

Billy el Bulli

mixed media on panel

19 x 13 cm 2022

Billy grew up in a rough neighborhood. His father was a tough guy and an undefeated hombreador. Billy learned how to be quick as a cat and to eat like a bear and he's grown up to be quite a bulky chunk of beef. He, now, is the undefeated champion. He does his part. He fits in. Half his village loves him. The other half is afraid of him. He's everything his father hoped his boy would grow up to be. But there's a part of Billy that doesn't want to fit in. Not here. He wants to give it all up.

Well, not everything. He loves being quick as a cat. He enjoys eating like a bear. He just wants to follow his heart. See, he's been looking at these two guys that frolic around town that everybody laughs at. Always joking about them behind their backs. They seem so happy. The look so free. Not caring what anybody thinks, 'cause it'll only be a second and then there gone. Billy wants to be part of that. Billy wants to dance. He loves to dance. And he loves to cook. Billy wants to be a dancing cook.

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BILLY EL BULLI is brave. Even though he feels his family might not understand, his surroundings might not accept, he listens to his heart, he follows his dreams. And that, is bravery.

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Chris Berens

Chris Berens studied illustration at the Academy of Art & Design in 's-Hertogenbosch, graduating in 1999. He has developed a complex and time-consuming painting technique, mostly shown as mixed media on panel.

"I'm most comfortable using fine brushes and drawing inks and graphites, but I also regularly use water color paints, markers and acrylics", Berens says. "For some time now I've added digital image making to my line of techniques, meaning 3D sculpting, digital painting and image processing. I combine and mix them with my more traditional media."

After his first major solo show at Jaski Gallery in 2005, Chris Berens' fame spread quickly. The young artist has already exhibited all over the world, from Amsterdam to New York, from Tokyo to Los Angeles, Seattle and Singapore. He also designed the cover for Panic of Girls, an album which was released in 2011 by Blondie. Deborah Harry and Chris Stein, founders of the band, are admirers of his work.

Back home Chris has been the subject of a television documentary. Chris Berens, Master of his Magical Universe was made for Dutch broadcaster Avro's Close Up series in 2013 and has since been broadcast several times at home and abroad.

Chris Berens also featured prominently in the television documentary Krabbé searches for Van Gogh, in which actor/painter Jeroen Krabbé traced the path of Vincent van Gogh in co-operation with Dutch artists.

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