

## Cincinnati Art Museum Hank Willis Thomas: All Things Being Equal... Workshop

### Alandes Powell – *The Cotton Bowl*/Response Transcript

00:00:01,390 --> 00:00:06,142

The *Hank Willis Thomas: All Things Being Equal...* exhibit

00:00:06,142 --> 00:00:07,726

was amazing, phenomenal.

00:00:08,930 --> 00:00:11,828

There was times I teared up.

00:00:12,950 --> 00:00:15,086

There was moments when I just got upset.

00:00:16,440 --> 00:00:18,717

And there was moments when I thought, what could I do

00:00:18,717 --> 00:00:22,004

differently? Did exactly what art is supposed to do.

00:00:23,400 --> 00:00:24,168

It moved me.

00:00:25,720 --> 00:00:28,175

I specifically fell for Cotton

00:00:28,175 --> 00:00:34,228

Bowl and was amazed when I realized that it was created in

00:00:34,228 --> 00:00:38,936

2011 and how it resonated with today, with right now 2020.

00:00:39,750 --> 00:00:44,980

In Cotton Bowl, you'll see a man on the left in a football

00:00:44,980 --> 00:00:48,630  
stance in a cotton field with  
his cotton picking outfit

00:00:48,630 --> 00:00:51,915  
on, knowing that he was  
used for his strength.

00:00:53,320 --> 00:00:54,750  
And to just pick cotton.

00:00:56,140 --> 00:00:59,520  
It wasn't about the whole  
man. It wasn't about his

00:00:59,520 --> 00:01:02,900  
whole meaning, his entire  
being. It was just about his

00:01:02,900 --> 00:01:04,252  
ability to pick cotton.

00:01:05,580 --> 00:01:10,200  
And then you look at the man on  
the right, which is in a

00:01:10,200 --> 00:01:13,830  
football stance, in a football  
uniform, of black man. And you

00:01:13,830 --> 00:01:17,130  
know that his power, his ability  
is used to entertain.

00:01:18,120 --> 00:01:19,480  
Not his entire body.

00:01:20,680 --> 00:01:22,198  
People don't care what  
he thinks.

00:01:23,800 --> 00:01:25,790

This is using him to entertain.

00:01:26,800 --> 00:01:30,765

It reminded me of my one of my  
all time favorite civil rights

00:01:30,765 --> 00:01:31,985

activist Colin Kaepernick,

00:01:32,650 --> 00:01:36,654

And how when he opened his mouth  
to say I'm bigger than a

00:01:36,654 --> 00:01:38,194

football player, how upset it

00:01:38,194 --> 00:01:41,700

made people, and how they really wanted  
to say just play ball.

00:01:43,130 --> 00:01:45,365

You know, I personally stand

00:01:45,365 --> 00:01:48,160

with Kap, on my knees.

00:01:49,330 --> 00:01:53,503

I think of people like LeBron  
James and it made me think how

00:01:53,503 --> 00:01:57,676

people told him to shut up and  
dribble and this piece of art

00:01:57,676 --> 00:02:00,886

captured that for me and I  
thought this was 2011.

00:02:01,790 --> 00:02:05,590

Hank Willis Thomas has such  
foresight and his ability to

00:02:05,590 --> 00:02:10,150

capture the need for justice, to  
capture how people see us, and

00:02:10,150 --> 00:02:12,430  
use us, is just so apparent.

00:02:13,300 --> 00:02:18,870  
I also love his Love Over Rules,  
spoke to my heart.

00:02:19,570 --> 00:02:23,951  
It actually said that rules that  
were made to oppress us, if they

00:02:23,951 --> 00:02:25,299  
are executed with love,

00:02:26,000 --> 00:02:30,160  
are maybe just with the saying,  
"Do unto others as you would have

00:02:30,160 --> 00:02:32,720  
them do unto you," that we find in

00:02:32,720 --> 00:02:36,722  
scriptures. Then rules would  
not do what they were

00:02:36,722 --> 00:02:39,728  
intended to do, if they were  
executed with love.

00:02:40,990 --> 00:02:45,190  
So thank you so much Hank Willis  
Thomas, for your creativity.

00:02:45,900 --> 00:02:50,124  
Thank you Cincinnati Museum for  
bringing this piece of work to

00:02:50,124 --> 00:02:52,340  
our community. It was needed.

00:02:52,930 --> 00:02:55,242

We have amazing, talented  
artists here in Cincinnati

00:02:55,242 --> 00:02:58,132

and I think it wakes up  
something in them.

00:02:59,450 --> 00:03:00,740

And that's meaningful.

00:03:01,730 --> 00:03:06,108

One day we won't need Black  
exhibits or Black History Month.

00:03:06,108 --> 00:03:10,884

One day people will realize that  
we as Blacks are the fabric

00:03:11,540 --> 00:03:13,440

of this community of these

00:03:13,440 --> 00:03:17,707

United States. It was built off  
our backs, off the backs of black

00:03:17,707 --> 00:03:22,260

men and women. And so it should  
just be the normal. Until then,

00:03:22,260 --> 00:03:25,650

we thank you Cincinnati Museum  
for stepping up.

00:03:26,830 --> 00:03:29,159

Thanks a lot. Grace and peace.