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## Spirit Spirits

Renata Berdes – Zolt Brown-Dunn – Casey Chrzan – Guy Conners – Sam Filicky – Ted Hamel – Ted Gram-Boarini – Stefan Harhaj – Nikki Heusman – Katrina Jackson – Lia Kohl – David Krueger with Ben Marcus – Lawrence M. – Susan Pasowicz – Emily Daisy-Schulz – Maria Vanik

Curated by Eli Greene & Devin T. Mays

### Circle Contemporary Chicago

2010 W Carroll  
Chicago, IL 60612

**September 27 - November 10, 2024**

Do senses sense spirit? How may a spirit be observed or felt? The essence of a thing may be what gives us a sense of that thing. The first is visible, the second, invisible; both remain in-di-visible, unable to be divided from one another.

I was asked to help sense or conjure a ground for Spirit Spirits. This ground need not be high, as the air does not cease to touch the ground here. This ground is not a permanent ground -Terra Firme - but rather another kind of ground, an ephemeral one. Breath and spirit have this transience, they come and go, repeatedly and indefinitely. Breath comes and goes until it does not come again. Yet, the breath of one can enter another. A phenomenon is set forth. The effort of breath gives both the balloon and the bubble their essence; therefore, one may get a sense of the balloon and bubble. In this way, breath grants these two things their spirit. One is only slightly visible when this spirit is contained. The other becomes visible by revealing the essence of its loitering container.

**Eli Greene** (b. New York, NY) is a Chicago and Houston based multimedia artist. Her works are often filtered through photography, saturated with the medium and everything it sticks to -- history, memory and loss. Through image, object, and performance, Greene's practice traces the act of one thing becoming another. Her recent work has been exhibited and performed at the Graham Foundation for Advanced Studies in the Fine Arts, Chicago, Maximillian William, London, The Smart Museum of Art, Gallery 400, The Reva and David Logan Center for the Arts and Regards, Chicago.

**Devin T. Mays** (b. Detroit, MI) works with sculpture, installation, performance, and pictures to locate the seen, unseen and understood. His literal use of the temperamental and temporary is an attempt to work with the materiality of everything and nothingness. The materials being used in his practice do not always present themselves as anything more than what they appear to be. There is not always a physical transformation at the hands of his facilitation. He often refers to his interdisciplinary practice as a practice-in-practice, a place for things to become Things. He has exhibited and performed at Martin Janda, Vienna; The Renaissance Society, Chicago; Neubauer Collegium, Chicago; gta exhibitions, Zürich; Sweetwater, Berlin; F, Houston; SculptureCenter, New York; Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago among others.

Opening Reception:  
September 27th 5-8 pm

CXW/WTAW Extra Hours:  
October 4th 5-8 pm  
October 5th 10-6 pm  
October 6th 1-4 pm



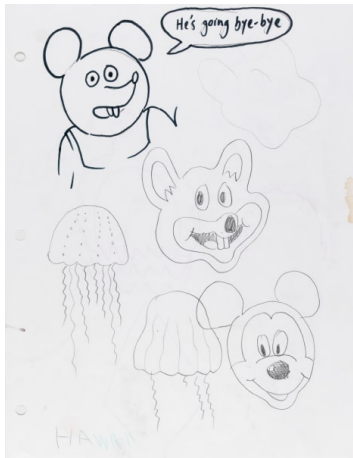
**Sam Filicky**  
*Forest, 2022*  
Acrylic on paper  
14 x 11



**Lawrence M.**  
*Green, Purple Squares, 2019*  
Mixed Media  
20 x 16 in.  
50.8 x 40.6 cm.



**Nikole Heusman**  
*Behind the Curtain, 2023*  
Acrylic on canvas  
20 x 16 in.  
50.8 x 40.6 cm.



**David Krueger with Ben Marcus**

*He's Going Bye-Bye*, n.d.

Graphite and marker on paper

11 x 8 ½ in.

