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SCULPTURAL WORKS BY FRIENDSWITHYOU MODEL PATHWAYS TOWARDS A UNIFIED PLANET

*Ushering in a new chapter of FriendsWithYou's practice, the artist collaborative's exhibition at GAVLAK
Palm Beach imagines a new belief system designed for our modern age*

PALM BEACH, FLA. – **GAVLAK** is pleased to present *Quantum Garden*, a solo exhibition of new and recent work by Los Angeles-based artist collaborative **FriendsWithYou**, on view from **February 10 to March 20, 2022**. There will be an opening reception for the exhibition Saturday, February 12 from 6-8pm. Through FriendsWithYou's iconic strategy of "remixing" modern archetypes to tell new stories, this latest body of work includes several free-standing bronze works and a number of wall-mounted clay sculptures, which recall the bas-relief in their form and capacity for whimsical narratives, decorative flourishes, and well-known subjects. Underlaid by a rich understanding of art's potential as a connective force and mechanism for empowerment, *Quantum Garden* introduces a generative era for FriendsWithYou, during which their visionary practice will be directed towards designing a paradigm for new systems of belief.

This project interrogates the anthropological dynamics of spirituality, asking how classical forms of ritual and myth might offer lessons for living in the present. Beginning with their renaming of Earth as "Ocean," FriendsWithYou imagines our planet as one where past, present, and future imminently converge in a teleological metaphor for global unity. The advent of what they foresee to be a decades-long venture, *Quantum Garden* offers a first view at what the collective terms "open-source spirituality." As a deconstruction of the traditional structures of religion, FriendsWithYou proposes a philosophy devoid of dogma or leaders, instead imbuing their work with an agenda based upon FriendsWithYou's motto, "Magic, Luck, and Friendship."

Hijacking familiar likenesses from popular media, FriendsWithYou's tableaus use intellectual property as their palette to produce records of the contemporary cultural landscape, translating this global iconography into overflowing compositions that analogize the rapid speed of media consumption. Akin to the public art projects and large-scale installations for which the collective is best known, these comparatively smaller works maintain a heightened sense of interactivity—rendered in a spectrum of bright hues, their densely populated landscapes lend to a wholly immersive experience. Such flashes of joy, nostalgia, and warmth are the result of what FriendsWithYou describes as their "positive propaganda," transporting the viewer into a transcendental state of childlike—or ultrapure—wonderment.

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Relational aesthetics remains a continued interest for FriendsWithYou, echoed in their works' positioning as vehicles for community building and societal healing. By playing within the zeitgeist, the collective leverages an earnest effort to create a more empathetic world.

ABOUT FRIENDSWITHYOU

FriendsWithYou is the collaboration between artist Samuel Borkson and Arturo Sandoval III. The duo is most known for their unique pop positive visions taking form in a variety of mediums, pushing culture towards a more empathetic compassionate world. Their work has been materialized as immersive installations, sculptures, paintings, animation and entertainment, live performances, virtual reality, and now deeper into digital and generative art, AR, & AI. They have created the hit animation series True and the Rainbow Kingdom on Netflix, participated in the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade in 2018 featuring their iconic Little Cloud character, and have exhibited their artworks in museums and public venues worldwide. FriendsWithYou's vision is to greatly impact our world with positivity and connectivity, connecting us to ourselves, each other and our living planet.