James Benning

ALABAMA

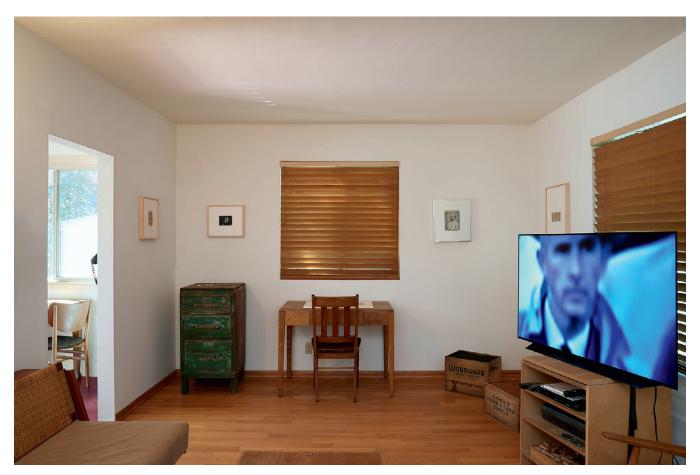
30758 San Martinez Road, Val Verde, CA 90384

March 12-13th, 19th-20th, and 26th-27th, 2022

Photography by Evan Walsh. Full details included in checklist. Kitchen:



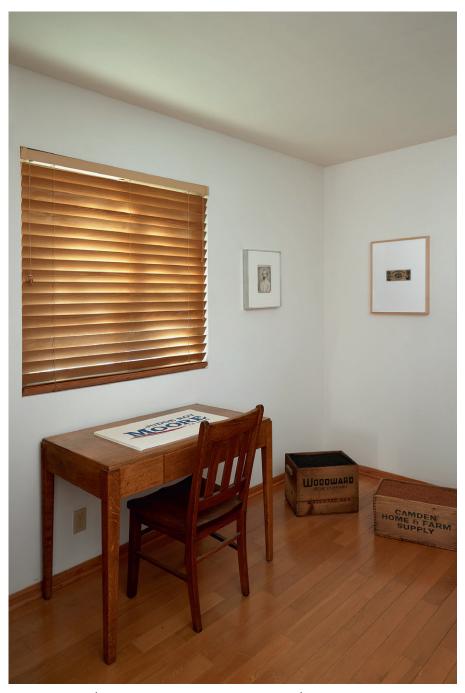
Alabama-Coushatta arrowheads, circa 1830s | Alabama map,1856



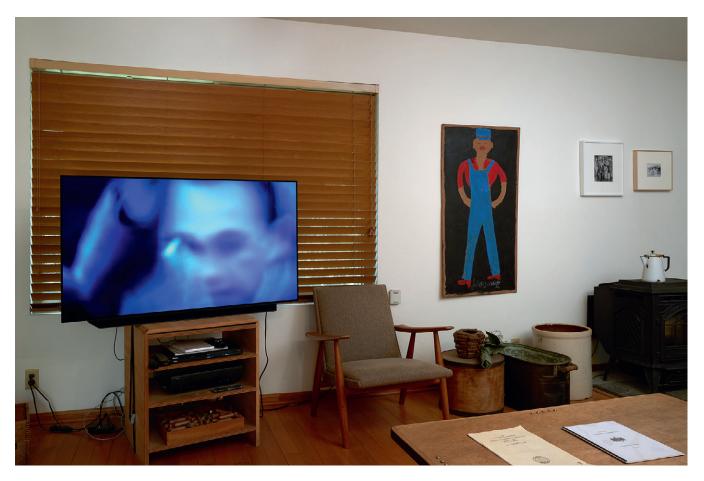
Installation view of ALABAMA by James Benning. Val Verde, California. Photo by Evan Walsh.



Stop the Runaway, 1804 | Andrew Jackson, 1844 | Civil War bullets, circa 1860s



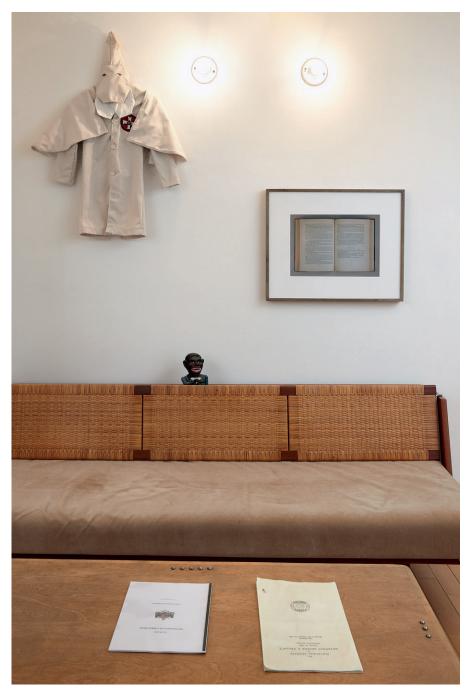
Special Election | Nathan Meier, Nathan Bedford Forrest | The Central Bank of Alabama, 1856 | WOODWARD IRON COMPANY | CAMDEN HOME & FARM