27.9 x 21.6 cm.



**Sam Filicky**

*Tree*, 2022

Graphite and marker on paper

9 x 12 in.

22.9 x 30.5 cm.



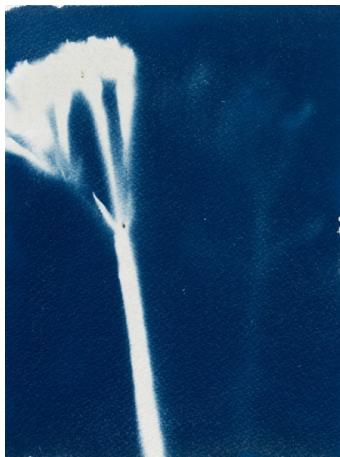
**Renata Berdes**

*Hospital Bed*, 2022

Paint marker on vellum

5 x 6 in.

12.7 x 15.2 cm.



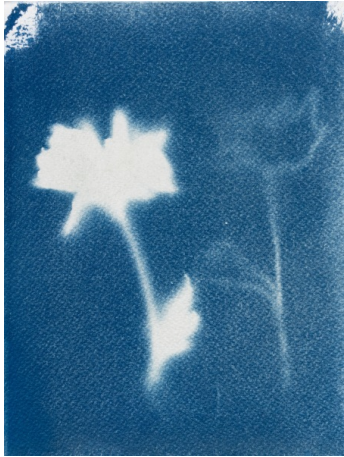
**Nikole Heusman**

*Untitled*, 2023

Cyanotype on paper

7 ¼ x 5 ½ in.

18.4 x 14 cm.



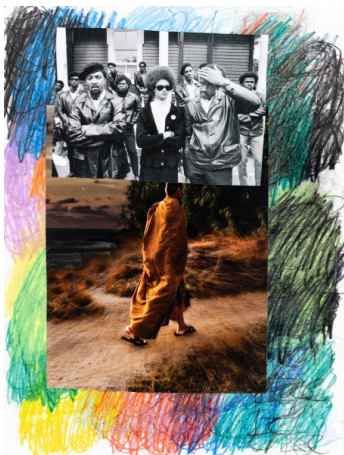
**Nikole Heusman**  
*Untitled*, 2023  
Cyanotype on paper  
7 ¼ x 5 ½ in.  
18.4 x 14 cm.



**Ted Hamel**  
*Anger*, 2020  
Pen and marker on paper  
11 x 14 in.  
27.9 x 35.6 cm.



**Lawrence M.**  
*Light Brown, Red, Orange, White and Pink*,  
2019  
Acrylic on board  
11 x 14 in.  
27.9 x 35.6 cm.



**Lawrence M.**  
*Swimming*, 2023  
Colored pencil, marker, pastel collage on paper  
14 x 11 in.  
35.6 x 27.9 cm.



**Maria Vanik**

*Untitled (Necklaces)*, 2024

Fishing line, plastic beads

23 x 8 in.

58.4 x 20.3 cm.



**Susan Pasowicz**

*Untitled*, n.d.

Colored pencil and graphite on paper

15 x 19 in.

38.1 x 48.3 cm.



**Casey Chrzan**

*Robot*, 2024

Acrylic and paint marker on paper

9 x 12 in.

22.9 x 30.5 cm.



**Ted Gram-Boarini**

*Lover*, 2024

Acrylic on canvas

10 x 8 in.

25.4 x 20.3 cm.



**Isamu Guy Conners**

*Black Grapes, 2023*

Watercolor on paper

9 x 12 in.

22.9 x 30.5 cm.



**Katrina Jackson**

*Untitled, 2024*

Marker and pastel on paper

14 x 11 in.

35.6 x 27.9 cm.



**Stefan Harhaj**

*Apples, 2024*

Acrylic, offset litho on cardboard

12 x 12 in.

30.5 x 30.5 cm.



