

# James A. Willis

## Artist Biography



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In the late 90's Willis focused his attention on painting the ever-changing Manhattan landscape. With his stylistic use of oils and acrylics, Willis seeks to capture the dynamic beauty of the city as well as the dramatic color shifts weather and light have on the architecture, people, and streetscapes.

The artist focuses on everyday New York City scenes from unexpected vantage points and perspectives. Whether his paintings feature a panoramic skyline or a narrow glimpse of a Greenwich Village side street, Willis' works create an air of intimacy in an otherwise indifferent city. Rich colors, moody lighting, and diving skylines play an integral role in most of the compositions. His gestural painting style captures the movement of the city, from people crossing streets to the light reflections of billboards and taxicabs. "I see the city as a living, breathing subject." says Willis. "It has infinite moods and complexities."

In addition to his paintings and drawings, Willis has explored many unexpected mediums. He designs and paints motorcycles, surfboards, and musical instruments, and sculpts in both leather, metal and traditional materials. His art can be found in

important private and corporate collections around the world.

Willis has owned and operated three successful multimedia studios, and was involved in many early online technologies. His team was the first to stream the New York City Marathon live to the web and produced some of the first virtual tours ever for clients such as the American Museum of Natural History, The Philadelphia Seaport Museum and the U.S. Navy. His last company, Asphalt Jungle, was the agency of record for Hanes online and worked for such diverse corporations as Pratt & Whitney, Relais & Chateaux, Cushman & Wakefield, Sony, Marvel, and the U.S. Navy.

Willis was the inaugural artist in residence at Gibson Guitars and continues to do special projects for Gibson

Willis has just ended a year long exclusive contract with Musician/entrepreneur Zac Brown designing and executing a broad range of projects a few of which are a monumental winged gate for Browns non profit Camp Southern Ground, custom guitar cases, custom leather products and collaborating on scripting and storyboarding a video as well as illustrating a graphic novel for Brown's latest musical venture.

James A. Willis paints and exhibits in New York City, Nashville and Tybee Island. He has been profiled or seen in American Art Collector, Art & Antiques, Native Magazine, The New York Times, The Huffington

Post, Guitar Aficionado, Fretboard Journal, Nashville Arts, [RefuelMagazine.com](http://RefuelMagazine.com) and [OriginalFuzz.com](http://OriginalFuzz.com) among others, and one of his cityscapes appeared on the cover of Art & Antiques. He has had multiple solo exhibitions at the George Billis Gallery in New York. His paintings of coastal Georgia can be seen at Icovozzi Fine Art in Savannah. Willis is the recipient of a perpetual studio space endowment from CHASHAMA, a nonprofit arts organization based in New York City. CHASHAMA was created and is chaired by his friend and patron Anita Durst.

James splits his time between Nashville, Entrepreneur Zac Brown's Bat Cave near Atlanta and New York City, where he lives with his wife, one of the best dogs ever and two wonderful daughters.



James A. Willis  
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