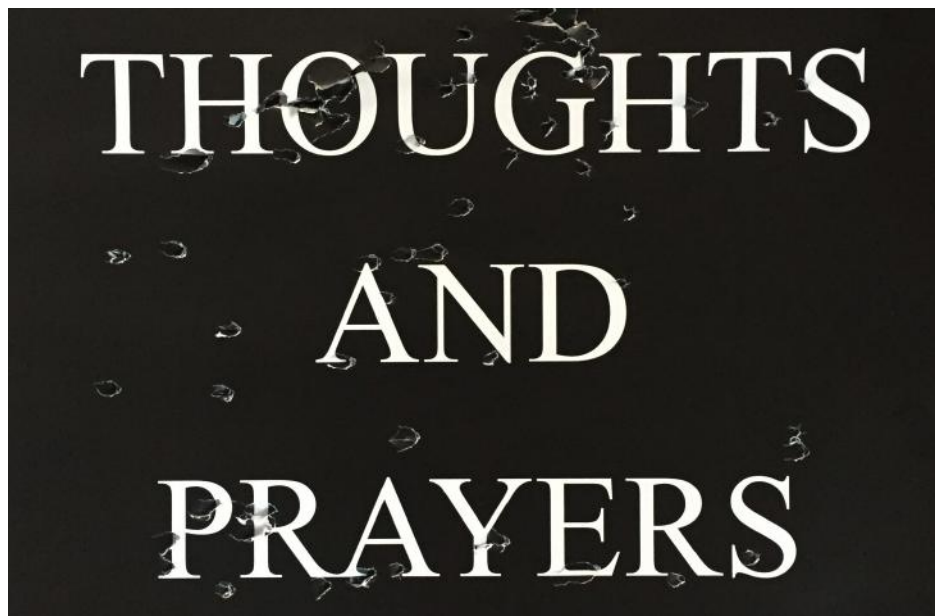
A Solo Exhibition Curated by Indira Cesarine

**EXHIBITION ON VIEW** January 22 – February 3, 2019

**OPENING RECEPTION** January 22 // 6pm-9pm

### THE UNTITLED SPACE

45 Lispenard Street Unit 1W  
NYC 10013



*Sarah Maple, "Thoughts and Prayers," 2018 (detail)*

**The Untitled Space** gallery is pleased to present, "**Thoughts and Prayers**," a solo exhibition of works by artist **Sarah Maple**, curated by gallery director Indira Cesarine, opening January 22, 2019, and on view through February 3, 2019. Sarah Maple is an award-winning visual artist known for her bold, brave, mischievous and occasionally controversial artworks that challenge notions of identity, religion and the status quo. Hailing from Britain, this will be the first solo exhibition of the artist in the United States. Much of Maple's inspiration originates from being raised Muslim, with parents of mixed religious and cultural backgrounds. "Thoughts and Prayers" will feature many new works, as well as a selection of some of her most notable past works, exploring a wide variety of media including performance, painting, photography, sculpture, collage, installation, and video. Maple's pro-feminist artwork provokes a dialogue with her sharp humor and satirical eye. She fearlessly addresses what it means to be a Muslim in the Western world. Her taboo-breaking artwork fights against censorship as she investigates themes of politics, violence, freedom, feminism, and the ironies of pop culture. She often employs self-portraiture as a vehicle for her narrative, or engages guerrilla-style performance as a means to convey her message.

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Sarah Maple, "Menstruate with Pride"

"Using her own image, and drawing on her experience as a Muslim woman, Sarah tackles society's many taboos, elevating those previously oppressed, and giving voice to those long since silenced." [-D Vice](#)

"Maple has made a name for herself over the years for pushing the boundaries of femininity, and for publicly discussing the convergence of her dual-Muslim heritage with feminism. Rather than crumble, Maple has an impressive resolve in the face of cyber adversity: she tries to laugh instead of cry... Maple hopes to examine where freedom of speech ends and abuse begins." [- Dazed Digital](#)

"Maple could well be the only artist to take on the Kardashians (with her 'Keeping Up With The Kapulets' show), stereotypes around Islam (with her 'I Love Orgasms' acrylic), and the taboos around menstruation (with her 'Menstruate With Pride' triptych). She has received a flurry of glowing reviews – and even more death threats." [- Good Trouble](#)

"I think we need to be challenged, we need to hear challenging, radical, provocative things, even if we don't agree with them, as it's those things that make us react and make us want to bring about change..." Sarah Maple for [TEDx](#)

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Sarah Maple, "The Opposite to a Feminist", "Fighting Fire With Fire", "Read My Lips"

Sarah Maple graduated with BA in Fine Art from Kingston University London in 2007 and in the same year won The Saatchi Gallery's "4 New Sensations" award for emerging artists. Maple's artwork, film, and performances have been exhibited internationally at galleries and institutions including Tate Britain, The Barbican, AIR Gallery, and The New Art Exchange, among many others. Maple's work has been the subject of documentaries including for ARTE and VPRO. In 2015 she released her first book "You Could Have Done This," a hardback of selected works. The same year she was awarded a Sky Academy Arts scholarship from Sky Arts, which included funding, mentoring and a Sky Arts documentary. In 2017 she gave a TEDx talk in Birmingham, UK on the importance of free speech, titled "The Freedom To Be Challenged."

