

PRESS RELEASE

Freeway: Creative Growth Artists in L.A.

May 30 – July 11, 2025



Untitled, JAg 328 by Juan Aguilera

DON'T LOOK Projects is proud to announce "Freeway: Creative Growth Artists in LA", a collaborative exhibition with Creative Growth Art Center, the pioneering Oakland-based nonprofit that has championed artists with intellectual and developmental disabilities for over 50 years. This exhibition spotlights the work of six Creative Growth artists: Juan Aguilera, Joseph Alef, Maureen Clay, Ying Ge Zhou, Cedric Johnson, and Peter Salsman.

Working across assemblage, painting, ceramics, and textiles, these six singular voices exemplify the diverse range of practices that Creative Growth brings together at its Oakland studios.

Central to the exhibition is a shared inquiry into materiality, with each artist cultivating a tactile and intuitive approach with their chosen medium.

Joseph Alef and Maureen Clay's paintings strike a dialogue in their lyrical mark-making, full of gesture and movement, carving out visceral forms that oscillate between the biomorphic and the surreal.

Similarly, Juan Aguilera's raucous mixed media works, here titled after planets, map out intergalactic systems, wittily composed of women's undergarments to build rich, layered tableaux.

Outside in the gallery patio, Cedric Johnson's colorful ceramic masks also carry a sense of highly worked haptic sensation. The artist often manipulates his materials to uncover emerging angles and give shape to his visions of interstellar travel.

Peter Salsman's work explores the relationship between painting and material craft, often translating his dreamlike imagery into commodities like shoes, bar carts, lederhosen, and here, rugs.

In Ying Ge Zhou's single work in the exhibition, an untitled work on paper, a figure rendered in a variety of yellows stands against a rough aquamarine background. There is a small detail in the chest of the dress the figure wears, a nod to the fashion magazines that Zhou often works from. It is a searingly powerful portrait, enigmatic and moving.

The work of the six artists in Freeway pulses with energy and life force, and is testament to the bold, expansive practices of creatives working in the San Francisco Bay Area today, where Creative Growth has been so fundamental in supporting and championing their community of artists.

DON'T LOOK Projects is a contemporary art gallery in Los Angeles, CA.
For press inquiries, contact gallery@dontlookprojects.com