



ALBANY MUSEUM OF ART



Georgia O'Keeffe's life as a groundbreaking artist is reimagined in Dawn Tripp's novel *Georgia*, which will be discussed by the AMA Art Lovers Book Club at 6 pm Tuesday, July 20 at the Albany Museum of Art. O'Keeffe is shown in this 1918 photograph taken by her future husband, Alfred Stieglitz. The photo is in the collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art. (Special photo)

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GEORGIA IS ON AMA ART LOVERS BOOK CLUB MEMBERS' MINDS

Albany Museum of Art Group to Discuss Novel About Georgia O'Keeffe

[For Release June 15, 2021 – Albany, GA]— Members of the AMA Art Lovers Book Club will have Georgia on their minds at their next meeting. But this Georgia is famous American artist Georgia O'Keeffe, not the Peach State.

The club will explore the best-selling *Georgia: A Novel of Georgia O'Keeffe* by Dawn Tripp at its meeting set for **6 pm on Tuesday, July 20, 2021** in the Willson Auditorium at the Albany Museum of Art, 311 Meadowlark Drive. There is no formal membership to join the discussion and no cost to participate. The meeting will be facilitated by AMA staff member Deandra "Dee" Moore.

Described as captivating historical fiction in the vein of Nancy Horan's *Loving Frank*, *Georgia* is an imagination of the life of O'Keeffe, her evolution from art teacher to an internationally recognized art leader, and her relationship with famous photographer and art dealer Alfred Stieglitz.

"This is not a love story," the novel's Georgia O'Keeffe says. "If it were, we would have the same story. But he has his, and I have mine."

Recognized as the "Mother of American Modernism," O'Keeffe (1887-1986) is known for her abstract paintings of flowers, her depictions of New York skyscrapers, and her groundbreaking New Mexico landscapes. Tripp says in her author's note in the 2016 novel that she became acquainted with O'Keeffe's work at the 2009 exhibition at the Whitney Museum of Modern Art. After reading several biographies of O'Keeffe and researching the artist, Tripp said she attempted to capture "the spirit of two extraordinary artists" in her imagined dialogue, some of which includes actual words from sources that include the couple's letters to each other.

In the novel, Tripp dispels the notion that O'Keeffe's talent and greatness as an artist should be looked at in gendered terms, which was a categorization to which O'Keeffe strongly objected. "Men put me down as the best woman painter," O'Keeffe said. "I think I'm one of the best painters."

O'Keeffe learned traditional painting techniques while studying at the Art Institute of Chicago and the Art Students League in New York, but her artistic direction shifted profoundly when she studied the revolutionary ideas of Arthur Wesley Dow. O'Keeffe, then a young, unknown art teacher, developed new ways of thinking about art, leading her to experiment with abstraction. She developed a personal language to better express her feelings and ideas through a series of charcoal abstract drawings.

Through a mutual friend, O'Keeffe's drawings caught the attention of Stieglitz (1864-1946), who held an exhibition of her work in 1917 at his gallery, 291, without first contacting her for permission. O'Keeffe learned of the exhibition and admonished Stieglitz for showing her work, but their interest in each other escalated as the onset of U.S. involvement in World War I set into motion economic issues that forced Stieglitz to close his 291 gallery and to cease publication of his photography magazine.

Stieglitz's marriage was deteriorating, a situation that worsened in 1918 when O'Keeffe accepted his invitation to move to New York, where he provided her with a studio in which to seriously pursue her art. His wife caught Stieglitz photographing a nude O'Keeffe, which led to the couple's separation. O'Keeffe and Stieglitz moved into a place together and began a love affair. Stieglitz obsessively photographed O'Keeffe, with many of the images appearing in exhibitions of his work. They married a few months after the Stieglitzes' divorce was finalized in 1924. By the late 1920s, her abstract works were selling at much higher prices, and she was recognized for her paintings of skyscrapers and radical depictions of flowers.

Beginning in 1929, O'Keeffe began spending much of her time each year in the Southwestern United States, a move that the novel's O'Keeffe said was necessary for her to become the legendary artist Stieglitz had predicted. "Perhaps on some level, he also knew that for me to fully become the legend he saw, I would have to leave him," the novel's O'Keeffe observes.

In New Mexico, O'Keeffe found a new direction for her art, one inspired by the stark landscape, as well as Native American and Hispanic cultures. She spent much of each year in New Mexico for the next two decades, making a permanent move there three years after Stieglitz's death in 1946.

Her reputation as one of America's most important artists of the 20th century grew and she began traveling internationally in the 1950s. She suffered from macular degeneration later in life, creating her last unassisted oil painting in 1972. After that, O'Keeffe utilized assistants to help her create artworks drawn from her memory and imagination. She passed away in Santa Fe, where the Georgia O'Keeffe Museum is located.

Tripp's fourth novel, *Georgia* was a national bestseller, finalist for the New England Book Award, and winner of the Mary Lynn Kotz Award for Art in Literature. A magna cum laude graduate of Harvard University, Tripp and her family reside in Massachusetts, where she is working on her fifth novel.

The AMA Art Lovers Book Club meets every other month at 6 pm on the third Tuesday. Everyone is welcome to participate in the discussion, and there is no charge to attend. Participants are welcome to bring a favorite beverage. Those who plan to attend are asked to call the AMA at 229.439.8400 by noon on the day of the meeting so that adequate seating can be prepared for the evening meeting.

Other dates and books for the current season are:

- Sept 21, 2021: *The Agony and the Ecstasy*, a biographical novel of Michelangelo Buonarroti by Irving Stone;
- Nov 16, 2021: *The House of Medici: Its Rise and Fall*, a history by Christopher Hibbert;
- Jan 18, 2022: *Just Kids*, a memoir by Patti Smith;
- March 15, 2022: *We Flew over the Bridge: The Memoirs of Faith Ringgold*, by Faith Ringgold;
- May 17, 2022: *A Piece of the World*, a novel by Christina Baker Kline inspired by Andrew Wyeth's painting *Christina's World*.

CURRENT AMA EXHIBITIONS

- *Butch Anthony: Art, Nature, and Intertwangleism* is in the Haley Gallery March 4-July 31, 2021.
- *Work, Worship & Community: Paul Kwilecki* is in the East Gallery March 4-June 26, 2021.
- *Educators as Artists: 4th College Faculty Exhibition* is in the McCormack Gallery March 4-June 26, 2021
- *Escape Plan*, installation by Elinor Saragoussi, is in the West Gallery.

ABOUT THE ALBANY MUSEUM OF ART

The Albany Museum of Art is located at 311 Meadowlark Drive in Albany, Ga., adjacent to Albany State University West Campus just off Gillionville Road. The museum is accredited by the American Alliance of Museums. The Albany Museum of Art is open to the public 10 am-5 pm Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays, and 10 am-7 pm Thursdays. Admission is free.

For more information about the AMA please visit our website, www.albanymuseum.com or call 229.439.8400. Be sure to follow the @AlbanyArtMuseum on Twitter, AlbanyMuseum on Instagram and AlbanyMuseumOfArt on Facebook.

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