

NEWS RELEASE

BRUNO DAVID GALLERY
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EXHIBITIONS FOR FEBRUARY | MARCH 2024

Exhibition Dates: February 9 – March 30, 2024
Opening Reception: Friday, February 9, from 6 to 8 pm

QUINN ANTONIO BRICENO
Soñar

FRANK SCHWAIGER
X Series

WILLIAM GRIFFIN
Horses

CHRISTINA SCHMIGEL
NIANCI LI
Little Pink
New Media Room

BILL CHRISTMAN
Cities of Tomorrow
Window on Forsyth

(SAINT LOUIS, MO — January 4, 2024) — Bruno David Gallery is pleased to present five solo exhibitions by artists who have a strong studio practice. They include **Quinn Antonio Briceño**, a Nicaraguan-American artist, **Frank Schwaiger**, a St. Louis-based artist, **Christina Schmigel** and **Nianci Li**, multi-disciplinary artists, and **Bill Christman**, a St. Louis-based multi-disciplinary artist. The gallery also presents a series of paintings by **William Griffin**, who passed away in 2020. This is his first exhibition posthumously. The exhibitions highlight the diversity and vitality of the contemporary art scene in St. Louis and beyond.

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Bruno David presents *Soñar*, an exhibition of new work by **Quinn Antonio Briceño**. This is Briceño's first solo exhibition at Bruno David Gallery.

Briceño's art, a reflection of dualities shaped by two countries, languages, and cultures, explores the perpetual pressure to choose between them. Consciously integrating Americana with Latinx influences, Briceño constructs a visual language bridging cultural gaps. His creations carve a unique space, offering solace to those burdened by societal expectations, and through painting and collage, he weaves a tapestry celebrating identity. Briceño's work is a dual exploration, sharing his personal struggle and narrating a journey towards acceptance, inclusion, and empowerment for the marginalized and forgotten.



Quinn Antonio Briceño, a Nicaraguan-American artist in St. Louis, earned his bachelor's degree in fine art from the San Francisco Art Institute (2017) and a master's degree from the Sam Fox School of Design and Visual Art (2022). Notable achievements include winning the Ann Metzger National Biennial in 2019 and being a finalist for the AXA Art Prize in 2021. Featured in publications such as All the Art, Friend of the Artist (Issue 10), St. Louis Magazine, Design St. Louis, and New American Paintings (No. 155, 165, 167). He works and lives in St. Louis and has shown his work locally, regionally, and nationally.

In concurrence with the exhibition, Bruno David Gallery will publish a catalogue of the artist's work with an in-depth exhibition history and bibliography.

Image: Quinn Antonio Briceño. *El Vivero*, 2020. Acrylic, Packing Stickers, Made in USA Stickers, Postal Stickers and Found Paper on Canvas, 60 x 60 inches

More on Quinn Antonio Briceño at <https://brunodavidgallery.com/artists/170-quinn-antonio-briceno/>

Bruno David presents a series of paintings titled "X", by St. Louis-based multi-disciplinary artist **Frank Schwaiger**. This is the artist's sixth solo exhibition with the gallery.

X is one of the most fascinating letters in the alphabet. It can stand for many things, such as a variable, a treasure, a kiss, or a chromosome. It can also represent the unknown, the mysterious, or the extreme. X is a letter that invites curiosity and exploration. It challenges us to solve problems, find answers, and discover new possibilities. X is also a versatile letter that can be used in different ways. It can form words that start with X, such as xylophone, x-ray, or xenophobia. It can also be used as a prefix or suffix to modify other words, such as ex-girlfriend, box-office, or extra-large. X is a letter that adds flavor and variety to our language. X is a letter that deserves our appreciation and admiration. It is not just a simple mark or a cross, but a symbol of adventure, excitement, and creativity. "X" has always signified the beginning of meaning.

Frank Schwaiger's series of paintings on X demonstrates his curiosity and passion for risking a venture into the unknown. His use of vibrant colors, dynamic shapes and abstract forms creates a visual language that, although geometrically constructed, freely expresses his emotions, thoughts, and visions. His paintings invite the viewer to join him on a visual journey , where each piece reveals a different aspect of his artistic adventure. Schwaiger is not afraid to experiment with different techniques, materials, and styles, as he constantly challenges himself to push the boundaries of his creativity. His series on X is a testament to his versatility, originality, and talent as a painter.

