

b. 1977 on the Osage Reservation in Oklahoma
Currently lives and works in Dowelltown, Tennessee
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Solo Exhibitions

2026
TBA, Electric Shed, Nashville, TN
2025
“The Sun Speaks in The Language of Light”, Slocumb Gallery, East Tennessee State University, Johnson City, TN
“Dark Big Bang”, Tinney Contemporary, Nashville, TN
2023
“There’s a poem in my garden”, Oz Arts, Nashville, TN
2021-2022
“A Cowboy Riding A Beam Of Light”, Dowelltown, TN at the artist’s home
2020
“You’re on new bridges made of home (you found the light in a dark poem), Wilder, Nashville, TN
2016
“Battlefield of Flowers” Angels Gate Cultural Center, San Pedro, CA
2014
“Soft Butch” Open Gallery, Nashville, TN
2008
“Pomp Kersey and the Battle of Short Mountain” Mainsite Contemporary Art, Norman, OK
2007
“It Ain’t That I Wouldn’t like to Stay” Pool Gallery, Berlin
2005
Mainsite Contemporary Art, Norman, OK

Selected Group Exhibitions

2025
“The Sea and the Sky, and You and I”, The Shepherd, Detroit Michigan
2024
“Assembly 2024: Horizon Scanning”, Museum of Contemporary Art, Arlington, VA
“Divine Light”, The Browsing Room Gallery, Nashville, TN
2023
“Linger, Dash, Talk”, Cement Fondu, Sydney, Australia
“Tempest”, Tinney Contemporary, Nashville, TN
2022
“This skin I’m in”, Revolve Gallery, Asheville, NC and Tipton Gallery, Johnson City, TN
2021
“Click! Photography Festival”, VAE, Raleigh, NC
“Futurephilia”, Adult Contemporary, Nashville, TN
2020
“New Paradigm”, Julia Martin Gallery, Nashville, TN
“Healing Feeling”, Dominique Gallery and Push Projects, via Artsy
2019
“Sleep Eazy”, Wilder, Nashville, TN
2018
“Godbottom”, Inferno, Brooklyn, NY

“Blackdove”, Red Dot Art Fair, Miami, FL
 “Calicornucopia”, Calico, Brooklyn, NY
 2017
 “The Likes of Us”, Growroom Showroom, Brooklyn, NY
 “Good Mourning Tis of Thee”, Co-Lab, Austin, TX
 2016
 “Are you loathsome” Video Revival, Brooklyn, NY
 “Triple Fantasy” Third Man Records, Nashville, TN
 2015
 “Sightlines” The Packing Plant, Nashville, TN
 “Flag Show” Club Roar, Nashville, TN
 2014
 “Written in the Stars” Antelope Valley College Art Gallery, Lancaster, CA
 “Re-Think Environment” Human Resources, Los Angeles, CA
 2013
 “Passages” Daniel Cooney Fine Art, New York City, NY
 “Polari” Mo-Wave, Seattle, WA
 2012
 “Midnight Salon” Honor Fraser Gallery, Los Angeles, CA
 2011
 “Golden” La Petite Mort Gallery, Ottawa, Canada
 2010
 “A Feast of Fools” Second Floor, Brooklyn, NY
 “Private Investigation” Mastodon Mesa, Pacific Design Center, Los Angeles, CA
 “At Least a Hundred Words” Pool Gallery, Berlin
 2009
 NADA Art Fair, Miami, FL with Pool Gallery (Berlin)
 2008
 “Polychromatic Dreams for Future Memories (This World is so Jacked)” Liberty Art Center,
 Liberty, TN
 2006
 “You Must Create” Pool Gallery, Berlin

Lectures/Panels

2025
 Radical Living and Growing an Art Practice Outside of Existing Paradigms, Belmont University,
 Nashville, TN
 DARK BIG BANG, artist talks, Nashville, TN
 2023
 Keynote Speaker for Vanderbilt University’s Ruby Gala Fundraiser for HIV/AIDS
 2022
 Queer Native Artists: Art and Advocacy, hosted by Vanderbilt University
 Cultivating Queerness: Artistic Practice in Rural Spaces, hosted by Amplify Arts
 2021
 “Futurephilia”, artists panel discussion moderated by Laura Hutson Hunter
 2021
 Artist Lecture, CECA and Austin Peay State University
 2017
 “On death, grief, and ritual”, panel member, Co-Lab Projects, Austin, TX
 2016
 Guest Lecturer at Temple University, Tyler School of Art
 2015
 Guest Lecturer at Brooklyn College, Film School

Professional Experience

2021

Founder of the Sterling Artist Residency in Dekalb, County Tennessee.

2008-2012

Co-founder of Liberty Art Camp; artist residency in Liberty, Tennessee. We hosted over 30 national and international artists from England, Spain, Canada, New York City, and Los Angeles working in film, sculpture, performance, sound, photography, painting, and multidisciplinary practices.

Awards

2024

Current Art Fund Grant recipient, Tri Star Arts and the Andy Warhol Foundation

2020

Tennessee Artist Fellowship, CECA, Austin Peay State University

1996

National Scholastic Art and writing Awards, Gold Key recipient

1995

Red Earth Festival First Place Youth, Painting/Drawing category, Oklahoma City, OK

Bibliography

2024

"Choctaw Artist Benjy Russell Creates Utopias in the Rural South", Nashville Scene, November 2024

2022

"I reached for your hand and we swam through stars", Approximate Press, Chattanooga, TN

2020

"At Wilder, Artist Benjy Russell Imagines a Radical Queer Utopia", Nashville Scene, March

2020

"Best Photography Exhibition; Benjy Russell's You're on new bridges made of home (you found the light in a dark poem)", Nashville Scene, "Best of" issue, October 2020

2019

Time is the thing a body moves through, T Fleischman, Coffee House Press

2018

"Check out Benjy Russell's artwork", Voyage LA, March 2018

2017

"The 2017 Sleight of Hand Exhibition", LENS CRATCH, June 2017

2016

"Hazing the Muse by Benjy Russell and Rya Kleinpeter, shot in rural Tennessee", Autre Magazine, January 2016

2014

Oxford American, Cover, Issue 84, spring 2014

"Projections and Perceptions; A look into Benjy Russell's realities", This City's Full, TCF Presents, July 2014

"Soft Butch by Benjy Russell", Recaps Magazine, Spring 2014

"10 Questions for Artist Benjy Russell", Nashville Scene, September 2014

"Tennessee artist Benjy Russell shows his 'Soft Butch' side", Out & About Nashville, February 2014

2013

"Hazing the Muse part II: Dr. Laurie Weeks interviews Benjy Russell and Rya Kleinpeter", Recaps Magazine, Summer 2013

2012

Syzygy, beauty. An essay, cover, T.Fleischman, Sarabande Books

"Benjy Russell", Camera Club Los Angeles, May 2012

2011

“Down on the farm”, cover, Put A Egg On It, issue 6

2010

Why are you surprised I’m still here, Billy Kaufman, Loudmouth Press

2008

“A sanctuary for freedom of creation, the Liberty Art Camp in rural Tennessee” photo essay by Luke Gilford for Fake Magazine; commissioned by MUSAC for Frieze Art Fair in London

“50 ways to leave your body”, cover and photo essay, Mean Magazine

2006

BPM Magazine, Cover photo and editorial spread

Collections

Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma acquisition for the Choctaw Casino and Resort in Durant, OK

Austin Peay University permanent collection

Works held in private collections in Germany, Canada, Mexico, and the United States