**Emily Daisy Schultz**

*Lottery, 2024*

Ballot box, index cards, marker

Dimensions Variable

NFS



**Zolt Brown-Dunn**

Untitled, 2024

Performance with clarinet, flute, concertina, and saxophone, and bubble machine.

Dimensions Variable

**Renata Berdes** (b.1994) The persistence and laser focus Renata Berdes possesses in pursuit of her artistic outcomes is indomitable. She continually pursues her themes, or “obsessions” as she calls them, with voracity and intention. Her sculptural works viewed collectively suggest the assemblage of a new space that plays with scale and permanence. Individually her sculptures are imbued with the magic of what is possible; first there was nothing, and now by Berdes’ hands and imagination the object exists. Found objects are unified through an intimate connection with the sense of touch that manifests in rich textures. Berdes delivers with confidence and honesty, engaging viewers through her own vulnerability. She invites us to see the world from her viewpoint and delights us with her reinterpretation of what is.

**Zolt Brown-Dunn** is an artist from Long Beach, CA working between their hometown, Chicago, and virtual game environments. Their bodies of work primarily consist of investigations into the intersections of Contemporality & Nostalgia, Deception & Collective Memory, Agency & Occupation. Work is often grounded in the sensibilities of the photographic, though often departs. And so on. Zolt maintains a fluid curatorial and organizational practice through the collaborative project Propagate Cooperative [IG] [WEB] and makes up half the team behind Test Strip [IG] [WEB]

**Casey Chrzan's** gestural approach to painting and collage reflects his carefree attitude in the studio. His quick, wet on wet application

of vibrant acrylics lends recurring subject matter – robots, flowers, basketballs, and family members – a sense of spontaneity and lightheartedness.

**Guy Connors** was born in 1990 in Tokyo, Japan and moved to Chicago as a child. Outside of his work as a painter, Guy is an avid runner. He takes breaks from his practice to participate in several marathons each year in cities across the US.

Guy has a talent for realism and is gifted with a keen sense of visual perception. Where other artists may be intimidated by the detail or scope of a reference image, he has the ability to break his subject down to the key qualities that convey depth, texture, and character. He skillfully layers brush strokes over time – whether in a wet on wet application of acrylic or delicate washes of watercolor – yielding a rich and varied surface.

**Emily Daisy-Schultz** is an artist. Recent projects have been exhibited at The Arts Club of Chicago, the Hyde Park Art Center, and Logan Center Exhibitions.

**Sam Filicky's** (b. 1999) work embodies the romanticism of traditional landscape painting and an appreciation for the beauty found in the natural world. Filicky's primary inspirations include landscapes, seascapes, abstraction, and the joy of the creative process. His soft, atmospheric landscapes aspire to capture a particular feeling or tone, whether that of a particular season, element of nature, or hazy memory of a terrain once visited. He routinely alternates between painting and drawing, gradually building each composition through a layering of different media on the surface. Filicky's paintings are defined by bold brushstrokes – fluctuating between quick and gestural or long and meandering – and a wet on wet mixing of vibrant or muted acrylics.

**Ted Hamel** (b.1990) To view Ted Hamel's artwork is to enter a strange and delightful world of fictional characters from the silver screen interacting with political figures, current events, train lines and locomotives. Ted finds meaning in his artwork by exploring his



emotions through subject matter and color in his narrative based artwork.

***Ted Gram-Boarini*** (b.1984) Ted Gram-Boarini is at once a visual artist and musician, and his preferred modes of artistic expression are mutually influential. This is witnessed in the mesmerizing rhythm of his brush strokes, and in the artistry of the lyrics he has written for the North Shore studio band, Van Go Go. Gram-Boarini reimagines music and movie references into acrylic paintings on canvas. Distinctively, his introspective nature and personal connection to the reference always shine through. Gram-Boarini allows us to see him through his work, while leaving space for the viewer's personal reverie.

