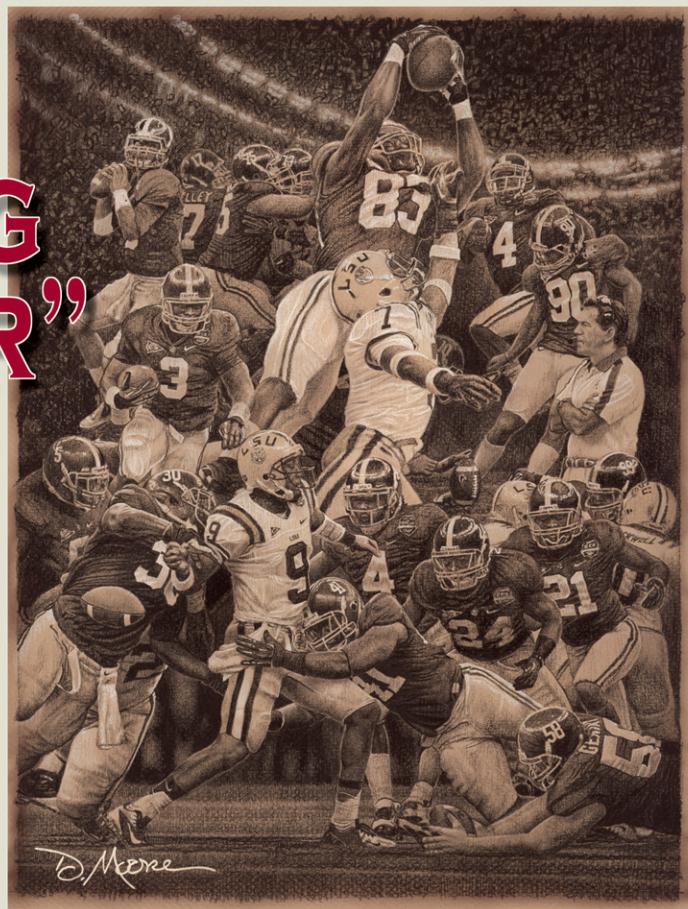


"RESTORING THE ORDER"

A WORD FROM THE ARTIST

Show at right is the preliminary compositional drawing for the artist's original oil painting, *Restoring the Order*.



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Upon hearing a certain something Barrett Jones' said on ESPN's pregame show for the BCS Championship Game, a light went on inside my head. When asked his thoughts regarding the rematch against LSU, Barrett said, "We like to think of it more as restoring the order, than revenge."

"Restoring the Order." I remember thinking that this was a great candidate for the title of a painting I was hoping to have the opportunity to soon create – one which would commemorate Alabama's victory over LSU to win its 14th National Championship. My first inclination was that this title would aptly describe Alabama jumping over LSU in polls, a restoration that many felt should have occurred back on November 5th in our own back yard. On another level I saw that Barrett may have been alluding, in some regard, to the restoration of Alabama's rich football tradition of winning national championships — which is almost like a birth-right kind of thing to us who bleed Crimson. I was also amused in recalling that years earlier, following the 1992 National Championship, my older brother (and Alabama graduate) said in jest that the natural order of the universe had been restored.

But it was during the game itself that I realized an even deeper level of meaning and pertinence for using *Restoring the Order* as the title. It was at a point in the game where it looked as if Bama was likely to win, that one of the television announcers brought up the topic of the Tuscaloosa tornado. His comments reminded everyone of how the community, the current and former Bama players, and many others outside the Bama nation joined in a team effort to help restore the community from the terrible disaster. Two of my daughters, who were watching the game with me, suggested that I could assign a portion of profits from the print sales to help in the ongoing restoration effort and somehow incorporate the houndstooth ribbon that has become the symbol for the restoration efforts. The phrase "restoring the order" began taking on a whole new meaning. Only a short time later, I received further confirmation for using the phrase as the title for the painting. Little did I know at the time that this newfound meaning would come to influence the composition itself.

During his on-the-field interview right after the game, a Gatorade-drenched Coach Saban was asked what message he hoped to send to the people of Tuscaloosa who had lost so much in the recent tornado disaster. He responded, "I think it gives everybody a lot of joy and spirit and hope that we're going to continue to work and move forward and try to help people *restore their lives* in our community. Things like this [National Championships] make everybody happy and gives them a lot of hope. I'm so happy and proud of our players, our folks, the people in our community, who have been through so much with the tornado. I hope this lifts their spirits and gives them hope for a successful future."

As I further considered the "restoring the order" theme, I became aware of a fourth level of meaning. While it is clear that Alabama exerted a "lights out" team effort in beating the Number-1 ranked team in the country, the biggest elephant in the room that night was not Big Al. It was the Alabama Defense. Since his arrival, Coach Saban has continually recruited, built, and personally molded the Alabama Defense into the most respected in the nation. In that sense, he has "restored the order" — at least for us "old school" fans who were brought up on Coach "Bear" Bryant's famous adage, "Defense wins Championships."

I have incorporated all of the above inspirations, influences and suggestions into "Restoring the Order" so that I might convey several messages and themes through my painting. I have done this by using a combination of symbolic devices, artistic license and composition. In the order of my above accounting, the following is a list of the significant meanings that I see and hope to convey in *Restoring the Order*:

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