Video Loop (14:14): The Birth of a Nation, 2:33 minutes | Inaugural Address, George C. Wallace, 1963, 3:18 minutes | Selma, March 7, 1965, 1:22 minutes | Angela Davis, California State Prison, sound only, 4:00 minutes | The Outlaw Josey Wales, 3:01 minutes



Jimmy Lee Sudduth, Red Shirt Fellow, 1984 | Scottsboro Boys | Victoria Price and Ruby Bates, 1931 | Door Text



Child's KKK robe and hood | Bank, 1896 | Inmate Handbook (Male), 2013 | Alabama 8th grade history text, 1957



Nathan Meier, In memory of



Tree along the Trail of Tears (Bankhead Forest, Alabama) Shotgun house with me and Morgan, 1968

Books:

Klansman's Manual, Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, 1924

Stars Fell on Alabama, Carl Cramer, 1934

Black Reconstruction in America, 1860-1880, W.E.B. DuBois, 1935

Scottsboro Boy, Haywood Patterson and Earl Conrad, 1950

The Strange Career of Jim Crow, C. Vann Woodward, 1955

Know Alabama, Lawrence Owsley, John Craig Stewart and Gordon T. Chappell, 1957

Let Us Now Praise Famous Men, James Agee and Walker Evans, 1960

The American Revolution, James Boggs, 1963

Down Home: Camden, Alabama, Bob Adelman, 1972

The Rebel Outlaw: Josey Wales, Forrest Carter, 1973

McIntosh and Weatherford, Creek Indian Leaders, Benjamin W. Griffith, Jr., 1988

And Their Children After Them, Dale Maharidge and Michael Williamson, 1989

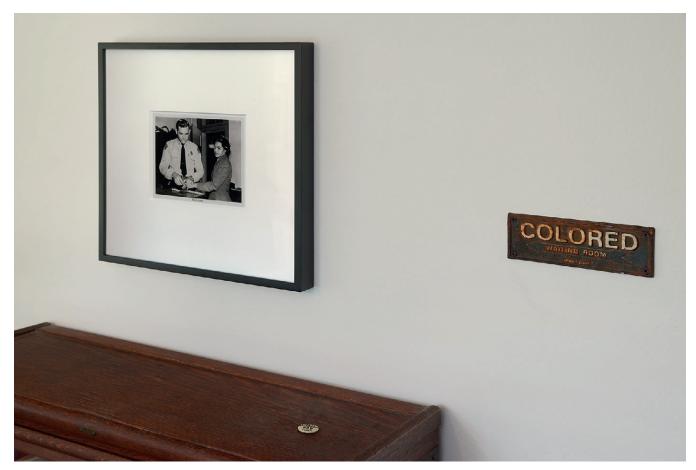
Poor But Proud, Alabama's Poor Whites, Wayne Flynt, 1989

Hammer and Hoe, Robin D.G. Kelley, 1990

From Selma to Sorrow, The Life and Death of Viola Liuzzo, Mary Stanton, 1998

BREACH OF PEACE, Eric Etheridge, 2008

Searching for Freedom after the Civil War, G. Ward Hubbs, 2015



Rosa Parks, 1955 | FREEDOM NOW, 1960 | Waiting Room, 1937



Booker T. Washington | After Traylor

Hallway:



Prison shirt (Limestone Correctional Facility)

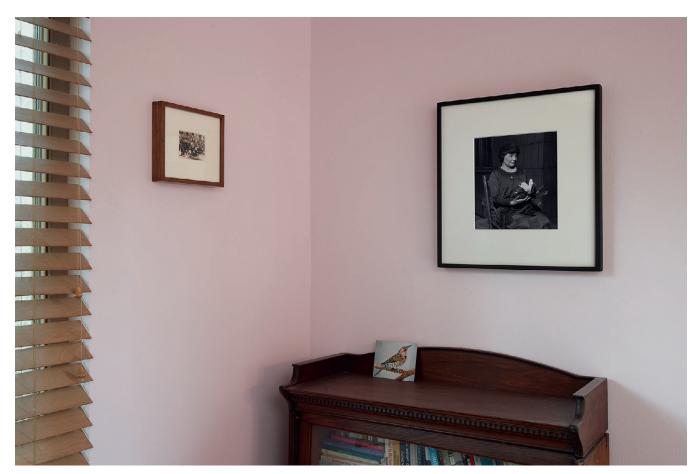
Bedroom:



