



ALBANY MUSEUM OF ART

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JUSTIN HODGES' *TIME TIME AND A HALF* OPENS APRIL 17 AT THE ALBANY MUSEUM OF ART

Installation by Georgia Artist Incorporates Digital Reproduction of Painting by Realist Artist Gustave Courbet

[For Release April 11, 2018 – Albany, GA] — Nearly 170 years ago, Gustave Courbet elevated what many considered to be mundane labor performed by ordinary men to an artistic level normally reserved for heroes, great leaders and epic events.

In *Time Time and a Half*, an installation that opens next week in the East Gallery of the Albany Museum of Art, second-year lecturer Justin Hodges of Georgia Southwestern State University utilizes a large digital image of Courbet's 1849 work *The Stonebreakers* to carry the discussion into the 21st century.

Hodges' exhibition *Time Time and a Half* opens with a reception at 6 pm Tuesday, April 17. That evening, he also will lead a panel discussion that explores a basic question: *What Is Art?* Both events are free and open to the public.

"Courbet was a skillful draftsman and he could render what he was looking at well, but it wasn't really about realistically rendering," Hodges observed in a recent interview. "What Courbet was actually trying to do was get to the core of what was happening in a sociological/political sense. It was about the reality of the time.

"One of the things he did was he painted it (*The Stonebreakers*) at a pretty enormous scale. Generally, things that were about grand narratives or potentially religious—references like the crucifixion, victories in wars—were reserved for that scale in that sort of painting. He rendered a real commonplace happening at that scale. In many ways, he celebrated the worker. That was a pretty controversial thing, coming on the heels of the French Revolution, which in many ways was looking at the class structure and being stuck in circumstances and no way around those circumstances."

Hodges, who earned a BFA in photography from Georgia Southwestern before receiving an MFA from the University of Cincinnati where he focused on new media installation, also speaks to the reality of the current times in his work. He says he creates works “that are, in large part, about the way we use photography now, and about the way we make images with digital devices and communicate with those devices sort of shape the way we do everything now. I think it changed the way we communicate.”

The Alabama native who grew up in Lee County, Georgia, said for his installation he has enlarged Courbet’s painting to 6 feet by 10 feet to serve as backdrop for a three-dimensional work. Courbet’s painting, in fact, now only exists through photography. The canvas original was destroyed during World War II.

“This installation, *Time Time and a Half*, is a reference first and foremost to if you’re working overtime, you get time and a half—sometimes,” Hodges said. “In (Courbet’s) painting, there are two individuals—a young man and an older man—and it’s sort of an allegory of being stuck in your circumstances.

“In their particular circumstances, they’re building a road in the French countryside and they’re breaking the rocks so a road can be put through the area. It’s a toilsome endeavor and it’s kind of a sad painting.”

Large stones are being brought into the AMA’s East Gallery as part of the installation, as well as some equipment that didn’t exist when the painting was created.

“In front of it, there’s a real shallow stage and there are these pneumatic hammering machines that take the place of where the workers would be in this composition,” Hodges said. “The piece is a comment on the way that we view labor, what value we give to labor in our current times, and the way that labor is changing. I think even service jobs are in trouble at this point, which is a product of the times we live in and the technology that is at our disposal. It’s just kind of investigating that idea.

“It’s complex, and what I’m particularly interested in is our technology and our devices make life more convenient, but we lose something in that process as well. *Time Time and a Half* is really a specific body of work, but that’s kind of broadly what my work looks at as well.”

Hodges also said he was happy to be back in Georgia and pursuing his career at the Americus university he once attended as a student.

“I missed my family and I loved the professors I had here,” he said. “Now, we’re a lot closer to home and I’m working with people I love and respect.”

EXHIBITIONS AT THE ALBANY MUSEUM OF ART:

- *Glen Dasher: In Retrospection; Monuments to Human Imperfection*, Haley Gallery, through June 16;
- *Inspired Albany*, photography about the people, places and culture of Albany, West Gallery, through June 2.

UPCOMING ALBANY MUSEUM OF ART EVENTS:

- *What Is Art?*, 6-8 pm, Tuesday, April 17 at the Albany Museum of Art. Panel discussion features interdisciplinary artist Justin Hodges; Glenn Dasher, sculptor and former dean of the College of Liberal Arts at the University of Alabama in Huntsville; Rob Matre, owner of the Matre Gallery; Paula Williams, executive director of the AMA, and Femi Anderson, owner of Renaissance Art Café.
- Glenn Dasher Welding Demo, 10 am-noon, Wednesday, April 18, Albany Technical College welding lab, room 124 of Freedom Hall.
- Glenn Dasher Gallery Talk, 6-8 pm, Wednesday, April 18, Albany Museum of Art, Haley Gallery.

All of these events have free admission and are open to the public.

The Albany Museum of Art, located in Albany, Georgia, houses an impressive collection that includes 19th and 20th century American and European art as well as a substantial collection of sub-Saharan African art including masks, sculpture, pottery, textiles, and musical instruments. The Albany Museum of Art is accredited by the American Association of Museums. The Albany Museum of Art is open 10 am through 5 pm Tuesday through Friday and noon until 5 pm on Saturday. Admission is free.

For more information about the AMA please visit our website, www.albanymuseum.com or call 229.439.8400.

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