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**CONTACT**

Lizz Biswell, Halsey Institute  
[BiswellL@cofc.edu](mailto:BiswellL@cofc.edu)  
843.953.5659 [w]  
843.412.0576 [c]

High-res images available [here](#).

**THE HALSEY INSTITUTE OF CONTEMPORARY ART  
ANNOUNCES FIRST 2018-2019 SEASON EXHIBITION  
THE IMAGE HUNTER: ON THE TRAIL OF JOHN JAMES AUDUBON**

Exhibition dates: August 17 – September 29, 2018

**CHARLESTON, SC** – The [Halsey Institute of Contemporary Art](#) at the College of Charleston is proud to announce their first exhibition of the 2018-2019 season, *The Image Hunter: On the Trail of John James Audubon*. The exhibition will be on view from Friday, August 17 to Saturday, September 29 with a public opening reception on Friday, August 24 at 6:30PM. The galleries are open to the public and admission is free.

**ABOUT THE EXHIBITION**

*The Image Hunter: On the Trail of John James Audubon* features new work by the Italian artist Hitnes. The exhibition is a culmination of *The Image Hunter* project, in which Hitnes retraced Audubon's travels in the United States and created work during a residency in Charleston, SC.

In the early half of the nineteenth century, John James Audubon spent decades tracking birds and drawing them, hoping to create a compendium of all of the birds in the United States. Charleston played an important role in Audubon's work as he kept a studio in the home of his friend and fellow naturalist John Bachman. Audubon hunted for specimens on the Sea Islands off of Charleston's coast, and he even included the city's distinctive skyline from the 1830s—replete with its church steeples—in his drawing of the long-billed curlew.

Nearly two hundred years later, the Italian painter and muralist holding the moniker Hitnes embarked on a twenty-city road trip to retrace and rediscover the America that Audubon traversed in the making of his opus *The Birds of America* (1827-39). Traveling along Audubon's exploratory routes, Hitnes observed, sketched, and painted what he saw, creating an updated visual documentation of Audubon's birds.



Hitnes's exhibition will document his journey, elaborating on what it is that drives a person to dedicate multiple decades of their life to pursuing an obsession like Audubon did. The exhibition will feature a range of work informed by his own expedition, and he will include other objects and ephemera collected on his trek. The exhibition will also be accompanied by a feature-length documentary film on Hitnes's trip, directed by filmmaker Giacomo Agnetti. Hitnes was an artist-in-residence at the Halsey Institute in the summer of 2017 and returned for a second residency in the summer of 2018.

### **ABOUT THE ARTIST**

Born in Rome, where he currently lives and works, Hitnes is a painter and muralist. A frequent traveler, Hitnes has completed residencies in countries including China, Australia, Mexico, Russia, Norway, Colombia, and the United States. His work has been featured in venues around the globe, including the Instituto Italiano di Cultura, New York; Museo Civico di Zoologia, Rome; 999contemporary, Rome; and Fifty24MX, Mexico City, among others.

Art and biodiversity have a unique rapport in Hitnes' paintings. His name is invented, as are most of the animals he illustrates: species that do not exist in the real world. Expressing his talent through various techniques – from graffiti to illustration and fine art – Hitnes is a modern incarnation of the true Renaissance man. Since 2012 he has taught screen-printing courses at Rome's European Institute of Design (IED), as well as workshops in muralism, including a masterclass in Adelaide, Australia.

### **EVENTS DURING THE IMAGE HUNTER**

*All events are free and open to the public and take place at the Halsey Institute's galleries unless otherwise noted.*

#### **Opening Reception**

Friday, August 24, 6:30PM – 8:00PM

#### **Artist Talk**

Saturday, August 25, 2:00PM

#### **Birds, Beidler, and Banding**

*A trip to the Francis Beidler Forest with Audubon South Carolina*

Sunday, September 16, 8:00AM – 10:30AM

Francis Beidler Forest, Harleyville, SC 29448

Registration is limited, tickets required.

#### **Halsey Talks: Street Art**

Tuesday, September 18, 6:30PM

#### **Family Day! for The Image Hunter**

Saturday, September 22, 11:00AM – 4:00PM

Free for all Halsey Institute members

#### **Curator-led Tour**

Thursday, September 27, 6:00PM

Free for all Halsey Institute members

#### **ABOUT THE HALSEY INSTITUTE OF CONTEMPORARY ART**

The Halsey Institute of Contemporary Art at the College of Charleston provides a multidisciplinary laboratory for the production, presentation, interpretation, and dissemination of ideas by innovative visual artists from around the world. As a non-collecting museum, we create meaningful interactions between adventurous artists and diverse communities within a context that emphasizes the historical, social, and cultural importance of the art of our time.

Location: The Marion and Wayland H. Cato Jr. Center for the Arts, College of Charleston  
161 Calhoun Street, 1st Floor (corner of St. Philip & Calhoun Streets), Charleston, SC, 29401

Parking: Available in the St. Philip and George Street Garages

Gallery hours: Monday – Saturday, 11:00 AM – 4:00 PM, open until 7:00 PM on Thursdays during exhibitions, or by appointment. Closed on Sundays. FREE ADMISSION and OPEN to the public.

Tours: Free guided group tours are offered through the Halsey Institute's Looking to See program.

Email [HalseyTours@cofc.edu](mailto:HalseyTours@cofc.edu) for inquiries. Guided tours are available at 2:00PM every Saturday during exhibitions unless superseded by a program.

More Information: Call (843) 953-4422, visit [halsey.cofc.edu](http://halsey.cofc.edu), or e-mail [halsey@cofc.edu](mailto:halsey@cofc.edu)

#### **Image Credit**

Hitnes

*Red-Bellied Woodpecker (Quick! Every-where)*, 2017

Watercolor and graphite on paper in wooden frame

39 3/8 x 27 1/2 inches (100 x 70 cm)

Courtesy of the artist, photo: Rick Rhodes

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