

Let's Go Home

Omar Abulsheikh – Chris Austin – Renata Berdes – Jairo Granados-Cardenas –David Krueger with Ben Marcus – Brian Reed – Ricky Willis – Wesley Willis – Jean Wilson –Carina Yopez – Marvin Young

Curated by Christina Stavros of Intuit: The Center of Intuitive and Outsider Art

November 22, 2024 - January 24, 2025

Let's Go Home explores the concept of “home” through imagery portraying domestic spaces, loved ones, intimate objects, and homeland—representations that allude to feelings of comfort or familiarity. From Brian Reed’s ceramic sculpture of his late father to Jean Wilson’s paintings of an air conditioning unit and a breakfast scene, and, even, Jairo Granados-Cardenas’s intimate photograph of his father’s handmade wrench cross, the works in this exhibition examine the emotional architecture that shapes one’s notion of home. Here, the concept of home expands beyond the confines of the everyday and the place where one sleeps to explore the idea of home as an emotional connection to people or places near or far away. *Let's Go Home* challenges us to, not only consider a wider lens for the concept of home, but how others may experience it and how vast those differences can be. Despite those differences, however, we can empathize with each other through the understanding that lived experiences can be the driving force of what connects people to the comforts of “home”.

Christina Stavros received a Masters in Art History from The School of the Art Institute of Chicago in 2023, and a BFA in Printmaking and minor in Art History from the Pennsylvania State University in 2014. Stavros’ lifelong passion for the arts led her to Intuit in 2016, where she is now the Chief Registrar and Assistant Curator. She continues to practice artmaking through linoleum printing, sewing, and other mixed media work.

Intuit champions the diverse voices of self-taught art, welcoming both new and familiar audiences. Intuit is a premier museum of self-taught art—also known as outsider art. These artists typically work outside the mainstream and may have faced societal, economic or geographic barriers to a traditional path of art making. The museum’s mission is grounded in the ethos that art can be found anywhere and made by anyone. The instinct to create is universal and the arts must embrace, represent and be accessible to all.

Opening Reception:
Friday November 22, 2024
5-8:00 pm

Guest Curator Hours/Talk:
Friday December 6, 2024
5-7:00 pm
Talk: 5:30-6:00 pm



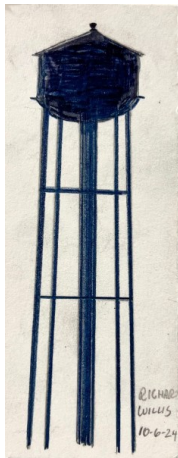
Wesley Willis

Downtown City Scapes, c. 1984

Ball point and felt tip pen on cardboard

20 x 30 in.

Collection of Intuit: The Center for Intuitive
and Outsider Art, gift of Paul Young and
Margaret Fox Young, 2004.9



Richard Willis

Untitled, 2024

Colored pencil on card stock

9 ½ x 3 ½ in.

Courtesy of Project Onward



Chris Austin

Picture Within a Painting, 2018

Acrylic inkjet and wood on canvas

48 x 36 in.



Brian Reed

Walter's Head, 2019

Clay, acrylic, wire

9 x 6 x 1 ½ in.



Renata Berdes

My Bedroom, 2022

Inkjet prints, foil tape, graphite and paint
marker on vellum, Scotch tape, glitter and
acrylic on Pantone by Letraset Adhesive

Paper

11 ⅛ x 10 ½ in.



Jean Wilson

Air Conditioning, 2023

Acrylic and graphite on paper

19 x 24 in



Jairo Granados-Cardenas

Wrench Cross, 2023

Photographic print on fine art paper

19 ½ x 27 ½ in.



Carina Yopez

Chevita mi Corazon, 2021

Dye sublimation, applique, embroidery,

beads, quilted on cotton

38 x 20 in.



Renata Berdes

Pink Bathtub, 2022

Acrylic on vellum

9 x 12 in.



Omar Abulsheikh

Walmart 2, 2024

Acrylic and paint marker on panel

16 x 16 in.



Marvin Young

Untitled (Two Women), 2024

Colored pencil, graphite and tape on paper

61 x 40 in.



