

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**RALPH ZIMAN'S THE CASSPIR PROJECT TOURS ATLANTA**  
**SEPTEMBER – NOVEMBER, 2024**



Policemen Sit On Their Truck After a Tear Gas Canister Goes Off  
C-Print on Kodak Endura Paper, 44" x 74", 2018

Ralph Ziman's expansive series **The Casspir Project** will be touring the Atlanta area for several exhibitions and activations aimed at social and educational engagement. Portrayed through photography, sculpture, film and installation, The Casspir Project reclaims and repurposes imagery and objects of apartheid, transforming symbols of oppression into icons of peace.

The Casspir Project's Atlanta tour will begin at the [Atlanta Contemporary](#) from **September 26–October 6**, then will exhibit at the [Atlanta Art Fair \(Booth B05\)](#) from **October 3–6**, and the last display of The Casspir Project will take place at the [Emma Darnell Aviation Museum and Conference Center](#) from **October 18–November 15**.

The central element of The Casspir Project is *SPOEK-1*, a 11-ton, 22-foot-long reclaimed Casspir—an Apartheid-era armored police vehicle—adorned with about 70 million individual colorful glass beads. To realize the work, Ziman refurbished a hull found in a scrapyards, and collaborated with nearly a hundred South African artisans to decorate it. Drawing on the artist's childhood growing up in the Apartheid climate, *SPOEK-1* intends to educate and inspire change, repurposing an object symbol of oppression and turning it into a celebration of South African craftspeople, a symbol of peace and collaboration.

Alongside *SPOEK-1*, The Casspir Project includes a series of photographs, sculptures and a short documentary including historical footage of the Casspir being used by the police, as well as personal interviews with South Africans about their experiences during Apartheid.

Different elements of The Casspir Project will be on view throughout the tour in Atlanta. *SPOEK-1* will be on view outside Atlanta Contemporary from September 26–October 6; Atlanta Art Fair (October 3–6) will feature a booth with photography and installation from the project; and all of The Casspir Project's elements will be on view at Emma Darnell Aviation Museum and Conference Center from October 18–November 15. Additionally, the Atlanta tour of The Casspir Project will be Co-Curated by Denise Jackson, an Atlanta local and the International Curator & Founder of the cultural organization Town + Culture.

### **THE VEHICLE | SPOEK 1**

A restored and refitted 11-ton, 22-foot-long apartheid-era Casspir police vehicle serves as the centerpiece for The Casspir Project. The vehicle's surface is fully covered in brightly-colored, traditional patterns of handwoven glass beadwork, completed by artisans from Zimbabwe and the Mpumalanga province of South Africa, including women of the Ndebele tribe, known for their craftsmanship.

### **PHOTOGRAPHY | CASSPIR, THE AK-47 PROJECT**

Two complete photographic series, *Casspir*, and *The AK-47 Project* present highly saturated and immersively detailed environments of allegory and aesthetic realism charting the history of institutional oppression caused by the South African military vehicle *SPOEK 1* and the legacy of the global arms trade and its effects on the everyday lives of Africans and their relationship with the AK-47.

### **SCULPTURE | AK-47s, BONES, POSTAL BIKE, BEADED PANELS, KNITTED REGALIA**

Besides the *SPOEK 1*, several other areas of sculpture will be exhibited, the wire and bead woven AK-47s used in *The AK-47 Project* photography, a postal bike similarly adorned in beads, the *Bones* series featuring replicated bones from African animals adorned in intricate beadwork, large-scale beaded panels and knitted regalia shown on the soldiers riding the *SPOEK 1* in the *Casspir* photography.

### **THE CASSPIR PROJECT DOCUMENTARY**

This 25-minute documentary on *The Casspir Project* includes historical footage introducing the *SPOEK 1* and its oppressive uses, as well as personal interviews with South Africans about their experiences during apartheid. The film shows the process of Ziman working with South African artisans on beading the massive vehicle that had come to represent a terrifying time in South African history, revealing along the way the positive emotional impact of transforming an object of fear into an object of beauty.

A comprehensive guide to all programming related to The Casspir Project Atlanta tour is available through Ralph Ziman's website. The guide goes into detail on each element of the

project as a whole including schematics of the vehicle, exhibition history, press images, and more.

## **ABOUT THE ARTIST**

Ralph Ziman's practice is motivated by a sense of social responsibility toward global politics. Using imagery that is at once vivid and dark, he comments on serious issues such as human rights, life under apartheid, and the arms trade. His work extends across a variety of media, including film, public intervention, sculpture, and installation.

Ralph Ziman was born in 1963 in Johannesburg, South Africa, and currently lives and works in Los Angeles, California. His work has been the subject of solo exhibitions at The Rendon Gallery in Los Angeles; Joseph Gross Gallery in Tucson, Arizona; and C.A.V.E. Gallery in Venice, California, as well as group exhibitions at the National Gallery in Cape Town, South Africa; Museum of Contemporary African Diasporan Arts in Brooklyn, NY; the FNB Art Fair in Johannesburg, South Africa; MUDAC in Lausanne, France; and Forum Schlossplatz in Aarau, Switzerland, among others.

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