Frank Schwaiger's art has been widely exhibited. He is a graduate of the Washington University in St. Louis, School of Architecture (Now the Sam Fox School of Design & Visual Arts), and received his Master from Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, where he worked with Buckminster Fuller. He lives and works in St. Louis and is the director of the Columbia Foundation.

In concurrence with the exhibition, Bruno David Gallery will publish a catalogue of the artist's work with an in-depth exhibition history and bibliography.



Image: Frank Schwaiger, *Burning Man*, 2023. Mixed media on canvas board, 26.75 x 21 inches
More on Frank Schwaiger at <https://brunodavidgallery.com/artists/66-frank-schwaiger/>

Bruno David presents *Horses*, an exhibition of paintings by the late artist **William Griffin** (1950-2020). Bruno David Gallery represents the William Griffin Estate.

William Griffin skillfully merges the techniques of classical masters with a contemporary perspective. His paintings showcase a distinctive approach where human figures are expressed through strong physical and emotional content. By employing a technique that focuses on the powerful essence of each gesture, Griffin creates a style that strips away extraneous details and is reminiscent of photography and film. These stylish oil paintings are within the long tradition of western painting and are influenced by early 20th century artists' movement away from representational work. Bridging historical influences with modern perspectives, offering viewers an exploration of form in a refined and innovative manner.

Griffin's personal style brings immediacy to his work. He integrates plasticity with decoration by creating large-scale paintings of movement in both human and animal bodies. His brushwork captures the essence of how bodies reflect and transform in fleeting moments of time, exploring the dynamic nature of physical form. By limiting his palette to grayscale values on the white primed surface, Griffin further accentuates two-dimensional solidity, confronting the viewer with an intimacy that resembles the encounter between the artist's subjects.



In Griffin's portrayal of horse legs, the viewer is introduced to his personal style, which creates a new and powerful tension by contrasting the enclosed volumes of figures with unpainted areas. In these paintings Griffin captures the dynamic energy, vitality, and muscularity of the horses' legs in a single moment.

While Studying painting and sculpture at Washington University in St. Louis, Griffin was invited to create sculptures for the St. Louis Veiled Prophet Parade, centerpiece event of the annual July 4th holiday celebration in St. Louis. Griffin has served as Artistic Director of the parade since 1989, bringing that annual event national attention and prominence. Like other painters who've also worked as commercial artists, Griffin's commercial experience has shaped and influenced his imaginative approach. His work has allowed him to explore a variety of styles and methods-producing public art, in sculpture and painted form, with a heightened interplay of illusion and reality.

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Image: William Griffin. *Legs I*, 2013. Oil on canvas, 24 x 24 inches

More on William Griffin at <https://brunodavidgallery.com/artists/164-william-griffin-estate/>

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Bruno David presents *Little Pink*; A short film directed by **Nianci Li**; spotlights a mobile sculpture and performance by artist **Christina Shmigel**.

The film is named after the cherished bicycle, Little Pink, which once defined Shmigel's daily commute in Shanghai and relocated with the artist to St. Louis. Maintaining a nostalgic connection, Shmigel safeguarded the distinctive bicycle license plate required by law at the time and reattached the memento to her current bicycle load. Shmigel draws inspiration from the resilience and optimism she observed in the recycling haulers of Shanghai during her decade-long residency in the city. For Shmigel, these unsung heroes are the best, if inadvertent, sculptors of Shanghai.

For her captivating mobile sculpture, Shmigel meticulously laser-cut individual modules from the cardboard boxes used during her relocation, repurposing recyclable materials into an imaginative load delicately balanced on the bike. Patience is not merely a virtue but a central theme in this work, evident in the painstaking building and assembling process. Little Pink, the sculpture, pays homage to the skills of the Shanghai recyclers, while concurrently resonating with the universal human experience of carrying a psychic load. The sculpture and its activation create a poignant narrative, weaving together Shmigel's personal journey and shared stories of perseverance and adaptation.



