



Sydnie Jimenez, Flower Bandana Face Jug, Glazed stoneware, 7.25 x 6 x 6 inches, 2023



Haylie Jimenez, Babe, Glazed ceramic tile, 5.5 x 5 inches, 2023

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

SYDNIE & HAYLIE JIMENEZ

SOUTHERN HOSPITALITY

961 CHUNG KING ROAD

NOVEMBER 18 – DECEMBER 16, 2023

ARTIST'S RECEPTION:

NOVEMBER 18, 6-9pm

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Charlie James Gallery is proud to present ***Sydnie Jimenez & Haylie Jimenez: Southern Hospitality***, the pair's first exhibition with the gallery. The Jimenez sisters work in clay in both two and three dimensions, creating worlds that revel in a queer punk aesthetic that warmly affirms their vital community while simultaneously mobilizing self-expression as revolt against systemic oppression and white supremacy. The intimacy and vulnerability of their figures are matched by their proud defiance, they resolutely stand against the world and for each other.

Southern Hospitality plays into this sense of communal spirit. As a concept, southern hospitality is one of welcome and nurture: it is an open door, a comfortable seat, and food in your belly. Its roots lie in communities of color that share histories of oppression, poverty, and lack, who have taken it upon themselves to sustain each other through collective care. The exhibition holds space for black and brown bodies enacting southern hospitality through joyful community. Wall-mounted ceramic tiles – some singular, some in larger groupings –

depict everyday scenes: creek swimming, porch sitting, parking lot canoodling, nighttime grilling. Together they create a sense of comfortable, playful kinship, like laughing with longtime friends or the easy silence among family. These quotidian scenes are nevertheless radical in their centering and celebration of historically marginalized figures.

The exhibition is presided over by a large, freestanding ceramic figure clothed in a swimsuit, sandals, and bucket hat, whose exasperated stare defiantly commands the viewer's attention. *Do it look like i care?* is a collaborative work, built by Sydnie and "tattooed" by Haylie. Most intriguingly, a Gothic cathedral tattoo takes up most of the figure's generous thigh, declaring the body as sacred and solid. This Gothic motif continues in the remaining ceramic figures: small vessels in the form of heads are described as gargoyles, watching over and protecting their communities; and wall-mounted cherubim, whose earthy monochrome glazes and peaceful expressions evoke souls set free from the mortal realm.

The idea of the Gothic as rooted in the American south also draws from the region's history of folding Afro-Caribbean religious traditions into Christian practice. In *Southern Hospitality*, this manifests as the spiritual embrace of running water in *Float* and *Suck Creek*; the totemic alligator tattoo in *Swamp Thing*; and the bat-winged, sometimes-horned figures of the cherub series. All of these symbols sustain a tradition that predates white supremacy, and continue to actively lift up and empower those who recognize them.

Twin sisters Sydnie and Haylie Jimenez were born in Florida and raised in rural Georgia, and both attended the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. While there they took an interest in the Institute's Mesoamerican and African collections, which provided a history of figuration outside of the Greco-Roman tradition and demonstrated the rich possibilities of indigenous clay. The Jimenez sisters build upon this historical foundation with works that revel in the intimacy and vitality of community and that live very much in the present moment. Combining the aesthetics of punk and cartoon animation, they utilize traditional media in works that embody their progressive values.

Artists Instagram: @syddd.viciouss @_h4yli3

Gallery website: www.cjamesgallery.com

Gallery Instagram: @charliejamesgallery