



HIGH MUSEUM OF ART ATLANTA

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**HIGH MUSEUM OF ART CELEBRATES 25TH ANNIVERSARY
OF “PICTURING THE SOUTH” PHOTOGRAPHY SERIES WITH
COMMEMORATIVE EXHIBITION**

*Uniting works from all past commissions with new photographs by
Sheila Pree Bright, Jim Goldberg and An-My Lê*

ATLANTA, July 8, 2021 — Launched in 1996, the High Museum of Art’s renowned “Picturing the South” series supports contemporary photographers in creating new bodies of work inspired by the American South for the High’s collection, which is among the nation’s leading photography programs and has strength in work made in and about the region. To commemorate the series’ 25th anniversary, the High will present “Picturing the South: 25 Years” (Nov. 5, 2021-Feb. 6, 2022), which will bring together for the first time nearly 200 works from all the past commissions by artists including Dawoud Bey, Sally Mann and Richard Misrach and will debut new work by the latest photographers selected for the series, Sheila Pree Bright, Jim Goldberg and An-My Lê.

“The ‘Picturing the South’ commission and exhibition series is entirely unique among American museums for its longevity, commitment to place and diversity of artistic perspectives,” said Rand Suffolk, the High’s Nancy and Holcombe T. Green, Jr., director. “For a quarter century, the series has called attention to the fabric of our shared experiences while concurrently highlighting what makes the South distinctive. We are thrilled to show the commissioned works collectively for the first time and to demonstrate how transformational ‘Picturing the South’ has been for the High and for the artists who’ve participated.”

Kevin W. Tucker, the High’s chief curator, added, “‘Picturing the South’ both reflects a rich legacy from the many artists represented through these commissions and acknowledges the High’s continuing dedication to collecting and exhibiting contemporary American photography.”

“Picturing the South” has produced a total of 16 extraordinary bodies of work, some of which have become iconic projects for the artists, including:

- Sally Mann’s major shift from portraiture to exploring the complex terrain of the Southern landscape.
- Dawoud Bey’s contemplative portraits of Atlanta high school students.

- Richard Misrach’s 10-year study of the Mississippi River’s industrialized corridor known as “Cancer Alley.”
- Alec Soth’s first photographs in what would become his remarkable series “Broken Manual.”

In addition to examples from those series, the exhibition will feature works from each of the other completed commissions by Kael Alford, Debbie Fleming Caffery, Emmet Gowin, Alex Harris, Shane Lavalette, Abelardo Morell, Martin Parr, Mark Steinmetz and Alex Webb.

The new commissions by Bright, Goldberg and Lê each will shed light on prevailing themes and movements in the South, including racial and national identity. Bright’s mysterious black-and-white photographs of Stone Mountain, a public recreation area that surrounds the largest monument to the Confederacy, scrutinize the literal and figurative marks that the region’s history of white supremacy has left on the land. Goldberg explores expressions of contemporary dynamics of racial identity in the South, with a particular eye to how notions of whiteness are articulated in a society that regularly assumes it as the default American identity. Lê’s photographs center on the social unrest that has emerged across the country, including protests in Washington, D.C.

“The ‘Picturing the South’ photographs address broad themes, from the legacy of slavery and racial justice to the social implications of the evolving landscape and the distinct and diverse character of the region’s people,” said Gregory Harris, the High’s Donald and Marilyn Keough Family curator of photography. “The works together tell a compelling story of the contemporary South and will offer audiences a unique opportunity to see the region through the lenses of some of the best photographers working today.”

To coincide with the exhibition, the High will publish digital resources for “Picturing the South: 25 Years” comprising artwork annotations and multimedia content, including a virtual tour, on an interactive online platform.

The exhibition will be presented in the Cousins Special Exhibition Galleries on the second level of the High’s Wieland Pavilion.

About the High’s Photography Department

The High Museum of Art is home to one of the nation’s leading photography programs. The Museum began acquiring photographs in the early 1970s, making it among the earliest American art museums to commit to collecting the medium. With more than 8,000 prints that span the history of the medium from the 1840s to the present, the collection has particular strengths in American and European modernist traditions and documentary and contemporary photography. Holdings include the most significant museum collection of vintage civil-rights-era prints in the nation as well as important holdings by Harry Callahan, Clarence John Laughlin, Evelyn Hofer, William Christenberry, Ilse Bing, Walker Evans, Peter Sekaer and Dawoud Bey. The collection also gives special attention to pictures made in and of the South, serving as the largest and most significant repository representing the region’s important contributions to photography.

Exhibition Organization and Support

“Picturing the South: 25 Years” is organized by the High Museum of Art. Major funding for this exhibition is provided by the Henry Luce Foundation, the Forward Arts Foundation, and the Phillip and Edith Leonian Foundation. This exhibition is made possible by Premier Exhibition Series Sponsor Delta Air Lines, Inc.; Premier Exhibition Series Supporters Sarah and Jim Kennedy, Louise Sams and Jerome Grillhot, Dr. Joan H. Weens Estate, and wish foundation; Benefactor Exhibition Series Supporters Anne Cox Chambers Foundation and Robin and Hilton Howell; Ambassador Exhibition Series Supporters The Antinori Foundation, Corporate Environments, and Elizabeth and Chris Willett; and Contributing Exhibition Series Supporters Farideh and Al Azadi, Sandra and Dan Baldwin, Lucinda W. Bunnan, Marcia and John Donnell, Helen C. Griffith, Mrs. Fay S. Howell/The Howell Fund, Mr. and Mrs. Baxter Jones, The Arthur R. and Ruth D. Lautz Charitable Foundation, Joel Knox and Joan Marmo, Dr. Joe B. Massey, Margot and Danny McCaul, The Ron and Lisa Brill Family Charitable Trust, Wade Rakes and Nicholas Miller, The Fred and Rita Richman Fund, In Memory of Elizabeth B. Stephens, USI Insurance Services, and Mrs. Harriet H. Warren. Generous support is also provided by the Alfred and Adele Davis Exhibition Endowment Fund, Anne Cox Chambers Exhibition Fund, Barbara Stewart Exhibition Fund, Dorothy Smith Hopkins Exhibition Endowment Fund, Eleanor McDonald Storza Exhibition Endowment Fund, The Fay and Barrett Howell Exhibition Fund, Forward Arts Foundation Exhibition Endowment Fund, Helen S. Lanier Endowment Fund, Isobel Anne Fraser–Nancy Fraser Parker Exhibition Endowment Fund, John H. and Wilhelmina D. Harland Endowment Fund, Katherine Murphy Riley Special Exhibition Endowment Fund, Margareta Taylor Exhibition Fund, and the RJR Nabisco Exhibition Endowment Fund.

About the High Museum of Art

Located in the heart of Atlanta, the High Museum of Art connects with audiences from across the Southeast and around the world through its distinguished collection, dynamic schedule of special exhibitions and engaging community-focused programs. Housed within facilities designed by Pritzker Prize-winning architects Richard Meier and Renzo Piano, the High features a collection of more than 18,000 works of art, including an extensive anthology of 19th- and 20th-century American fine and decorative arts; major holdings of photography and folk and self-taught work, especially that of artists from the American South; burgeoning collections of modern and contemporary art, including paintings, sculpture, new media and design; a growing collection of African art, with work dating from prehistory through the present; and significant holdings of European paintings and works on paper. The High is dedicated to reflecting the diversity of its communities and offering a variety of exhibitions and educational programs that engage visitors with the world of art, the lives of artists and the creative process. For more information about the High, visit www.high.org.

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