***Stefan Harhaj*** As an artist who is very process oriented, Steve enjoys painting layers of color and creating patterns using motifs such as flowers, leaves, and boats. Through repetition, Stefan has developed his own aesthetic language, rendering these recurring subjects and overarching themes in a manner reminiscent of folk art. One can easily recognize his artwork, through his personal take on archetypal symbols and patterns. "I'm not rushing, I'm just sitting here taking my time trying to figure out what looks good. I like to start somewhere then think about what I'm going to do next. I'm working on figuring out what I want to do."

***Nikki Heusman's*** (b.1969) art practice is defined by her distinct artistic style and adeptness across mediums. Her portraiture is marked by subtle line work and shading on figures that are offset by backgrounds that pulsate with energetic color patterns. "I like doing people because I find them very interesting. I always wondered how they would look on canvas and how would they look in my eyes from a standpoint." Heusman draws inspiration from a variety of sources: classic paintings, contemporary works of art and pop culture. Regardless of origin, the resulting works maintain subjects rendered with a whimsical hand. Each piece is crafted

through a methodical process, involving careful composition, sketching and transferring.

**Katrina Jackson** is one of Arts of Life's newest community members attending the program on the south side of Chicago.

**Lia Kohl** is a cellist, composer, and sound artist based in Chicago. Her wide-ranging practice includes composition and performance, installation, improvisation, and collaboration. She tours nationally and internationally, working in theater, jazz, rock, and experimental contexts. Her work centers curiosity and patience, an exploration of the mundane and profound possibilities of sound.

**David Krueger** Born in 1962, David Krueger approaches everything in life with boundless enthusiasm and imagination. Heavily inspired by pop culture and storytelling, Krueger's work is saturated with symbols, vibrant colors, graphic shapes, and detailed patterns. His geometric style is characterized by horizontal bands drawn across the canvas which break up the frame into narrative sections, reminiscent of comic book layouts. Between these lines, he incorporates elaborate decorative elements that include stars, zigzags, squares, crosses, X's, and radiating lines. Krueger's work was recently featured at *Untitled Art Fair* in Miami Beach and the *Outsider Art Fair* in NYC. Previous exhibitions include *In Good Company* at the Chicago Cultural Center and *All Well and Good* at Circle Contemporary. He has an ongoing collaborative practice with artist Ben Marcus, creating comics about the character Love Man. Krueger's practice has been featured in *Disparate Minds*.

**Ben Marcus** is an artist and DJ in Chicago, Illinois.

**Lawrence M.** Born in 1994, Lawrence joined Arts of Life to begin developing his studio practice. Working primarily in drawing, painting, and collage, he engages with a process and aesthetic reflecting his everyday interests – gathering imagery of animals, watching cartoons, and a spontaneous layering of diverse materials and ideas. Lawrence also enjoys traveling with his family, spending

time with friends, and playing basketball, shot put, and a variety of other sports. Among other exhibitions, his work has been included in *Duck Feet* guest curated by Ricardo Partida, *If a Mountain Could Love* guest curated by Cody Tumblin, and *Dance Dance Dance* guest curated by Tyson Reeder.

**Susan Pasowicz** Born in Chicago in 1955, Sue Pasowicz is a dreamer and visionary. Fascinated by mystery, color, and organic forms, Pasowicz intuitively uses colored pencil and graphite to create whimsical, dream-like landscapes. Informed by both the fantastical and everyday, hints of her surroundings and memories become tangled in a web of wispy, hair-like marks that build up on the works' surface. Often incorporating mirrors, portals, windows, or doors, Pasowicz's work transports the viewer to nebulous and magical environments.

**Maria Vanik** Born in 1970, Maria is a lifelong Chicagoan. While she has an extensive background in experimenting with fiber and sculpture materials, she's currently focused on a prolific studio practice based in drawing. Vanik expands on references ranging from found imagery to pop culture to personal memories through the inclusion of patterns and vibrant colors, paired with a distinct approach to symbolism and mark-making. She has been a member of Arts of Life's Chicago studio since 2017.