

JASKI GALLERY

AMSTERDAM



GuruGuru

mixed media on panel

19 x 13 cm 2022

GURUGuru is an Indian white wolf. Her parents named him Guru as it means "Dispeller of darkness" or "One who points the way", not because he is a Guru of any kind. He just radiant. Luminous. Literally. Guru's mother was something of a living legend when she was pregnant with Guru. Her belly lit up in the dark. And when Guru was born, it became clear that she was not the luminary one, Guru was. Great things were expected of him.

He must be so special, they said. He must be very talented, they whispered. He is destined to lead the way, they cheered. But Guru went nowhere. He did nothing. Had no specific talent whatsoever. He just sat. Silently. All day, every day. Smiling. It drove the creatures around him crazy. Who does he think he is, the creatures around him growled. He does nothing. How come he gets to do nothing all day, when everyone else in our community works from daybreak to nightfall, we get payed so poorly, and we don't even have time to spend the money we make.

Sure, Guru sets the table and has a meal prepared for when we get home, but that is not an art or special gift.

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There's food aplenty where we live. He doesn't even have to leave the area to get it.

"Exactly", Guru finally said. We are all together. We are safe. We have plenty of food. We raise our children together. We have no enemies, only friends. All of you work so hard. For next to no reward. And I just smile. Could it be, you aren't upset with me, but with yourselves? Can it be, that every time you come home from work and there's food on the table, but you're too tired to talk to each other, tell stories, or read, or play, you see me and can't seem to remember how to is you're not doing the exact same thing? Come, sit around me, there's plenty of light in me for all of us. And they did.

GURU is a guru. Through no intension or fault of his own, he teaches us you don't have to accomplish anything in life in order to shine. You are perfect, just the way you are. Right now. Believe it to be true. It's true.

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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.