

Related Programs

Center Days

July 22, 1-4pm

Celebrate the opening of *Multiples & Multitudes* at our Center Day with art-making activities inspired by the themes of the exhibitions on view and more!

William Estrada *Mobile Street Art Cart Workshop*

August 12, 10am-3pm, and October 14 during Center Days 1-4pm

William Estrada leads a drop-in print workshop activating his *Mobile Street Art Cart* on display in the exhibition. The activity expands on print-making as a tool for political activism, education, and highlight local voices and issues across Chicago.

Family Portrait Sessions

August 27 at Hyde Park Flea, 12-5pm

Hyde Park families, both familial and chosen, are invited to have their portrait taken by William Estrada as a part of his ongoing *FAMILY PORTRAIT PROJECT*. This portrait series’ focus is to provide families with a physical photograph that honors their story.

Building Legacies in Public and in Practice

October 5, 6-8pm

Join exhibiting artist William Estrada and Cesáreo Moreno (Chief Curator of the National Museum of Mexican Art) for a conversation that traces parallels between the practices of Estrada and the late artist and activist Carlos Cortéz (1923-2005). The conversation will highlight the influence of Cortéz onto generations of Mexican-American artists in Chicago and pay particular emphasis on shared values and methodologies present in Estrada’s and Cortéz’s practices. This program is a collaboration between Hyde Park Art Center and the National Museum of Mexican Art (NMMA) on the occasion of the exhibition William Estrada: *Multiples & Multitudes* and the centennial commemoration of Carlos Cortéz’s legacy.

William Estrada:
Multiples & Multitudes

July 22 - October 29, 2023

Kanter Family Foundation Gallery



Installation view of *Multiples & Multitudes*

Generous support for this exhibition is provided by:



Hyde ParkARTCENTER

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Hyde Park Art Center is a unique resource that advances contemporary visual art in Chicago by connecting artists and communities in unexpected ways. The Art Center is funded in part by the: Alphawood Foundation; Andy Warhol Foundation for Visual Arts; a City Arts III grant from the City of Chicago’s Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events; Field Foundation of Illinois; Harpo Foundation; Harper Court Arts Council; Illinois Arts Council, a state agency; The Irving Harris Foundation; The Joyce Foundation; Leo S. Guthman Fund; Lloyd A. Fry Foundation; MacArthur Fund for Arts and Culture at Prince; Polk Bros. Foundation; Searle Funds at The Chicago Community Trust; and the generosity of people like you.

Contributions by Dr. Ivan Arenas Sarah Atlas, Jasmin Cardenas, Chicago ACT Collective (Paulina Valencia Camacho, Sarah Atlas, Juan Carlos Pérez, William Estrada, Silvia Inés González, Amanda Cortes, Jessica Muller, Hilesh Patel, Vanessa Sanchez, Eric Reyes, Karen Reyes, Eric J. Garcia, Rudy Esparza, Ivan Arenas, Nicole Marroquin), Jen Delos Reyes, Martha Elena Maldonado, Mobilize Creative Collaborative (Aquil Charlton, William Estrada, Andrés Lemus-Spont, Marya Spont-Lemus), Dr. Patricia Nguyen & Axis Lab Chicago, Hilesh Patel, Aram Han Sifuentes, Estudiantes de 5to grado de Telpochcalli (2011), Edith Tovar, Jocelyn Vazquez-Gomez, and Adrian Zelaya.



William Estrada is an artist whose art can be found in parks, community gardens, libraries, YouTube, classrooms, galleries, and community gatherings of all kinds. Through his work in print-making, photography, performance, installation, sculpture, painting, and design (as well as many hybrids), William aims to reimagine public and educational spaces to unite people and amplify local voices. William’s art is often collaborative and always made with an audience in mind. His audience’s participatory role is designed into the structure of his work, which consists of making space physically or metaphorically for others to express themselves politically and artistically. Thus, the title of this exhibition makes reference to William’s capacity to engage multitudes of people through his practice and to his ability to create platforms that are useful tools for others to make and represent themselves.

