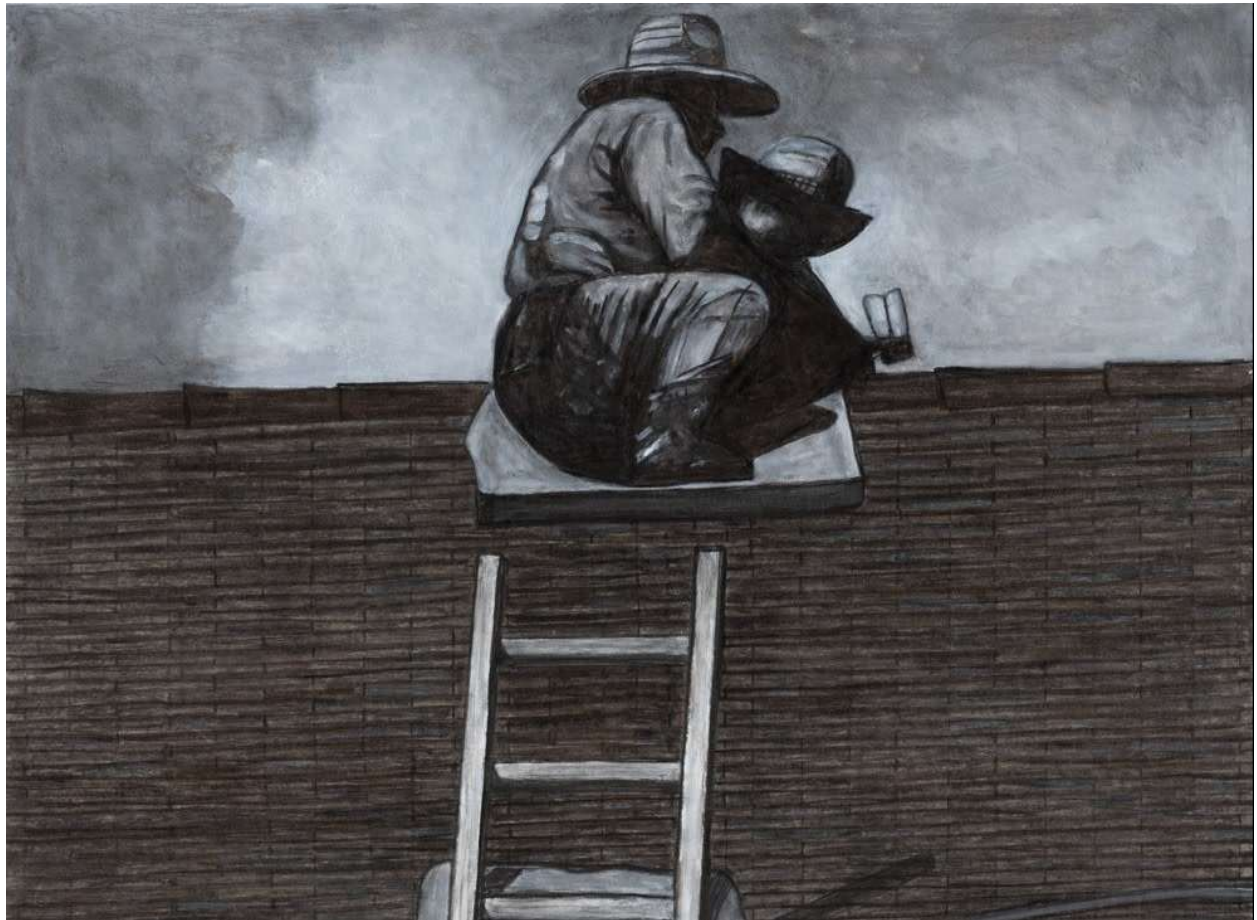


# FORT GANSEVOORT

## MEATPACKING DISTRICT

### Willie Birch: *Up on the Roof*

Fall 2025



Fort Gansevoort will present *Up on the Roof*, a solo exhibition by Louisiana-based artist Willie Birch, opening Wednesday, September 10. The exhibition will be on view from September 11 through November 8.

The twelve large-scale paintings on view, all exhibited for the first time, feature the people, landscapes, and architectural structures Birch has observed in his New Orleans community. Beginning in the year 2000, Birch turned away from the vibrant colors characteristic of his oeuvre and began layering charcoal marks and smudges with white acrylic paint on paper. Since then, he has committed fully to this formal

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strategy, working exclusively in a monochrome palette to render poignant works that mingle references to current events with nuanced observation of the visible quotidian world – images that reflect Birch's understanding of humanity in all its complex and contradictory truth.

The seemingly sundry objects that fill Birch's frame accrue to more than the sum of their parts, manifesting as visual metaphors containing deep meaning and power. Close observation of his compositions reveals allusions to the African diaspora, global art history, American politics, and all facets of New Orleans culture. Constructed with an abundance of personal meaning, these works also reflect the collective truths of the community in which Birch has grounded his practice.

The exhibition at Fort Gansevoort provides a prelude to the artist's touring museum retrospective Willie Birch: Stories to Tell. Co-organized by the New Orleans Museum of Art and American Federation of Arts, the exhibition will open in 2026 at the California African American Museum in Los Angeles and travel to the New Orleans Museum of Art and the Museum of Contemporary Art, Jacksonville in Florida, with an accompanying catalog published by Yale University Press.