

# Present / Tense

Tom & Malayka Gormally

***Present / Tense* is both a meditation on our extended family and an exploration of the contemporary challenges of human connection in this cultural moment.**

In the East Gallery, three of Tom's sculptures memorialize the passing of his father, William "Bud" Gormally, a native of Fort Dodge. Bud was a powerful person - the leader of the Gormally family tribe. These sculptures pay homage to his initial anxiety and subsequent acceptance, dignity, and bravery in his final journey. Several of Malayka's paintings focus on Gormally family reunions, particularly the family's front-lawn farewell ritual. The scattered clusters of family members remind the artist of the broader meaning of the family in the historical art canon.

In the 2nd Floor Gallery, Tom's *Fox Series* addresses the ever-increasing divisiveness and level of vitriol in American society; with this series, he aims to inspire dialogue and help bridge the widening gap in our culture. Tom approaches the issue in a way similar to how he imagines a shaman would deal with this disturbance, by creating effigies to dispel the negative influences. He combines this effigy representation with a folk-like carving style, original fabrications, and inviting light elements to create apt idioms for the current moment.

Alongside Tom's work in the 2nd Floor Gallery, Malayka's portraits focus on two groups of immigrants, the first being members of the Ethiopian Community in Seattle, a nonprofit, community organization. The second group was inspired by Malayka's visit to an office of the International Rescue Committee during a day-long event for immigrants to apply for U.S. citizenship. Malayka's father was an immigrant, and she was inspired to develop this project as a counter-statement to anti-immigrant policy and sentiment.



Tom was born and raised in Fort Dodge (and later Minneapolis) and now resides in Seattle. He has created sculptures for over 40 years, utilizing wood, found objects, and LED lighting to produce works with precision craftsmanship and luminous warmth. Some of his sculptures, such as his *Fox in the Henhouse* series, address cultural tensions with wit and absurdity, while other sculptures memorialize the indelible moments in the life of Tom's immediate family.



Malayka was born in Berkeley to an immigrant father and a Jewish mother and raised during the Civil Rights era. She makes colorful, figurative paintings and drawings that reflect the complexities of intimacy and connection between generations and races. Malayka has created paintings inspired by Gormally family reunions, as well as friends and family in Seattle. Her paintings of recent immigrants, including drawings of immigrants in the process of applying for U.S. citizenship, work in tandem with Tom's *Fox in the Henhouse* series to comment on the contemporary cultural zeitgeist.

