

I'm Always Here for You **Thomas Tran**

Exhibition Dates: May 26 - July 22, 2023

Opening Reception: 6-8 PM Friday, May 26, 2023

Artist Talks: 2-4 PM Saturday, May 27, 2023

PLATFORM

Thomas Tran, *I'm Always Here for You*, 2023, Acrylic on polytab
Image courtesy of the artist

April 27, 2023. Houston, TX - Art League Houston (ALH) is pleased to present our sixth and final PLATFORM installation, *I'm Always Here for You*, by Thomas Tran. Through the large-scale acrylic painting, Tran transports the viewer into the imagined space he dubs the *Only World*, where individualism is juxtaposed with the forces that cannot be controlled.

Pulling from past experiences, relationships, and thoughts for the imagery, the *Only World* is not too far off from Tran's reality. He is interested in the self-preserving nature of Self and its relentless determination to believe it is independent, despite the fact there are so many factors outside of one's choosing. *I'm Always Here for You* is inspired by Tran's relationship between Self and Universe, and comes to the conclusion that all things are connected.

Through personal anecdotal symbolism, a world that does not have to make sense is shown, and its inherent chaos is contrasted by the helplessness of one who resists it. When one makes the choice to open up and be vulnerable, they can then communicate with the world around them.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Thomas Tran is an artist from Alief-Houston, Texas. He is Vietnamese-American, 26-years-old, and likes to make art simply around his everyday thoughts and feelings. He enjoys getting to know people, psychology, manga & anime, video games, sad music, and traveling. He creates illustrations, comics, and murals.

Tran earned his BFA in illustration at the Columbus College of Art and Design. His book, *Bubba Stories*, was published in 2018 and features a story told through graphite illustrations and comics of a character named Bubba exploring a subconscious-inspired world in order to find a feeling he can't describe. Illustrations from this book won Honorable Mention at the AOI (Art of Illustration) show in 2018. Tran's work has also been featured in Bonfire's 2019 annual anthology, *Victory Road*, and *Cactus Juice*. In 2019, he was a recipient of the Support Artist and Creative Individuals grant from the City of Houston. This led to the creation of the *New Alief Community Mural 2019* at Universal Plaza in Vietnam/Chinatown in Bellaire, the first mural in the

area celebrating the Alief community. In 2022, he also created the *Longevity* mural in Houston's Asiatown.

<https://www.artbythomastran.com/about>

Instagram: @artbythomas

For more information, visit www.artleaguehouston.org, or contact Zhaira Costiniano, Exhibitions and Curatorial Projects Manager, at zhaira@artleaguehouston.org or 713-523-9530.

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