

Up From Down Home: The Journey North

Artist Jevoid Simmons

Congregation Open House
Sunday, September 11, 2022
10:45 AM – 12:30 PM

Community Open House
Saturday, October 1, 2022
10:00 AM – 12:00 NOON

Show Open to the Public
Sundays, October 2 – October 30, 2022
1:00 PM – 3:00 PM

Northminster Presbyterian Church

Tower Gallery, South Door
2515 Central Park Avenue
Evanston, Illinois 60201

Call 847-869-9210 for more information.

Masks strongly recommended
Access limited based on COVID restrictions
Portions of the Tower Gallery are inaccessible to those with mobility challenges

Up From Down Home: The Journey North
Artist Jevoid Simmons

About the Artist



Jevoid Simmons is the last of four boys born in Greenville, Alabama. He, his parents and older brothers were forced to leave the South under threat of racial violence in the early 1950s. They became participants in the mass migration of Black Americans out of the South.

Simmons is a painter and woodcarver, working primarily in the folk/primitive style. Through his art and written narrative, he documents his family's history through his paintings and his first book, *Up From Down Home: The Journey North*. He resides in Evanston, Illinois with his family and two Siberian huskies.

Artist Statement

When you view the paintings in this exhibit, you may see similarities to Grandma Moses' style. The paintings support the written narrative of my family's migration out of rural Alabama in the early 1950's. I was the last of four boys born in the South. Twelve more siblings would be born in Iowa. There's a twenty-five year span between the oldest to the youngest sibling in our family. This project is an effort to connect our past, present and future generations. My hope is that other parents and family elders will share their own family story/history with their children and grandchildren.

The paintings are part of my recently published book, *Up From Down Home: The Journey North*. The paintings were executed over a seven-year period with the last one completed in 2015. I hope the warm, tranquil style will invite the viewer into the picture. However, the related written narratives convey the extraordinary hardships and life and death struggles faced by Black folks living in the South under Jim Crow.

My more recent work has been focused on racial equity and justice issues in our country. In addition to painting, I'm a woodcarver and sometimes storyteller. My carvings are ongoing and capture family, friends, acquaintances and other characters from the past. The carvings are a part of a collection I call Sugar Creek Folks.

***Up From Down Home: The Journey North*, can be purchased on-line at www.upfromdownhome.com.**

To view my website, including my most recent paintings focused on racial equity and justice, go to www.sugarcreekfolkart.com.