

Arturo Herrera

*Out of twenty four*, 1995

For the MCA's exterior wall, artist Arturo Herrera uses a vocabulary that is immediately recognizable, that of cartoon illustrations from children's coloring books. Using collage (cutting and pasting) Herrera has assembled three provocative pop-culture hybrids that are placed so that they read from left to right as you enter the building. You see a cross-eyed dog's head set on the body of a kneeling boy, Santa Claus hauling off a listless boy without hands and feet, and a crying duck head on top of the legs of a superhero. Jumbled and at first confusing, these amalgams do not seem to be the haphazard undertakings of a child, but deliberate reconstructions. Their significance, like that of the title, is ambiguous, yet their familiarity encourages the suspicion that Herrera is challenging us to create our own story, our own interpretations of how these elements fit together. He provides us with tools - a standard narrative structure, intriguing spatial relationships (within the figures themselves and between the figures and the mobile visitor), and a human scale - but offers no guarantee that by using them we will arrive at answers. *Out of twenty four* plays with our innate desire to make sense of what we see by ensuring that this so-called pleasure is difficult, if not impossible, to reach. Herrera holds an MFA from the University of Illinois at Chicago and has been represented in numerous exhibitions in Chicago and New York. He has lived in Chicago for six years.

