



TIME EQUITIES INC.



**Damien Davis:**  
***Ivory Towers Were  
Made By Somebody***

**Opening November 15<sup>th</sup>  
6:00 to 7:30PM**

55 5th Ave, Lobby  
New York, NY 10003  
[TEIArtinBuildings.com](http://TEIArtinBuildings.com)

**Time Equities Inc. Art-in-Buildings is pleased to announce the newest exhibition in the lobby at 55 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Damien Davis: *Ivory Towers Were Made By Somebody***

*Ivory Towers Were Made By Somebody* is the latest work by Damien Davis to interrogate the invisible histories of urban environments. Composed of six panels, the work draws its inspiration from traditional objects, symbols, and scenes native to a construction site such as gears, bolts, and hard hats. Davis' interest in mechanics is not limited to the literal, but includes the unseen labor that fuels the grandeur of the urban landscape. "The installation I am imagining is both an acknowledgement of the enslaved Africans, Native Americans and immigrants that built (and continue to rebuild) New York City, that still largely go unseen and unacknowledged." Davis says.

Within Davis' ensemble of panels, the viewer is dazzled by a symphony of colors and textures ranging from the lyrical curvature of wood grain to geometric emblems cut from plastics. Ancient Egyptian symbols populate the panels, alongside haphazard stick-figure iconography typically associated with institutional signage. Elements of Afro-Futurism thwart recognizable profiles from ancient history to present day with Davis' biting and humorous fusion of the Nefertiti bust, who wears a hard hat atop her already generously tall crown. Further, assemblages of African masks composed of plastic seashells reference the Caribbean diaspora while contemplating the tension between the artificial plastic and the naturally occurring source material it imitates.

Most prominently, a system of wooden gears beg the viewer to activate the kinetic sculpture. Though gears may traditionally symbolize progress, their mechanization equally describes a departure from the natural and a triumph of industry. Through his installation, Davis subverts the expectation of metal and its symbolism of industry and progress to ask: who are the people who really make the gears turn and why don't we celebrate them?

Damien Davis (b. 1984) is a Brooklyn-based artist, born in Crowley, Louisiana and raised in Phoenix, Arizona. His practice explores the historical representations of Blackness by unpacking the visual language of various cultures, questioning how societies code/decode/recode representations of race through craft, design and digital modes of production. His work has appeared at The Whitney Museum of American Art, Museum of Modern Art, Museum of Arts and Design and various galleries across the country, most recently including solo exhibitions at Charlie James, Los Angeles, CA and Mrs., Maspeth, NY. He is the recipient of the Rema Hort Mann Foundation Community Engagement Grant and has been awarded residencies with Dieu Donn , Triangle Arts Association, the Museum of Arts and Design, Lower Manhattan Cultural Council, Pilchuck Glass School and Sugar Hill Children's Museum of Art and Storytelling. Davis is also a former fellow and current advisor for the Art & Law Program in New York City, as well as a board member for the Fire Island Artist Residency. His work has been mentioned in the New York Times, Frieze Magazine, The Guardian, Hyperallergic, Vulture Magazine, and NYLON. Davis is currently a Visiting Assistant Professor of Sculpture at Purchase College (SUNY). Davis holds a BFA in Studio Art and an MA in Visual Arts Administration from New York University.

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Damien Davis: *Ivory Towers Were Made By Somebody* is curated by Tessa Ferreyros and sponsored by the Time Equities Inc. (TEI) Art-in-Buildings. TEI is committed to enriching the experience of our properties through the Art-in-Buildings Program, an innovative approach that brings contemporary art by emerging and mid-career artists to non-traditional exhibition spaces in the interest of promoting artists, expanding the audience for art, and creating a more interesting environment for our building occupants, residents, and guests.

Founded in 1966, Time Equities, Inc. ("TEI") has been in the real estate investment, development, and asset and property management business for more than 50 years. TEI currently holds in its own portfolio approximately 36 million square feet of residential, industrial, office and retail property including about 5,000 multi-family apartment units, approximately 580,000 square feet in pending acquisitions, and 1.7 million square feet of various property types in stages of pre-development and development. With 327 properties across 33 states, 5 Canadian provinces, Anguilla, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, and Scotland, the TEI portfolio benefits from a diversity of property types, sizes and markets. There are concentrations in the Northeast, Southeast, Midwest and West Coast of the U.S., and new markets around the world are always being evaluated.