David Krueger with Ben Marcus

Love Man Print 2, 2023

Risograph print on paper

14 x 11 in.

Omar Abulsheikh's works develop slowly as he carefully layers paint to achieve his desired effect. As a result, his paintings are identifiable by saturated pigments, heavy linework on a textured surface. "I like to draw. I like myself. Happy going." Abulsheikh's most recent works feature nebulous, spray-painted backgrounds that are reminiscent of star fields. He then layers narratives upon them, pulling from a rich sense of humor that shines through his artwork. "It's a painting. It's about something. People who fight and dance."

Born in 1967, **Chris Austin** studied mechanics at Ferris State University; a background that is evident in his meticulous art making process. Thoughtfully composed works emerge from methodical planning that manifests through research, sketching, and assembling source materials. Austin alternates between painting on canvas and hand-cut cardboard imbuing his work with a fresh viewpoint. Austin's mechanical interest is further evidenced in 2-dimensional works in which he uses subject matter to break the linear border of the substrate. His painting practice is grounded in realism with a nod to folk art. Chris layers elements within his paintings – intentionally overlooking volume and shadow and instead focusing on "the composition [and] the colors". His minimalist approach encourages narratives to emerge that are left open for personal interpretation and musing. Recent exhibitions include Into Action at Resolution Studios in Chicago and With a Little Help From My Friends guest curated by Megan Foy and Julian Van Der Moere. "Art is expressing yourself. I know how to make good art."

The persistence and laser focus **Renata Berdes** (b.1994) 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.

Jairo Granados-Cardenas is a self-taught film photographer whose captivating work reflects a profound connection to both his Mexican roots and the vibrant cultural tapestry of his current home in Chicago, IL. Born in Sahuayo, Michoacán, Mexico, Jairo spent his formative years immersed in the dynamic fusion of his Mexican heritage and the distinctive atmosphere of a Mexican-American household in the northern suburbs of Chicago. Despite lacking formal training, Jairo's artistic journey has been defined by an innate ability to capture the essence of human experiences through the lens of his camera. His evolving perspective is shaped by a keen understanding of composition, an astute mastery of color, and a unique flair for storytelling. These elements converge seamlessly in his photographs, creating a visual language that transcends cultural boundaries and resonates with viewers on a profound level. Currently based in Chicago,

Jairo Granados-Cardenas draws inspiration from the bustling urban landscape and the diverse tapestry of people that populate the city. His work is a testament to his intuitive response to human actions and gestures, a skill that has become instrumental in capturing moments of cultural intimacy and visual surrealism. Each photograph tells a story, weaving together the threads of daily life with an artistic vision that invites viewers to engage with the complexities of the human experience.

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.

Born in 1972, **Brian Reed's** art practice is guided by his inquisitive nature. The contemplative quality of his artwork extends a feeling of intimacy to the viewer, as we observe the result of his exploration of the people who inspire him and the animals that intrigue him. Reed experiments fearlessly with materials and continually welcomes new challenges. This is most evident in his three-dimensional works constructed with a variety of mediums. The resulting forms are at once brutal and elegant. Brian's affinity for acquiring new skills extends to teaching. He is a member of the agency's educator track, and shares art skills in a variety of settings. Reed's work has recently been included in Perceptions of Flow: Formation at Evanston Art Center and Text(ure(al) guest curated by Matt Bodett. "Art makes me happy because I like working with my hands. I like the way I use them. I like being with people while making art. I have so many friends from here."

