

REGINALD BAYLOR

“A Common Denominator”

Paint on asphalt at Fond du Lac and Locust intersection

*My goal with the artwork is to display a visual language that will spark the imagination of the youth that live and play in the Fond Du Lac Avenue community. My design for the intersection highlights some of the common denominators in the surrounding neighborhood. These include but are not limited to health, safety, economics, development, education, peace, history, access, and most importantly neighbors. These common denominators are integrated into a depiction of a choo choo train underneath a railroad viaduct.*

### Artist Biography

Reginald Baylor was born November 1966 in Milwaukee. He attended the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh (1984-88) where he was a sculpture major, but was encouraged to pursue commercial art and art education.

After college, Baylor relocated to Southern California where he worked for the Laguna Beach Art Museum and Newport Beach Art Museum (1991-93).

Baylor received representation by his current art dealer, Suzanne Zada of Beverly Hills, CA in 1995, and moved to Chicago. While living in Chicago, he began a career as an owner-operator for Mason Dixon Trucking. He continued mastering his aesthetics, craftsmanship, and straight-edge techniques with his acrylic on canvas paintings.

Baylor returned to the Milwaukee area with his family in 1998 and began exhibiting in area galleries and museums. He became a fulltime artist in 2008.

Baylor is currently working from his studio in Milwaukee's Historic Third Ward. His “open studio” concept invites clients and the public into the space to interact and experience Reginald Baylor Studio.

Baylor was one of two Milwaukee Arts Board recipients of its 2012 Outstanding Artists of the Year award. A Baylor exhibit will be part of the reopening of the Wisconsin Museum of Art in April.

### Materials and Process

Baylor, after IN:SITE’s nationwide research, is planning to use milk paint. The paint was suggested initially by Lauren Zimmermann, who helped City Repair in Portland paint intersections in the summer of 2011. IN:SITE compared this to two other paint options.

Milk paint is nontoxic. It is made from milk with pigments added for color. Though milk paint has been used for thousands of years, it does not compete commercially due to its short shelf life.

Although IN:SITE might mix its own milk paint or use a different company, it conducted tests using General Finishes Milk Paint. Alverno intern Jean Smith spoke with the owner, who said they have painted concrete and it worked “just fine.” Zimmermann, who grew up in Milwaukee, has responded that it should hold up through the fall even with the high traffic on Fond du Lac Avenue and occasional summer flooding. She also confirmed there will be enough traction. To make sure traction is not an issue, the areas in the image that are “black” are really asphalt. IN:SITE Alverno intern Jean Smith has conducted milk paint tests, including drying time, durability, and how the paint will handle flooding conditions. IN:SITE will continue to test paint options.

IN:SITE will have trained teams coming to the intersection on June 9<sup>th</sup> (or 16<sup>th</sup>/23<sup>rd</sup> if it rains on the 9<sup>th</sup>). The installation will start on one of the two long diagonals. The first team will have stencils and will chalk in the design. The paint teams will follow. Using the long edge allows for the largest teams to work. Right now, the groups providing teams include Felmers Chaney Correctional Center (with project planner Chelsea Wait overseeing this crew), Capuchin Apartments, Alverno College, and Urban Deversions. Mayor Barrett’s Office has discussed his possible participation.

#### IN:SITE Insights

--The introduction to a November 2012 *Milwaukee Magazine* story about Reginald Baylor notes, “Reginald Baylor has a signature style, both in person and in paint. One of Milwaukee’s best-known and appreciated artists, his high-priced canvases are surely coveted, but his impact is stretching much further, deep into the city he proudly calls home.”

--Baylor is donating his design to the “Art on Fond du Lac” installation. It will be his first public art project. His canvases have sold for as high as \$50,000. IN:SITE has set the value of the donation at \$20,000, though this is probably low.

--IN:SITE is thrilled with the design. It can be understood by anyone who sees it. It will change the entire character of the intersection. The design is site sensitive, a hallmark of IN:SITE projects, by responding to the railway overpass and important elements in the neighborhood.

Key sponsor: The Neighborhood Improvement Development Corporation has completed its review.

Site host: The Department of Public Works has completed its review and is working on a Common Council resolution in order to obtain a permit.