CHICAGO ARTISTS COALITION
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE





Herman Aguirre (left), Diana Noh (Middle), Skyler Simpson (right)

Dust That Lay

Work by Herman Aguirre, Diana Noh, and Skyler Simpson, curated by rachel dukes

Dust That Lay explores the fleeting thoughts, inscrutable dreams, and fragmented memories that seep through subconscious containment and glisten through the veil of reality. Herman Aguirre, Diana Noh, and Skyler Simpson explore the unresolved detritus of the past as foundational for forming knowledge that can radically shift understandings of personal identity and how we navigate our shared reality.

Spanning sculpture, photography, painting, and drawing, each artist surrenders to the unknown, exposing a devotion to their rawest, most uncontained tendencies.

Herman Aguirre pulls imagery from his surroundings in Back of the Yards, Chicago, and revives them in sculptural paintings where he reveals the residual imprint of violence on his community. Diana Noh tears, folds, and repairs photographs of transitional spaces to examine presence within absence and reveal how the past continually interrupts and inhabits the present. Skyler Simpson employs automatism, teasing the strand between precision and intuition in her meticulously

OPENING RECEPTION
Friday, July 10, 2026
5 - 8 PM

GALLERY HOURS
Wednesday 11 AM - 4 PM
Saturday 12 PM - 4 PM
All other days by appointment
Please email dana@chicagoartistscoalition.org

*Artists and Curator are part of the 2025 CAC Residency Cohort

drawn, monochromatic fluid-scapes, submerging viewers into a mysterious world where beauty and horror coexist.

Dust That Lay engages with Hauntology, a cultural philosophy suggesting the present is haunted by elements of the past as well as their unrealized futures. To this end, each artist interrogates the subconscious remnants that we may not readily understand but know play an active role in interpreting the various layers of the present moment.

ARTIST AND CURATOR BIOS

Herman Aguirre is a Mexican American artist born and raised in Chicago, IL, where he is currently based. Through his detailed drawings and large-scale, multi-layered paintings, he reconstructs memories to find adequate language to confront and co-exist with the realities of his experience growing up in Back of the Yards, Chicago. He received his BFA (2014) and MFA (2017) from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, where he is currently a faculty member in the Painting and Drawing Department and a youth instructor in the Continuing Studies Early College Program. Aguirre's notable awards include University of Saint Francis Visiting Artist, Fort Wayne, IN (2021); Thelma Karges Memorial Merit Award, Evansville Museum of Arts, Evansville, IN (2018); and was one of 8 artists awarded the Leonore Annenberg Fellowship (2017-2018). Aguirre has exhibited in solo and group exhibitions across the country and has also been featured in New American Paintings - Midwest (2018, 2019, 2020, and 2022). Several of his pieces are in the permanent collections of the Phoenix Art Museum, Phoenix, AZ; the Rockford Art Museum, Rockford, IL; and the National Mexican Museum of Art, Chicago, IL. Aguirre is represented by Zolla Lieberman Gallery, Chicago, IL, and Portrait Society Gallery, Milwaukee, WI.

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Diana Noh is an interdisciplinary artist working across photography, fiber, and installation. Her practice celebrates reconstructions of distressed photographs of transitional spaces, exploring themes of trauma embedded in her family relationships and cultural in-betweenness. Noh received her BFA from Kyungil University, Gyeongsan, South Korea (2017) and her MFA in Photography from Cranbrook Academy of Art, Bloomfield Hills, MI (2022). She has participated in group and solo exhibitions at national and international art venues, including Strata Gallery, Santa Fe, NM; Red Springs Art Space, Artsy, Red Springs, NC; Harold Washington Library Center, Chicago, IL; Editart, Geneva, Switzerland; and Space HNH, Seoul, South Korea. Noh has participated in artist residencies with Kimball Arts Center, Chicago, IL (2026); Peninsula School of Art, Fish Creek, WI (2022); and Talking Dolls, Detroit, MI (2022). She has also been awarded the Freestyle Focus Forward Award, Society for Photographic Education (2026); Monthly Art Award, Boynes Emerging Artist (2023); and was a featured artist in the Sunspot Soho catalog and digital exhibition, Aedra Fine Arts (2024). Her work has been acquired by several private collectors as well as the Jennifer and Dan Gilbert Collection, Detroit, MI; and Kyungil University Collection, Gyeongsan, South Korea.

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In her paintings and drawings, **Skyler Simpson** explores the mysterious nature of intuition, a phenomenon that connects our world to the otherworld. She received her BFA from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (2018) and her MFA from the University of Wisconsin-Madison (2024). Simpson's work has been exhibited in solo exhibitions at Abel Contemporary Gallery, Stoughton, WI; Gallery 7, Madison, WI; and Lux Center for the Arts, Lincoln, NE. Her pieces have been featured in group exhibitions across the country, including Red Arrow Gallery at Oz Arts, Nashville, TN; New York Academy of Art, New York, NY; Day & Night Projects, Atlanta, GA; and La Luz de Jesus Gallery, Los Angeles, CA. Simpson was most recently recognized as a Luminarts Visual Arts Finalist (2026) and her work was selected for the AXA Art Prize Exhibition in 2022, 2023, and 2024. Her work has been featured in New American Paintings (April/May 2024), juxtapoz.com (2021), POBA Zine, issue n*6 (2020), and Booooooom.com (2020). Simpson is represented by Abel Contemporary Gallery, Stoughton, WI.

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rachel dukes is a Texas-born and raised independent writer and curator based in Chicago, IL. She received a degree in Accounting from the University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, AR, and her MA in Museum and Exhibition Studies at the University of Illinois Chicago, Chicago, IL. She currently leads the Archives and Collections department at the South Side Community Art Center (SSCAC) and has supported the curation of exhibitions

at Gallery 400, Hyde Park Art Center, and SSCAC, where she most recently co-curated *Beyond Frames: Black Women Collectors Shaping Cultural Heritage in Chicago*. Her exhibition reviews and artist interviews have appeared in several Chicago-based publications, including Sixty Inches From Center, LVL3, New City, and Chicago Reader. Her writing has also been featured in the 2022-2023 issue of Black Embodiments Studio, *A Year in Black Art,* and the Spring 2025 issue of the International Journal of Surrealism, *Surrealism and the Black World*. Rachel serves as board chair for Chicago Tap Theatre and plays the French Horn in community ensembles across Chicago.

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ABOUT CHICAGO ARTISTS COALITION

Founded in 1974, CAC began as a small group of artists advocating for rights, support, and visibility. Currently located in West Town, CAC is a non-profit organization that supports contemporary Chicago artists and curators by offering a residency program, exhibitions, professional development and resources that enable them to live, work and thrive in the city.

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