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Jim Hodges Survey to Premiere at the Dallas Museum of Art

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With the Wind by Jim Hodges, 1997

Jim Hodges: sometimes beauty
Dallas Museum of Art
October 6, 2013 through January 12, 2014



In October 2013, Dallas will premiere a major traveling exhibition and the first comprehensive survey to be organized in the United States on the work of contemporary American artist [Jim Hodges](#). Co-organized by the [Dallas Museum of Art](#) and the Walker Art Center, *Jim Hodges: sometimes beauty* explores the trajectory of the artist's twenty-five-year career, highlighting the major themes that unify his multilayered and varied practice.

Comprising approximately seventy-five works produced from 1987 through the present, this exhibition examines how Hodges transforms both everyday and precious materials into poignant meditations on themes including time, loss, identity, and love. *Jim Hodges: sometimes beauty* brings together photography, drawing, works on paper, and objects rendered in mirror, light bulbs, and glass alongside several major room-size installations to examine and illuminate Hodges' command of material and gesture.

On view at the Dallas Museum of Art from October 6, 2013, through January 12, 2014, *Jim Hodges: sometimes beauty* is co-curated by Jeffrey Grove, the DMA's Hoffman Family Senior Curator of Contemporary Art, and Olga Viso, Executive Director of the Walker. Following its debut at the DMA, the exhibition will travel to Minneapolis's Walker Art Center, where it will open in February 2014, and then proceed to the Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston in June, and the UCLA Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, in October.

"*Jim Hodges: sometimes beauty* immerses the viewer within the poetic practice and attuned vision of one of the most compelling artists working today. We are pleased to partner with the Walker Art Center in the organization of the first major retrospective of the artist's career, adding to new curatorial insight and broadening public understanding of an artist whose work deserves even greater national and international recognition," said Maxwell L. Anderson, the DMA's Eugene McDermott Director.

"We are thrilled to have played a key role in the development of this exhibition, the result of a natural partnership between the Walker and the Dallas Museum of Art," said Walker Art Center Executive Director Olga Viso. "Both Jeffrey Grove and I have long histories working with Jim Hodges, having exhibited and acquired his work early on in his career. When the exhibition comes to the Walker, it will be a fantastic complement to *Untitled*, a major outdoor sculpture by Jim Hodges that the Walker acquired and installed this spring."



Ghost by Jim Hodges, 2008

Since the late 1980s, Jim Hodges' reconsiderations of the material world have inspired a body of work in which the man-made and artificial are invested with emotion and authenticity. From the delicate nature of early installations comprising hundreds of drawings on paper napkins and disassembled silk flowers pinned to the wall, to the large, light-filled mirror mosaics and complex installations of the past decade, Hodges' ability to coax meaning from the simplest materials has remained constant. His aesthetic has consistently embraced natural metaphors, reveled in the qualities of color and light, and explored meaning through language, particularly in Hodges' use of text and titling.

Though much of his work appears concerned with the evanescence of time, it is the careful recording of it in the making of his art that distinguishes Hodges' approach. "Jim's concern and interest in the passage of time and ephemeral nature of life can be read through

his experience coming of age in the mid-1980s at the height of the culture wars and AIDS crisis. But in looking at his body of work comprehensively, what is revealed is a celebration of nature and life," said Grove. "There are broad affinities throughout his work in all media that extend beyond the material to embrace experiences of light, color, and sound. *Jim Hodges: sometimes beauty* provides a singular opportunity to experience Jim's complex, idiosyncratic, and nuanced devotion to ideas and ethics that are very personal, but easily accessible."

Jim Hodges: sometimes beauty maps a timeline of the artist's career, but rather than unfolding chronologically, the exhibition is organized around significant recurring themes that have informed and shaped Hodges' practice, including materiality, temporality, and the threshold between light and dark. For the installations at the Dallas Museum of Art and the Walker Art Center, exhibition curators Grove and Viso have worked closely with Hodges to create an exhibition design and experience unique to each venue.

Highlighted works include:

- *Untitled (Gate)*, 1991, a room-size installation that one cannot enter, marks one of Hodges' earliest major articulations of the web motif that became a recurrent theme in the artist's work for many years, as well as one of his first forays into the structure of space and architecture as critical elements.
- *what's left*, 1992, a touching meditation on identity and loss, comprises a virtual portrait of the artist as if he had just disrobed. This sculpture of Hodges' clothing is knit together by a delicate, silver-chain spider web, symbol of both strength and fragility, a simultaneity informing much of Hodges' work.
- *Changing Things*, 1997, is an assemblage of 342 petals and leaves taken from disassembled silk flowers and pinned individually to the wall. This work of visual poetry addresses the floral motif and theme of precarious beauty inherent in much of Hodges' production.