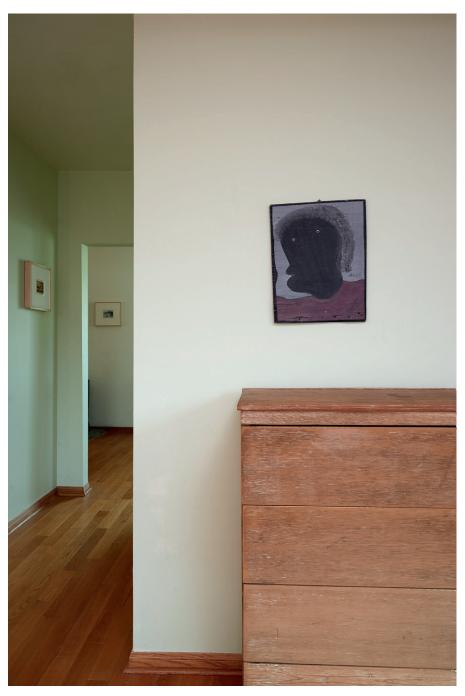
After Maggie Louise Gudger | After Missouri Pettway



Mose Tolliver, Self-portrait, 1985 | Red Dirt Girl | GEES BEND



Two mules from Gee's Bend,1968 | Nathan Meier, Yellowhammer Woodpecker | Helen Keller,1920



Mose Tolliver, Self-portrait, 1985

Out Building:



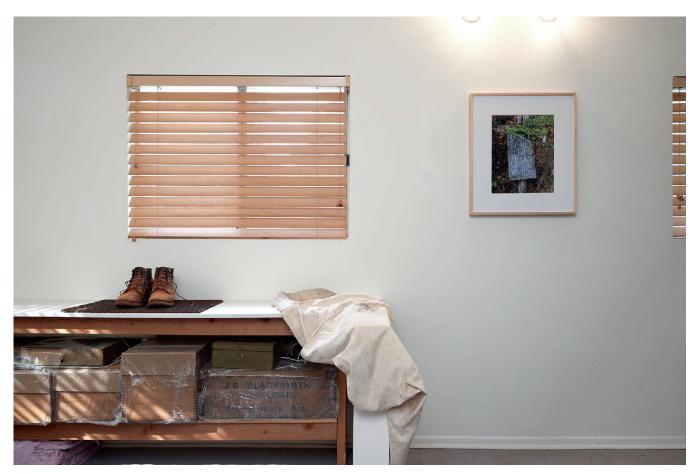
Nathan Meier, Jim Crow | Go Home Negro | GIVE US AMERICAN RIGHTS | NOTICE!



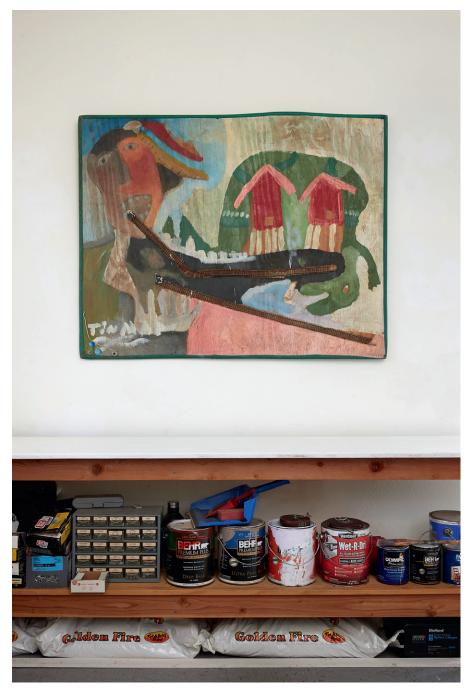
After Evans (Lucille Burroughs) | Winonah Margaret Beamer, 1961 | Work Boots



Cotton sack, circa 1930



Work Boots | Cotton sack, circa 1930 | GOD SAID THE WORLD COME TO A END, 2018



Charlie Lucas, Track, 1986

Press Release:

Installed throughout the artist's home at 30758 San Martinez Road, Val Verde, California, James Benning's ALABAMA (2017-2022) is a multi-faceted work exploring the state of Alabama and its pivotal role in American history, societal dynamics, civil rights and art history.