Several of William’s useful artworks are included in this exhibition through ephemera or installations. Estrada’s *RADICAL Printshop* (2018-ongoing) is a pop-up print shop that takes residency in communal spaces for community members to use. His *Mobile Street Art Cart* (2015-ongoing), a classroom on wheels designed to offer art workshops anywhere, is presented here as a sculpture that will be activated during the run of the exhibition. *Arte with Maestro William* (2020-ongoing), a bilingual YouTube channel that offers free art

lessons taught by William for families to follow along, also plays in the gallery. Estrada’s *Family Portrait Project* (2014-ongoing) is a mobile photography studio operated by the artist that provides free printed portraits for families in Chicago neighborhoods. One-hundred-and-forty of the resulting photographs (from a total of over 15,000 so far) are included in the exhibition, a record of the longevity of this generous offering. These projects have been designed as invitations for others to create, as venues for the artist’s performative community interventions, and as visual artworks in their own right.



Installation view of *Multiples & Multitudes*

The projects described above are present as video works, prints, installations, and sculptures that will be activated by the artist during impromptu and planned performative events throughout the run of the exhibition. This body of work, exhibited together for the first time, allows viewers to perceive the importance of presence and action in the artist’s practice. In these projects as well as in others in the exhibition, the artist takes on the role of teacher, facilitator, photographer, and city-planner, putting into practice a radical imagination – the capacity to envision and create different futures that challenge the status quo and move us towards a more just and sustainable world.

Drawing inspiration from the Chicano Art Movement in the United States and Taller de Grafica Popular in Mexico City –two movements that were committed to making art accessible and used art as a tool to circulate relevant sociopolitical messages—William’s work is radically accessible to communities. Like artists from these movements, William’s career as an artist started with mural painting. His mural practice, which started in Pilsen in 1998, is still ongoing and his work continues to live in public spaces. William’s work is reproduced inexpensively or can be found online, and is made by, with, and for community members. Collective making is a core value of his practice. William’s prints leave space for

participants to intervene in their own voice, as in “Mad Libs,” allowing for the work to be completed and owned by participants. William’s collaborators include people he encounters briefly like exhibition visitors or chance encounters in the park or students, fellow teachers, interdisciplinary artists and more. Several of William’s collaborators are acknowledged in the artwork labels.

In 2021, William was awarded a year-long residency as part of the Jackman Goldwasser Residency program at Hyde Park Art Center, which provided him a free studio space and research and professional development support. During his residency, William worked with Jasmin Cardenas on the *Puppets + Resistencia* project included in the exhibition and his *RADICAL Printshop* took residency in his Art Center studio, inviting others to take advantage of the space and resources. There was a stack of prints outside his studio door throughout the residency for anyone to take them home. Some of the prints that William generously gifted to our visitors are included in the exhibition. In the style of protest signs, they deliver short, empathetic messages about community love and care. Inspired by Mexican hand-painted signs, the palette of the prints is bright, like the hopeful messages they convey.

It’s clear that William is not an artist who works alone. In the process of developing this exhibition, he struggled with the idea of calling this a solo exhibition. Despite his collaborative spirit, a solo exhibition of his work has been long overdue. The time is right to examine William’s accomplished decades-long practice and it is a distinct honor for his first solo exhibition to take place at Hyde Park Art Center given his deep history with the organization. William taught in the Art Center’s summer camp for 13 consecutive years, between 2005 and 2018. His work has been exhibited here as part of group exhibitions and he has participated in countless public programs. William’s work has brought joy and has empowered countless visitors and class takers at the Art Center over the years. We are thrilled to celebrate, bring attention to, and foster critical dialog around William’s significant body of work through this exhibition.

Mariela Acuña, Curator of *Multiples & Multitudes* and Exhibitions and Residency Manager

About the artist:



William Estrada is an arts educator and multidisciplinary artist. His art and teaching are a collaborative discourse that critically re-examines public and private spaces with people to engage in radical imagination. He has presented in various panels regarding community programming, arts integration, and social justice curricula. He is currently a faculty member at the UIC School of Art and Art History and a teaching artist at Telpochcalli Elementary School. He has taught art at the Art Center since 2005. William is engaging in collaborative work with the Mobilize Creative Collaborative, Chicago ACT Collective, and Justseeds

Artists’ Cooperative. His current research is focused on developing community-based and culturally-relevant projects that center power structures of race, economy, and cultural access in contested spaces that provide a space to collectively imagine just futures.