



The **Green Family Art Foundation** is pleased to present *Oh, Man!*, a solo exhibition of works by Venezuelan artist, **Bernadette Despujols**. The exhibition, presented in the foundation's Spotlight Gallery, opens on **October 8, 2022** and remains on view through **January 29, 2023**.

A text by **Darryl Ratcliff** accompanies the exhibition.

### **Bernadette Despujols Makes Painting Come Alive**

What pictures do not fully capture in Bernadette Despujols work is how luscious the surfaces of her canvases are. There is a vitality, like the artist's hand is the wind and it is rippling the surface of the painting, infusing the work with power and life. It reminds me of the verse Genesis 1:2, "Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters." Despujols hovers over the work, which in turn demands the viewer do the same. Her techniques of scratching, scraping, layering, molding — approaching the canvas with the freeness of a sculptor — makes one lament how often artists choose to pursue a flat pictorial plane.

In her work *Ciro, 2022*, a man reclines on a white chair, wearing shorts and a t-shirt, holding a yo-yo in his hand, while a garden hose lays in a tangle by his feet. His t-shirt says, "Abortion rights are human rights," and his melancholy gaze is looking away from the viewer. These men that Despujols is painting do seem tired, forlorn, and resolute. They are all reclining or sitting — and by the caked-up paint on their faces one can infer that they are in need of rest.

In *Rafael y Sigfredo, 2022*, one figure sits on a wicker stool in a pink, short sleeve shirt and shorts, while the other figure wears pants and a gray sweater that says, "Her body, her right, her choice." Once again, these figures are not looking at each other or the viewer; it is as if they are captured deep in thought after some great debate. The cigarettes and cups of coffee on the table are remnants of their social life. There is a juxtaposition of the messaging of the t-shirts and how these men are painted which make them the most unlikely of activists. It's a world where male support of gender equality is as mundane and uneventful as playing with a yo-yo, drinking coffee, and smoking cigarettes.

There are many tropes that unite this body of work. Despujols often uses a checkered, grid-like tile floor that is then echoed in the pattern of a shirt or a chair. Typically, there is also the use of lush foliage that can make it difficult to know if the subject is inside or outside. Her subjects are engaged in leisurely domestic activities; They are with their children, their dogs, and their birds. Despujols also clearly loves and is quite skilled at using the color white.

Although there are larger themes of intimacy and women's rights throughout the works, the small moments are breathtaking. The way Despujols can work the wicker of a bench to have a slight give from the weight of the figure sitting in it. The simple scratch mark delineates the string of a yo-yo in one painting, and then the detailed braiding almost rosary like treatment of the string of the yo-yo in the next. Despujols is constantly working and reworking these concepts. It is not just that there are tile floors — it is that there are five different ways to make tile floors interesting. Now let me show you what I can do with foliage, with the foot of a sofa, let's have eight different flesh tones make up a leg. It's heady, dizzying, and delightful stuff from an artist who is clearly in love with the process of painting. Nothing is mailed in; if there is an opportunity to add

a bit more soul or flourish — the artist takes it. That the paintings can be so ferocious and yet, intimate, and quiet is a singular achievement.

**About the Green Family Art Foundation:**

The Green Family Art Foundation is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization.

The foundation's mission is to provide a venue for, make grants to museums for the benefit of, and educate others about contemporary artists we believe communicate important ideas that are relevant and discussion worthy today and in the future.

The exhibition is located at 2111 Flora Street, Suite 110, Dallas, TX 75201. Hours are Wednesday-Friday, 11am-5pm and Saturday-Sunday, 11am-6pm. Admission is free.

For press inquiries, please reach out to [info@greenfamilyartfoundation.org](mailto:info@greenfamilyartfoundation.org) or call 214-274-5656.