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15 X 15

February 21 – April 11, 2015

New York, NY- Bill Hodges Gallery is pleased to announce its fourth exhibition at its new Chelsea location, titled *15 x 15*. The show will be on view from February 21st to April 11st and will feature 15 preeminent artworks of a variety of mediums from 15 different artists, such as Adam Pendleton, Roy DeCarava, Jacob Lawrence, Carrie Mae Weems, Norman Lewis, Kehinde Wiley, and more.

Most recently, Bill Hodges Gallery explored works done on paper through its exhibition *History*. While *History* explored the timeless medium that lends itself as a conduit for artistic manifestation, *15 x 15* can be thought of as an exhibition that will examine the conduits themselves. The 15 works on display present 15 unique narratives from 15 contemporarily relevant and historically significant African American artists, modern and contemporary, living and dead. From **Mickalene Thomas's** relaxed print *Les Trois Femmes Noires* to **Chester Higgins, Jr.'s** solemn photographic print *A Young Muslim Woman, Brooklyn, 15 x 15* is an exhibition about African American artists, their artworks, and the audiences who interpret them.



Roy DeCarava
'Kids God Bless,' From Belafonte, New York 19
(Boy With Woman's Hand on Shoulder), 1952
Printed ca. 1960, Gelatin Silver Print
20 x 14 1/4 in.

15 x 15 is an exhibition about people; nearly each artwork on display contains a human figure in a varying of contexts. A dozen figures in a flowery meadow constitute **Jacob Lawrence's** ink, wash, and graphite drawing *Children At Play*. The children merrily going around in a circle link arms, creating a larger compositional shape, with the negative spaces selectively darkened in between them. A sense of movement is activated, and we see that each visible child's face exhibits a different emotion, possibly representing the whirl of emotions present when at play. Again, multiple figures are present in **Carrie Mae Weems's** photo from the *Kitchen Table Series*, however not in the same rambunctious manner as in Lawrence's. Although nearly receding into the shadows of the background, the woman's presence is felt by both the viewer and the man as she clings to the wall, head cocked to one side.

Solitary figures without a visual context also have the ability to convey an artist's narrative. **Kehinde Wiley** resurrects a spirit of elegant plaintiveness in *Passing Posing (The Martyrdom of St. Symphorian)* by careful consideration of gestural pose. Wiley's work often incorporates the statuesque figures depicted in classical paintings; Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres' *The Martyrdom of St. Symphorian* provides the foundation in which Wiley expounds upon in this work. In another instance of artistic inspiration and homage, **Chuck Close** uses photographer **Lorna Simpson** as subject, capturing the very spirit existent in her own work as we see her concentrating on something distant.

In a similar element of ambiguity, **Roy DeCarava** captures a moment in time for the viewer to read in the Gelatin Silver Print *'Kids God Bless'* (pictured), printed circa 1960. Between the boy's impenetrable glare and faint smirk, a multitude of scenarios happening off camera could be deserving of such a look, however the viewer has only the woman's hand to base his or her analysis on.

Still, even without an explicit figurative form, or even abstracted ones like in **Camille Billops's** *Mondo Negro IV*, the artist's narrative is always present. Take **Adam Pendleton's** *Because* for example. Seemingly autobiographic, Pendleton's words evoke empathy from the viewer not only through their weight but also through their plausible truth.

The Bill Hodges Gallery is located on the 2nd floor of 529 W. 20th Street between 10th Avenue and 11th Avenue. Our closest subway stations are at 14th St. & 8th Ave. (A-C-E-L) and 23rd St. & 8th Ave. (C-E). Gallery Hours are Tuesday to Friday 10am – 6pm and Saturday 12:30pm – 5:30pm. Press viewings can be arranged. For more information or to arrange a viewing, please contact Bill or Navindren Hodges at (212) 333-2640 or via email at info@billhodgesgallery.com.

BILL HODGES GALLERY

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