

FORT GANSEVOORT

The Arts Intel Report

Willie Birch: Up on the Roof

Fall 2025



Willie Birch, Two Roofers and a Ladder, 2022, acrylic and charcoal on paper, 60 x 90 in

FORT GANSEVOORT

"It's incumbent to me to understand that I owe something to my ancestors," said Willie Birch in 2022. "My work is loaded with them." Birch, who was born in New Orleans in 1942, approaches the city that raised him with an acute sense of devotion and observation. This latest exhibition reflects the resiliency of New Orleans as a community, as seen through structures such as roofs, fences, and benches. While Birch can use color with great joie de vivre, for this series he's worked in gray layers of charcoal and acrylic on paper, which emphasizes the modest objects and their ties to the African diaspora. One feels a sense of reverence in Birch's dedication to the culture that holds his origins. —Maggie Turner