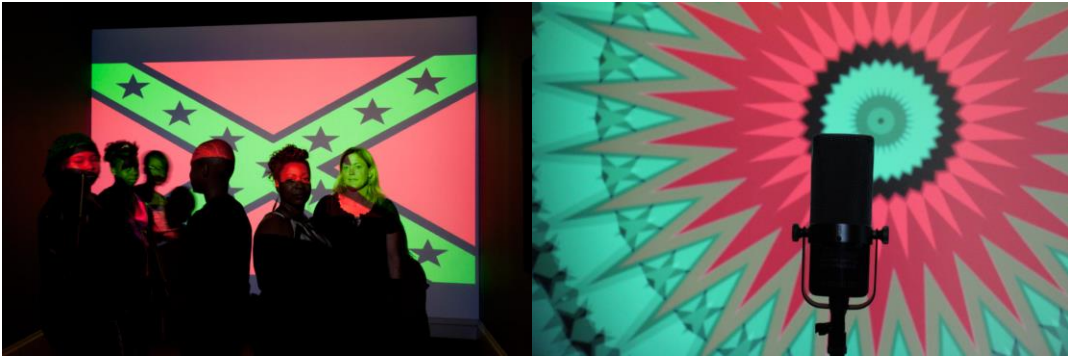


For Immediate Release

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***Black Righteous Space* on view February 1 through April 7, 2018,
at University Art Museum**



Hank Willis Thomas, *Black Righteous Space*, 2012, interactive video installation

ALBANY, N.Y. (December 18, 2017) – The University at Albany Art Museum is pleased to present *Hank Willis Thomas: Black Righteous Space* February 1 through April 7, 2018.

Black Righteous Space features a looping soundtrack that combines songs, speeches, and dialogue from more than fifty noted black leaders, musicians, poets, and celebrities, including Malcolm X, Maya Angelou, Michelle Obama, Angela Davis, Gil Scott-Heron, Tupac Shakur, Dick Gregory, The Staple Singers, Chris Rock, Stokely Carmichael, Nikki Giovanni, Bobby Seale, and Marvin Gaye. As they share their observations on racism, equality, injustice, and life in America, each is punctuated with a throbbing rush of visual force. On the screen, as they speak, a barrage of patterns—including a recurrent Confederate flag recolored in hues of the Black Power Movement—flashes and pulses in time to the rhythm of the voices and music. The kaleidoscopic imagery turns the words and music into a continuous visual flow. Additionally, a microphone placed in front of the screen keeps the conversation going. This interactive component is a keynote of the exhibition. During randomized periods of silence in the audio track, Thomas encourages visitors to speak or sing into the mic, contributing their own voices and views to his *Black Righteous Space*.

Hank Willis Thomas is a conceptual artist working primarily with themes related to identity, history and popular culture. His piece *Black Righteous Space* is an interactive installation that immerses visitors in contemporary African-American culture, and invites them to voice their own opinions.

“By pairing the soundtrack of these speakers with the reverberating, altered flag, the installation explores the idea of taking control of symbols and their meanings,” Hank Willis Thomas says of *Black Righteous Space*.”

Hank Willis Thomas (b. 1976, Plainfield, New Jersey) earned a B.F.A. in photography and Africana studies from New York University, and an M.F.A. and M.A. in photography and visual criticism from the California College of Arts. He has also received honorary doctorates from the Maryland Institute of Art and the Institute for Doctoral Studies in the Visual Arts. His work has been exhibited throughout the U.S. and abroad, including at the International Center of Photography, Guggenheim Museum Bilbao, Musée du quai Branly, and the Cleveland Museum of Art. Thomas's works are in numerous public collections, among them the Museum of Modern Art New York, the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, the Whitney Museum of American Art, the Brooklyn Museum, the High Museum of Art, and the National Gallery of Art in Washington D.C. His collaborative projects include Question Bridge: Black Males, In Search of the Truth (The Truth Booth), and For Freedoms, which Thomas co-founded in 2016 as the first artist-run super-PAC. For Freedoms was recently awarded the 2017 ICP Infinity Award for New Media and Online Platform, and Thomas is also the recipient of the 2017 Soros Equality Fellowship.

Thomas's current and upcoming exhibitions include *Prospect 4: The Lotus in Spite of the Swamp* in New Orleans and *Freedom Isn't Always Beautiful* at Savannah College of Art and Design Museum in Georgia. A member of the Public Design Commission for the City of New York, he lives and works in New York City.

Black Righteous Space will be on view in the second floor Nancy Hyatt Liddle Gallery from February 1 through April 7, 2018, during the same time as the exhibition *This Place* will be on view in the museum. *This Place* is a photography exhibition that explores the rifts and paradoxes of the highly contested spaces of Israel and the West Bank, featuring internationally renowned artists Martin Kollar, Jungjin Lee, Thomas Struth, and Jeff Wall.

The exhibition is supported by the Office of the President, Office of the Provost, The University at Albany Foundation, and University Auxiliary Services.

Please note there will be no opening reception.

For more information, call (518) 442-4035 or visit our website at www.albany.edu/museum.

Museum Hours: Tuesday 10 am – 7 pm; Wednesday through Friday, 10 am – 5 pm; Saturday noon – 4 pm.

About the University at Albany:

A comprehensive public research university, the University at Albany offers more than 120 undergraduate majors and minors and 125 master's, doctoral, and graduate certificate programs. UAlbany is a leader among all New York State colleges and universities in such diverse fields as atmospheric and environmental sciences, business, engineering and applied sciences, informatics, public administration social welfare, and sociology taught by an extensive roster of faculty experts. It also offers expanded academic and research opportunities for students through an affiliation with Albany Law School. With a curriculum enhanced by 600 study-abroad opportunities, UAlbany launches great careers.

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