

The FLAG Art Foundation Presents New Exhibition: “Floating a Boulder: Works by Felix Gonzalez-Torres and Jim Hodges”

October 1, 2009 - January 31, 2010

The FLAG Art Foundation is honored to announce Floating a Boulder: Works by Felix Gonzalez-Torres and Jim Hodges, an exhibition featuring works by Felix Gonzalez-Torres and Jim Hodges, two prominent artists that developed a unique vocabulary of meaning through a myriad of subtleties.

Rooted in conceptual and minimal framework, Gonzalez-Torres' work transformed ordinary objects into emotive relics with references to politics, death, and love. Through materials such as bead curtains, strands of lightbulbs, take away piles of candy, stacks of paper, mirrors, wall clocks, and jigsaw puzzles, the works combine their aesthetic allure and ephemeral nature with the gravitas of the subject matter itself.

Jim Hodges' oeuvre emanates from a similar practice. Hodges' photographs, lightbulb sculptures, mirrors, chain spider webs, scarves, and their rich imageries, craftsmanship, and implementations of color and light conjure notions of the passages of time, love, loss, life.

Both artists distill personal experiences and emotions into their objects with a universal resonance. Furthermore, a vital component to both artists' works is the role of the viewer, invariably contributing to the timeless relevance of the work.

In 1993, Gonzalez-Torres reflects, “I need public interaction. Without the public these works are nothing. I need the public to complete the work. I ask the public to help me out, to take responsibility, to become part of my work, to join in.”[1] Almost 10 years later, Hodges echoes: “I don't think that I am ever not engaged with that consideration. This dialogue or this interaction with a viewer, what's perceived, what's being experience, what's being responded too...Actually, the viewer completes the work.”[2]

[1] Hoban, Stephen, ed. Felix Gonzalez-Torres: America, p. 35. New York: Guggenheim Foundation, 2007.

[2] Berry, Ian. “You Ornament the Earth: A Dialogue with JIM HODGES by Ian Berry.” Jim Hodges, p. 6. Saratoga Springs: Tang Teaching Museum and Art Gallery at Skidmore College, 2003.

BIOGRAPHIES:

Felix Gonzalez-Torres

Gonzalez-Torres was born in Güaimaro, Cuba in 1957. In 1970, he and his sister were sent to Madrid, where they stayed in an orphanage until settling in Puerto Rico with an aunt and uncle in 1971. Torres graduated from the Colegio San Jorge in 1976 and began

his art studies at the Universidad de Puerto Rico, while actively participating in the local art scene. In 1979 he moved to New York with a fellowship to study at the Pratt Institute in Brooklyn. The following year he participated in the Whitney Independent Study Program, where his development as an artist was profoundly influenced by his introduction to postmodern theory. He attended the program a second time in 1983, the year he received his BFA from Pratt. Gonzalez-Torres joined the artists' collective Group Material (along with Doug Ashford, Julie Ault, and Tim Rollins) in 1987, the year he received his MFA from the International Center of Photography/New York University. Subsequently he taught at New York University and briefly at the California Institute of the Arts in Valencia.

Gonzalez-Torres's first solo exhibitions in New York were held at the Intar Latin American Gallery and the Rastovski Gallery in 1988. In 1989, he exhibited a billboard in Sheridan Square, New York City, on the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of the Stonewall Rebellion. In 1990 he began exhibiting with the Andrea Rosen Gallery, which continues to represent his work today. The Museum of Modern Art, New York, invited Gonzalez-Torres to participate in its Projects series in 1992, for which he created a photographic billboard of an empty, but previously occupied, double bed that was shown in locations throughout the city. During his lifetime, Gonzalez-Torres was the subject of several important museum exhibitions, including Felix Gonzalez-Torres: Traveling in 1994 at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Smithsonian Institution, Washington D.C., and the Renaissance Society at the University of Chicago, and a retrospective organized by the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, in 1995, which traveled to the Centro Galego de Arte Contemporánea, Santiago de Compostela, and ARC-Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris.

Gonzales-Torres participated in hundreds of group shows during his lifetime, including early presentations at Artist's Space and White Columns in New York (1987 and 1988, respectively); the Whitney Biennial (1991); the Venice Biennale (1993); SITE/Santa Fe (1995); and the Sydney Biennale (1996). Since his death, there have been numerous exhibitions devoted to his work, including ones organized by the Sprengel Museum Hannover (1997-98); the Serpentine Gallery, London (2000); and the Biblioteca Luís Angél Arango, Banco de la República, Bogotá, Colombia (1999-2000). Recent exhibitions include a retrospective at the Hamburger Bahnhof—Museum für Gegenwart, Berlin (2006), and an exhibition of formative work executed in Puerto Rico at El Museo del Barrio, New York (2006). Gonzalez-Torres died from complications due to AIDS on January 9, 1996.

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Jim Hodges

Jim Hodges was born in Spokane, Washington in 1957. While in Spokane he received his BFA from Fort Wright College in 1980. In 1983 Hodges moved to Brooklyn to study painting at Pratt Institute, receiving an MFA in 1986. Hodges lives and works in New York City.

About The FLAG Art Foundation

The FLAG Art Foundation is an exhibition space for contemporary art. The program includes 3 to 5 professionally-curated shows each year by established and emerging international artists. We are on the 9th and 10th floors of the Chelsea Arts Tower, located in the heart of New York's art district on 25th Street between 10th and 11th Avenues.

FLAG provides a unique educational environment in which visitors can view, contemplate, and engage in active dialogue with the artworks. Curators select and borrow from a variety of sources to include a wide range of work in each exhibition. FLAG is also a resource that facilitates loans of contemporary artworks to museums around the world. An extensive database of available works is maintained and made available to curators via info@flagartfoundation.org.

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