In ALABAMA, a selection of archival objects, works on paper, photography, painting, textile work and a film installation trace narratives of self-determination amidst imposed power dynamics. The events that it outlines unfold over centuries, beginning with the region's occupation by white settlers and the expulsion of the land's native peoples, continuing through the subjugation of Black populations, and extending to the area's present-day social climate. ALABAMA's point of departure is Benning's continued engagement with so-called "outsider artists" - self-taught artists, often from marginalized communities. In the mid 2000s, Benning endeavored to expand his filmmaking practice to include painting, and first did so by creating copies of these artists' works based on reproductions found in catalogs. Tracing the origins of these artists would time and again lead Benning back to Alabama, prompting him to assemble artifacts and create pieces that broadened his focus to the history and significance of the state and its inhabitants, ultimately shaping a record of activism, expression, resistance, homage, strife and reverence. The presentation's domestic setting locates Benning's work in a context that suggests a happenstance encounter and intimates the ongoing relevance and living nature of the project's pieces and their legacies. Displayed non-chronologically throughout the home's rooms, amidst the trappings of the artist's own life, the work complicates the linear narratives often assigned to history. highlighting the delicate intricacies embedded within the work's component parts. Consisting of both found and reproduced elements, ALABAMA points to Benning's own nuanced deconstruction of the past and brings into guestion hierarchies dictated by authenticity. Shown in Val Verde, geographically removed from traditional exhibition spaces, Benning conflates notions of public and private by inviting visitors to a deeply personal encounter.

James Benning (b. 1942) has created over 30 feature-length films in the past 50 years. Beginning his experimental film practice in the 1970s, Benning developed a distinct visual language associated with long, real-time, single-shot frames, and the use of landscape to convey deeper themes. Exploring topics of politics, marginalization of peoples, ecology and technology, Benning often returns to the grand narratives of the US and their hidden undersides. In recent decades, his practice has expanded to include photography, printmaking and large-scale installation work that continue and complement his filmic practice.

Selected Solo Exhibitions:

- 2021 PLACE, neugerriemschneider, Berlin, DE
- 2020 Down the Rabbit Hole: JB in JT, O-Town House, Los Angeles, US
- 2018 Found Fragments, neugerriemschneider, Berlin, DE 31 Friends (October), O-Town House, Los Angeles, US
- 2016 measuring change, neugerriemschneider, Berlin, DE
- 2015 »Silent« Cinema, Staatsgalerie Stuttgart, Stuttgart, DE Decoding Fear, Kunstverein in Hamburg, Hamburg, DE
- 2014 *James Benning*, VOX Centre de l'image contemporaine, Montreal, CA *natural history*, Museum of Natural History, Vienna, AT *Decoding Fear*, Kunsthaus Graz, Universalmuseum Joanneum, Graz, AT
- 2012 One Way Boogie Woogie 2012, Argos Centre for Art and Media, Brussels, BE Two Cabins, neugerriemschneider, Berlin, DE Milwaukee/Duisburg, Platform A Gallery, Newcastle, GB One Way Boogie Woogie 2012, NGCA Northern Gallery for Contemporary Art, Sunderland, GB
- 1981 James Benning, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, US
- 1978 Four Oil Wells, Artpark, Lewiston, US

Selected Group Exhibitions:

- 2018 Outliers and American Vanguard Art, National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C., US
- 2016 *presently*, neugerriemschneider, Berlin, DE
 - The Promise of Total Automation, Kunsthalle Wien, Vienna, AT
- 2015 Fictitious Tales about the History of Earth, MAK Center for Art and Architecture, Los Angeles, US
- 2014 Die Unberechenbarkeit komplexer und offener Systeme. James Benning, Lutz Dammbeck, Fridericianum, Kassel, DE The 2014 Whitney Biennial, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, US
- 2013 Tell It To My Heart: Collected by Julie Ault, Kunstmuseum Basel, Basel, CH Looking Back/The 7th White Columns Annual, White Columns, New York, US
- 2011 41. Internationales Forum des Jungen Films/Forum Expanded, Berlin, DE
- 2007 documenta 12, Kassel, DE
- 1996 Cineprobe, Museum of Modern Art, New York, US
- 1987 Biennial Exhibition, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, US
- 1979 Eight Artists: The Elusive Image, Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, US
- 1977 documenta 6, Kassel, DE

For further press information and imagery, please contact Jan Salewski at neugerriemschneider: +49 30 288 77277, jan@neugerriemschneider.com; or Scott Cameron Weaver at O-Town House: +1 213 263 9428, home@o-townhouse.art.