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HARRY UNDERWOOD: THE DESIGN OF DESTINY

New exhibition brings the Tennessee artist's dreamlike paintings to Downtown Atlanta

ATLANTA — September 2026 — The Rialto Center for the Arts at Georgia State University, in partnership with The Sun ATL, presents *HARRY UNDERWOOD: The Design of Destiny*, opening September 17, 2026, and continuing through January 14, 2027.

The exhibition marks the first visual art presentation in the Rialto's newly renovated lobby and coincides with the opening of the Rialto's 30th season.

Harry Underwood creates an unmistakable world of palm trees, swimming pools, bicycles, automobiles, roadside architecture and anonymous figures, combining the visual language of mid-century America with handwritten observations on life, longing, uncertainty and human nature.

Working primarily in latex paint, pencil and varnish on wood panels, Underwood draws from memory and imagination rather than straightforward nostalgia. His paintings can initially resemble postcards from an idyllic past, but a closer look — and especially a reading of the texts woven throughout them — reveals something deeper. Humor, romance, anxiety, hope and philosophical reflection coexist within scenes that seem both remembered and invented.

Born in Miami in 1969 and raised near Homestead, Florida, Underwood eventually settled in Tennessee after Hurricane Andrew uprooted him in 1992. A self-taught artist and former construction worker and house painter, he began developing his distinctive approach to painting in the late 1990s and early 2000s. His work has since been exhibited by galleries in the United States, England and France and has been featured in numerous editions of the Outsider Art Fair in New York.

Atlanta gallerist Shawn Vinson has represented Underwood in the Southeast since 2019, presenting his work at Decatur's Different Trains Gallery, The WADDI in Inman Park and, currently, at The Sun ATL.

"Harry's paintings draw you in from across the room and then keep you there," said Vinson. "At first you respond to the imagery and colors. Then you begin reading. There's humor, wisdom, vulnerability and sometimes something wonderfully absurd happening beneath the surface. I'm looking forward to introducing his work to an entirely new audience at the Rialto."

HARRY UNDERWOOD: The Design of Destiny is presented by the Rialto Center for the Arts in partnership with The Sun ATL and curated by Shawn Vinson, founder and director of The Sun ATL and curator in residence at the Rialto Center for the Arts.

HARRY UNDERWOOD: The Design of Destiny

September 17, 2026 – January 14, 2027

Rialto Center for the Arts at Georgia State University
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