



ALBANY MUSEUM OF ART

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Jim Hendricks
Director of Marketing & Public Relations
229.439.8400
jim.hendricks@albanymuseum.com

FREEDOM'S EVE SET FOR SATURDAY, JUNE 18 AT ALBANY MUSEUM OF ART

Juneteenth Observance Will Include Reading by Angie Cain Jones, Art Activity

[For Release June 8, 2022 – Albany, GA] – The Albany Museum of Art will observe Juneteenth with *Freedom's Eve*, a free community event from **2-4 pm** on **Saturday, June 18** at the museum, located at 311 Meadowlark Drive.

The event will feature a special reading by Albany author Angie Cain Jones from her book *The Underground Railroad Under My Feet*.

"*Freedom's Eve*, in observation of Juneteenth, will bring our community together for remembrance, discussion, and learning about a critical part of American history within the context of literature and the arts," Director of Education and Public Programming Annie Vanoteghem said.

"Scars from our nation's past must be acknowledged and discussed to help mend divisions, and move toward unity," Vanotegehm said. "I am looking forward to honoring this day with my community and hearing from new perspectives with powerful storytelling and inspiring discussions."

Juneteenth, which is a contraction of June 19th, commemorates the date in 1865 when federal troops arrived in Galveston, Texas, to take control of Texas and to ensure that all slaves were freed. The troops' arrival was more than two years after the Emancipation Proclamation was signed. The nation's longest-running African-American holiday, Juneteenth became an official federal holiday in 2021.

Inspired by her family's history, Jones spent four years writing *The Underground Railroad Under My Feet*. The Civil War-era story begins with Mary, a 6-year-old child who combines the characteristics of Jones' mother and grandmother, both named Mary. The story combines Albany's history and her family's history of fighting for civil rights.

"Our history is alive, waiting, wanting, and needed to be told," Jones said.

In the novel, which follows her through age 16, Mary learns her grandparents are members of the Underground Railroad, and then becomes a conductor herself.

Jones said she was also moved to write her book because, as a teacher, she realized a lot of pertinent history was not included in classrooms. Teachers have to focus on test-driven state standards, frequently reducing information to bullet points.

After the reading, AMA staff will take participants on a brief tour of *Homecoming*, the summer exhibition of artworks from the AMA's permanent collection, where pieces of art that focus on themes of freedom will be highlighted.

"One of my favorite aspects about my profession is our ability to tell stories," Director of Curatorial Affairs Katie Dillard said. "Storytelling can take many forms and is passed on through a variety of mediums, whether it's through spoken word, a song, or visual interpretation.

"With this event, *Freedom's Eve*, we want our visitors to engage in the history of Juneteenth and take a step back to acknowledge and understand that there are many stories about freedom still to tell. Our permanent collection provides snapshots into a variety of stories with different historical contexts, ages, and locations both at home and across the world in which people fought for their freedom."

One of the artworks that will be explored is *Archangel Michael Subduing Satan*, an undated pigment on canvas painting created by an unknown Ethiopian artist. The painting was a gift from Stella E. Davis.

"This artwork is also an allegory for Ethiopia fighting back against their Italian oppressors during the conflict in the mid-1930s," Dillard noted.

After the tour, the group will engage in an art activity by creating together a quilt that will be for display, and have an open discussion on the personal meaning of freedom.

"It is proper that the AMA recognizes and participates not only in the commemoration of Juneteenth, but in the discussion of what this memory means to us today, as it is clear the legacy of slavery continues to reverberate in American life today," AMA Executive Director Andrew J. Wulf, Ph.D., said.

Light refreshments will be served at the event. There is no cost to participate, but space is limited. A link for free online registration for *Freedom's Eve* may be found at www.albanymuseum.com/freedoms-eve.

AMA EXHIBITIONS

- *Homecoming*, which features works from the Albany Museum of Art Permanent Collection, is in all galleries May 12-Aug 13, 2022.

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 through Saturdays. 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.

Albany author Angie Cain Jones from her novel *The Underground Railroad Under My Feet at Freedom's Eve*, an observance of Juneteenth set for 2-4 pm on Saturday, June 18 at the Albany Museum of Art. The event is free and open to the public. (Photo courtesy of Angie Cain Jones)

###