Her work has been featured in numerous international publications, including *Vogue*, *The Guardian*, *i-D Magazine*, *The Sunday Times UK*, *The Independent*, *People Magazine*, *Dazed*, and the *Huffington Post* among many others. In 2018 she was invited to make a limited edition cover for *Harper's Bazaar's* art issue alongside artists including Yayoi Kusama, Barbara Kruger, and Linder Sterling. Her artwork is in collections including Soho House, The Hyman Collection and the Ned. Sarah lives and works in Sussex, England.

## ARTIST STATEMENT

"My work is largely motivated by my upbringing as well as my interest in activism and gender politics. Citing current affairs I create works that provoke the viewer through satirical, tongue-in-cheek commentary. My mother is a Muslim from Kenya, who married my British father in the 1970s. She raised me as a Muslim in the UK and sent my siblings and I to a Catholic school. Much of my work examines the duality of my multicultural upbringing and the conflict of identity among young Muslims living in the western world. I began to explore these themes after reflecting on Muslim identity in Britain post 9/11 and 7/7 and the impact of the Iraq war. Motivated by the current political climate and being from an immigrant background, these subjects are close to my heart as I question notions of identity, belonging, and "otherness" in my works.

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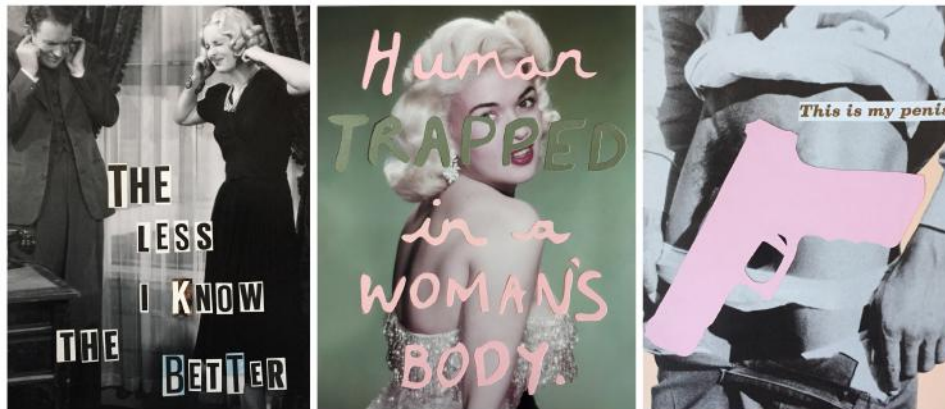
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Sarah Maple, "Go Home"

I see many parallels between the UK and the US, especially with Brexit and the Trump election. The gun debate is something especially intriguing to the British. The threat of terror is continually focused on and yet nothing is done about gun laws. When officials offer up "Thoughts And Prayers," it appears hollow and insincere. I am interested in how a lack of action directly and/or indirectly inflicts suffering and potential violence on its citizens.



Sarah Maple, "The Less I Know", "Human Trapped", "This Is My Penis"

Also inspired by feminism and gender politics, my work aims to challenge deep-seated ideas about what it means to be a woman. I am interested in the role shame plays in women's lives - how we take up space in the world, our physical appearance, bodily functions and "blame culture." I explore the ways we can change the visual narrative for women as a form of empowerment. The medium I choose is determined by the strongest

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way to deliver my message; hence it is constantly evolving across a wide variety of media. Self-portraiture, for example, offers the possibility of taking ownership of our image. When we photograph ourselves, we have complete control over how we want our selves, our gender, our femininity, and our sexuality to be perceived by others. Humor is also an important element in my work. I often use a "Trojan horse" to get my message across and sometimes I just like to point out the obvious as this can be the most direct way to highlight how ridiculous something is. I used to accept a lot at face value but when I discovered feminism it motivated me not only to question the role of women, but also the preconceived ideas relating to all things in society." – Artist Sarah Maple

*Maple's exhibition will be the first of a series of solo exhibitions presented by The Untitled Space throughout 2019 featuring artists with an extraordinary body of work that aligns with the gallery's mission to promote women in art and unique voices that are under-represented.*

**ABOUT THE UNTITLED SPACE:**

The Untitled Space is an art gallery located in Tribeca, New York in a landmark building on Lispenard Street. Founded in 2014 by Indira Cesarine, the gallery features an ongoing curation of exhibits of emerging and established contemporary artists exploring conceptual framework and boundary pushing ideology through mediums of painting, sculpture, printmaking, photography, video and performance art. The gallery is committing to exploring new ideas vis-à-vis traditional and new mediums and highlights a program of "Women in Art" as well as special events aligned with our creative vision.

**Exhibition Contacts:**

The Untitled Space [info@untitled-space.com](mailto:info@untitled-space.com)

**Website link:** <http://untitled-space.com/sarah-maple-thoughts-and-prayers/>