

b. 1963 Saint Andrews, Jamaica; lives and works New York City

Ward earned a BA from Hunter College, City University of New York, in 1991 and an MFA from Brooklyn College in 1992. Through repurposing found objects and materials, the artist creates installations, sculptures, and paintings that address cultural and social inequities. The embodied narratives of his work produce imagery that is often dramatic, comedic, and fantastical.

His found-object sculpture *All Stars* offers a complex, poetic meditation that oscillates between the historical and the present, the ethereal and the mundane, the political and the personal. Constructed out of objects that can be used as weapons, such as a baseball bat and nails, juxtaposed with healing materials, such as cotton and medical tape, this sculpture presents Ward's poignant meditation on the violent history of cotton and sugarcane. The artist acknowledges, "For me it was about referencing cotton picking, but also that I could combine something dealing with violence—this primal club—with something dealing with healing, which was cotton. What I did was dip the cotton into sugar and then iron and burn the edges. I was subjugating the club. It became this ritualized object for me, giving it some power."¹

All Stars transforms mundane objects into an enigmatic landscape rooted in agricultural history that confronts painful memories. It was created shortly after his residency at the Studio Museum from 1992 to 1993, when he was rapidly producing a series of sculptures from found objects that explored issues around the AIDS crisis and the drug epidemic that was decimating New York City at that time. Since then, his work has examined race, poverty, consumer culture, and disparities in power and wealth. —Daniela Fifi

1. Nari Ward, interview by Scott Indrisek, *Modern Painters* 24, no. 1 (February 2012): 34–35.



All Stars, 1995–96
Baseball bat, ironed cotton, nails, medical tape, and sugar
33½ × 5 × 5 in. (85.1 × 12.7 × 12.7 cm)