Combing footage captured with Li's travel camera and the artist's presentation, the film *Little Pink* documents the course of Shmigel's performance. Growing up in Shanghai, Li was accustomed to the city's recyclers; the emergence of familiar imagery re-appropriated by an ex-pat American artist intrigued her and sparked reflection on cross-cultural phenomena. For both artists, the documentary serves as a lens through which ordinary elements assume diverse meanings within shifting contexts.

During her 14 years in Shanghai, including an art residency at the Doulun Museum of Contemporary Art, **Christina Shmigel** looked to the city of Shanghai to inspire and inform her work. Shmigel now lives and works in St. Louis where she has had solo exhibitions of her work at The Saint Louis Art Museum, Laumeier Sculpture Park, and the St. Louis University Art Museum.

Originally from Shanghai, China, **Nianci Li** graduated from Washington University in St. Louis (BA'22), and has evolved into a nomadic artist and writer, embarking on residencies in Mexico and rural Colombia.

Image: Nianci Li - Christina Shmigel, "Little Pink" (still image), 2023. One-channel video, sound, color, 3 minutes 42 seconds
More on Christina Shmigel at <https://brunodavidgallery.com/artists/68-christina-shmigel/>

Bruno David presents *Cities of Tomorrow*, a sculpture installation by multi-disciplinary artist **Bill Christman** (with Dave Rudis, Fabricator and Jim Kiske, Lighting). The installation in the WINDOW ON FORSYTH and is on view 24/7 at 7513 Forsyth Blvd., Saint Louis (Downtown Clayton), MO. This is the artist's first solo exhibition with the gallery.

"I believe in creating something from junk that nobody wants anymore, and that's kind of redeeming it." says Christman. After receiving his undergraduate degree in art and art history from the University of Missouri at Columbia, Christman first taught high school art and then worked as a theatrical scene painter (with the Municipal Opera and elsewhere), helped in the creation of Blueberry Hill in the U. City loop. In addition, he has made art,



organized, and participated in group Performances, and had numerous group and solo exhibitions.

A Christman artwork is a kind of Pop Art, meant to be enjoyed and to surprise – artworks that are striking and bold, mostly made from available and remembered images and elements, but in new combinations and therefore always unexpected and often very funny. Some are zany and high-spirited, some are curious and thoughtful, and some are almost beyond description! They're brash, irreverent, iconoclastic, as well as gaudy, pulpy and sometimes even vulgar and crude. Like advertising, this art is designed to grab you, to get your attention fast. It has a slapdash look to it, as compared to the usual Pop Art, because it's meant to counter commercial slickness. The ragged surfaces, the ordinary materials and even the look of these artworks contradict commercial, high-tech finish and sheen.

Christman's art is restlessly inventive and alert. It has all the energy of popular culture, all the energy of a perpetually adolescent rambunctiousness. In fact, it often harkens back to the time when Christman himself was an adolescent in the late 1950's and 60's. Hence the frequent tinge of nostalgia, and hence, as one might expect from someone whose idea of an artistic vocation was formed at this time, the irrepressible exasperation with things as they now are.

Always interesting, often laugh-out-loud funny, this art is an ironic response to the superficial, contrived and sheer phoniness of so much contemporary consumer culture. It honors that culture, or at least acknowledges it, with a kind of equivocal affection, but seems to derive, paradoxically, from a deep reservoir of seriousness. The corndog and nougat works, the pseudo-shrines, the pseudo-signs and billboards, the signs of an alternative self, signs of the times and signs of an imagined yesteryear, they all express, in some way, the aim of transcending the world as we know it. Bill Christman's art aims to make us laugh and to jog us into the reminder that what is and what is all around us, what so dominates our everyday lives, isn't all that might be. (text by Keith Spoeneman)

Image: Bill Christman. *Cities of Tomorrow* (detail), 2023.

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Quinn Antonio Briceño, Frank Schwaiger, Christina Shmigel, Bill Christman, and Bruno L. David are available for interviews. For images and additional information, please contact Bruno at info@brunodavidgallery.com

Bruno David Gallery

Public Hours:

WINTER HOURS: Tuesday - Friday 11 – 5 pm, and by appointment

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ABOUT THE BRUNO DAVID GALLERY

Bruno David Gallery has been a leading art gallery since its establishment in Saint Louis in 2005. Bruno David represents some of the most innovative artists practicing in Saint Louis, along with artists of international reputation.

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