



ALBANY MUSEUM OF ART

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AMA TO HOST *COURAGEOUS CONVERSATIONS* FOR COLLEGE STUDENTS

Albany Museum of Art Program on Nov 11 to Use Art as Catalyst for Discussion

[For Release Sept 21, 2022 – Albany, GA]— The most difficult conversations in America today are the ones involving racial relations and racism. *Courageous Conversations About Race*, a program that has been conducted at the Albany Museum of Art periodically since 2018, offers a safe space where members of the community can use art as a means to foster constructive conversations that lead to better understanding, and to search for common ground.

Courageous Conversations About Race returns to the Albany Museum of Art on **Friday, Nov 11, 2022**, with a program focusing on college students. Participants will use art to stimulate discussions about race and race relations.

Courageous Conversations About Race will be conducted **9 am-3 pm** and is open to college students. Lunch is included in the program. Sponsored by United Way of Southwest Georgia as part of its Reimagine Albany initiative, the event is free to participating students, but space is limited. Students may register at the secure link at www.albanymuseum.com/courageous-conversations.

“Through rigorous work and innovative programs, the AMA aims to contribute significantly to the field of museums and community well-being, changing the ways museums are viewed today via our dynamic, issue-focused public programs, such as *Courageous Conversations About Race*, an essential constructive discussion addressing the difficult subject of race in America for all members of the Albany community and beyond,” AMA Executive Director Andrew J. Wulf, Ph.D., said.

AMA Director of Education and Public Programming Annie Vanoteghem said the program will again be facilitated by Gloria J. Wilson, Ph.D., from the University of Arizona, and Sara Scott Shields, Ph.D., from Florida State University.

Participants will participate in discussions and engage in exercises that are intended to promote a deeper understanding of the intersection of racial identity, politics, and social and educational outcomes in America.

"Dr. Wilson and Dr. Scott Shields have facilitated each of our first four *Courageous Conversations About Race* programs, and we are excited to have them back this fall to work with college students," Vanoteghem said.

Dr. Wilson is an assistant professor in Art & Visual Culture Education at the University of Arizona; chair of Committee on Multiethnic Concerns, National Art Education Association, and co-director of Arizona Arts, Racial Justice Studio. Dr. Scott Shields is an art education associate professor, and department chair of Florida State University.

"Our facilitators will tailor the program to a college audience, and they have artworks they incorporate into the program," Vanoteghem said. "We also will have three thought-inspiring exhibitions that will offer students perspective at this event."

The exhibitions are *Fighters for Freedom: William H. Johnson Picturing Justice*, *Wayna: Her Dreams of Ethiopia*, *Works by Tracy Murrell*, which are open, and *Forsaking All Comfort and Prosperity*, *Works by Maryam Safajoo*, which opens on Oct 6.

"In *Fighters for Freedom*, *William H. Johnson*, one of the most important African-American artists of his generation, employs symbolism as he tells complete stories in each painting about his heroes who fought for racial justice and world peace," Vanoteghem said. "Johnson's paintings depict difference-makers, including Harriet Tubman, John Brown, Frederick Douglass, Abraham Lincoln, Marian Anderson, and many others."

Fighters for Freedom: William H. Johnson Picturing Justice is organized by the Smithsonian American Art Museum, and the paintings were a gift from the Harmon Foundation to the Smithsonian American Art Museum. Generous support for the project is provided by Art Bridges.

"In *Wayna: her Dreams of Ethiopia*," Vanoteghem said, "Tracy Murrell uses silhouettes as entry points to more complex conversations about gender, race, and how beauty is perceived. Her work incorporates stories she heard from her cousin Wayna, a Grammy-nominated singer, and her paper-cut Ethiopian crosses are seen as a unifying force.

"Maryam Safajoo tells stories in her exhibition *In Forsaking All Comfort and Prosperity* of persistent persecution that the Iranian Baha'i community has experienced since the 1979 Iranian revolution. Much of what she relates she was told by people who witnessed persecution, homicides, and atrocities. She also draws upon events that she has seen firsthand."

Students with questions about *Courageous Conversations About Race* may contact Vanoteghem at annie.vanoteghem@albanymuseum.com or call her at **229.439.8400**. Information may be found online at www.albanymuseum.com/courageous-conversations.

AMA EXHIBITIONS

- *Fighters for Freedom: William H. Johnson Picturing Justice* is in The Haley Gallery, Sept 1-Dec 10, 2022. Organized by the Smithsonian American Art Museum. Generous support is provided by Art Bridges.
- *Wayna: Her Dreams of Ethiopia*, *Works by Tracy Murrell* is in the East Gallery, Sept 1, 2022- Jan 7, 2023.
- *Georgia Artists Guild of Albany, 29th Juried Exhibition* is in the McCormack Gallery, Sept 1, 2022- Jan 7, 2023.

AMA EVENTS

- *AMA ChalkFest*, Nov 19, 2022, 10 am-5 pm, Front Street and Veterans Park Amphitheater. Admission is free. www.amachalkfest.com.

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.

CAPTION INFORMATION

High school students work on an exercise at the February 2022 Courageous Conversations About Race program at the Albany Museum of Art. The program returns to the AMA on Nov 11 with a focus on college students. (Photo: Albany Museum of Art)

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