- *With the Wind*, 1997, is a layered scrim of floral-print and delicately colored silk scarves. This work, both fragile and reactive to its environment, is informed by memory and explores ideas of accumulation and dispersal that echo through Hodges' work.
- *As close as I can get*, 1998, is a large-scale "drawing" rendered in Pantone color chips held together with tape. This work underscores Hodges' interest in labor, craft, and the exuberant potentiality of color.
- *All in the field*, 2003, a mesmerizing, hand-embroidered textile, fuses the powerful grisaille camouflage pattern Hodges has rendered elsewhere in large-scale wall-paintings and outdoor sculpture with the delicate floral motif that appears throughout his practice.
- *Ghost*, 2008, an exquisite, hand-worked glass sculpture of beautiful butterflies and delicate budding flowers encased by a massive bell jar, this work unifies themes including the fragility of life and memento mori that Hodges has explored throughout his career.
- *on the way between places*, 2009, an epic series of twenty-one charcoal and saliva drawings, discloses Hodges' constantly evolving interest in drawing, natural metaphor, ideas of construction and dissimulation, and disruption of sequential time.
- *Movements (Stage IV)*, 2009, is a dazzling, intricately patterned mosaic of cut mirror. This work exemplifies Hodges' engagement with the reflective surface, evoking both the music of the dance club and the consequences of vanity. It symbolizes Hodges' ongoing negotiation with dueling themes of celebration and memorialization.



Untitled (Gate) by Jim Hodges, 1991

About Jim Hodges

New York-based artist Jim Hodges is known for his singular ability to infuse emotion and narrative into the objects of our daily lives, creating poignant studies on ideas such as temporality, life, and love. He has been featured in numerous solo and group exhibitions in the U.S. and in Europe, including the 2004 Whitney Biennial and a solo exhibition at the Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris.

Hodges' work is included in the collections of notable institutions, among them the Dallas Museum of Art; the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, MN; The Art Institute of Chicago; Fonds Régional des Pays de la Loire, Nantes, France; the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington D.C.; Los Angeles County Museum of Art; Musée National d'Art Moderne, Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris; The Museum of Modern Art, New York; the Philadelphia Museum of Art; the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; and the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York.

Born in 1957 in Spokane, Washington, Hodges received a BFA from Fort Wright College in Spokane and an MFA from the Pratt Institute. He lives and works in New York City.

Exhibition Organization and Tour

Jim Hodges: sometimes beauty was co-organized by the DMA and the Walker Art Center and co-curated by Jeffrey Grove, the DMA's Hoffman Family Senior Curator of Contemporary Art, and the Walker's Executive Director Olga Viso.

The exhibition tour includes:

- **Dallas Museum of Art**, Dallas, TX (October 6, 2013–January 12, 2014)
- **Walker Art Center**, Minneapolis, MN (February 14–May 11, 2014)
- **Institute of Contemporary Art**, Boston (June 3–September 1, 2014)
- **UCLA Hammer Museum**, Los Angeles, CA (October 5, 2014–January 2015)

Exhibition Catalogue

The exhibition is accompanied by a comprehensive, fully illustrated catalogue that traces the artist's development and provides essential documentation on Hodges' career as well as detailed exhibition and publication histories. The catalogue includes essays by Jeffrey Grove and Olga Viso, as well as a work by Pulitzer Prize finalist, playwright, and feminist philosopher Susan Griffin and texts by Bill Arning, Director of the Contemporary Arts Museum Houston, and Helen Molesworth, Barbara Lee Chief Curator, ICA, Boston.

About the Dallas Museum of Art

Established in 1903, the Dallas Museum of Art (DMA) ranks among the leading art institutions in the country and is distinguished by its innovative exhibitions and groundbreaking educational programs. At the heart of the Museum and its programs is its global collection, which encompasses more than 24,000 works and spans 5,000 years of history, representing a full range of world cultures. Located in the vibrant Arts District of downtown Dallas, the Museum welcomes more than half a million visitors annually and acts as a catalyst for community creativity, engaging people of all ages and backgrounds with a diverse spectrum of programming, from exhibitions and lectures to concerts, literary events, and dramatic and dance presentations.

The Dallas Museum of Art is supported in part by the generosity of Museum members and donors and by the citizens of Dallas through the City of Dallas/Office of Cultural Affairs and the Texas Commission on the Arts.