Ricky Willis (b. 1968) is an architectural historian and sculptor, depicting high-rise apartment buildings, Shell gas stations, CTA buses and trains, and water towers. Willis is a living Google Earth, able to pinpoint virtually any building in Chicago and tell you when it was built, what building existed in the same spot before it, and the best bus route to get there. With simple materials and found wood, he recreates these structures flawlessly from memory with startling elegance, charm, and insight as to their function and history. Contact with real places and locality drive Willis' work: with the use of appropriated materials, most often collected during his public transit or bicycle commutes around Chicago, Willis builds up objects of the city from the literal material of

the city, taking items that are economically uninteresting and transforming them. Willis is almost never seen without his iPad or laptop. He uses it for entertainment (watching the Three Stooges and old cartoons) as well as collecting images of vintage gas station signs and doing research for his constructions. Another favorite past time is watching images of water tower demolitions on YouTube. It brings him joy to show his friends and these videos. When asked why he likes watertanks, Willis states, "Because Watertanks, they were gorgeous!" Ricky is the younger brother to the late Chicago artist and musician Wesley Willis. Ricky and Wesley's work was shown together for the first time in Wesley Willis/Ricky Willis/Joy Bus Ride as the inaugural exhibition at Project Onward's new gallery at the Bridgeport Art Center, in the fall of 2013. In 2019, Ricky again had the honor of displaying his sculptures with his late brother's drawings in an exhibition titled City of Many Dreams at Matthew Rachman Gallery.

Wesley Willis (1963-2003) was a self-trained artist and native Chicagoan, growing up on Chicago's Southside. Willis honed his technical abilities in the Chicago Public Schools, where he received an 'A' in his drafting class and aspired to become an architect. Willis could often be found sharing his drawings on the streets of Chicago and engaging those passing by, his personality and sensitive heart earning him a dedicated following. Willis's graphic vision captures the urban life spirit of the late 20th century. As an intuitive artist he has made a bold, genuine, and unique contribution to the visual arts. His work is represented in significant museum collections both in Europe and America.

Jean Wilson was born in Chicago in 1958 and has been a member of the Chicago Studio since 2007. Drawn to beasts both real and fictional – ranging from wolves and wildcats to bats and birds of prey to werewolves and three-headed hellhounds – Wilson is most inspired by the feared and respected nature of these subjects. Immediately visible across her body of work are sharp talons, ragged tufts of fur, glowing eyes, and jagged teeth lining unhinged jaws. While her feral menagerie serves as a collective talisman, it is also directly linked with her creative identity and related aspirational acts in the studio; she'll often watch favorite creature features while wearing elaborate animal masks, fantastical wolf montage T-shirts, or a full body gorilla suit. As an avid consumer of pop culture, her paintings also sometimes depict stereo systems, CD players, headphones, or favorite musicians. For another ongoing series, Wilson has created yellow legal pad drawings over the years, poetic missives listing bits of text transcribed from various source material, including magazines, album covers, and online advertisements. Wilson's work has previously been featured in *With a Little Help From My Friends* curated by Megan Foy and Julian Van Der Moere, *Jesse* curated by Peter Anastos, *Opening Night* curated by Liza Eilers, *Face in the Crowd* curated by No?!, *Morical*, *Hand Drawn Circle* at Intuit: The Center for Intuitive and Outsider Art, *Party Animal* at The Franklin, and *In Good Company* at the Chicago Cultural Center, as well as a limited edition print run with Summertime Gallery in Brooklyn. She can also be heard on the Arts of Life Band's 2017 album *Kinda Weirdy*.

Carina Yopez is a Chicago, Illinois, native with family roots in Guanajuato, Mexico. She is an educator and artist. She is passionate about exploring the traditions of matriarchy and the interconnected stories of Chicago immigrants through quilting. By using sewing as her medium, she delves into the techniques of domesticity and expresses her family's stories with a focus on healing ancestral trauma. Her work sparks conversations about the intersection of craft and fine art through sewing and appliqué layering, honoring her culture through floral motifs in her quilts and photographic weavings.

Born in 1961, **Marvin Young** is a lifelong resident of Chicago's South Side. Young has been dedicated to art-making since he was a child and joined our South Side studio in 2024. He observes his environment intensely and draws constantly as an expression and record of people and places in his community as he's experienced them over the decades. These portraits and various urban landscapes, both imagined and remembered, capture his hometown in a singular voice. Quite prolific, Young often produces several small scale drawings a day, or one large scale drawing over several days. He draws quick, yet detailed representations of figures (sometimes incorporating textile or background patterns) and neighborhood architecture, with subjects ranging from female police officers to taxis to the public housing project he once lived in on Cottage Grove