

Artist's Statement
[note: artist's name withheld]

Through my artwork, I express my delight in the endless textural and tonal possibilities of oil paint, which I use straight from the tube in its purest form. With this medium, I create layers, rhythms, relationships, and balance. These physical characteristics of my work serve as a metaphor for the subject matter that forms an ongoing series: narrative paintings that examine and celebrate the complexity of human interaction. Through my paintings, I explore the way that colors shift and change depending on their placement, the way that pattern creates dynamism, and the way that the individual elements of a painting come together to create a whole. Similarly, my work explores the relationships we have with those closest to us, how people affect each other, and the way those connections change and grow over time.

My working process is a happy marriage of structure and intuition. A photograph provides the jumping off point for the initial sketch. I use the sketch to construct the complex composition that I transfer to the canvas or board, often defining the forms in black. Within that structure, I can then freely embrace my dual loves of color and pattern, exploring all of their interrelationships as I build up layer upon tactile layer. I investigate the effects that elements of the painting have on each other. I thoughtfully consider the way that every segment balances the others, determining whether each brushstroke amplifies the color, maximizes the pattern, or enlivens the rhythm of the painting. Although each component asserts itself, none dominates the work; instead, the different facets harmonize into a cohesive whole. Sometimes my layers manifest themselves more three-dimensionally, with sculptural forms made of wood or canvas adding heft, or crumpled and flattened aluminum foil adding patina.

My visual vocabulary comes from a wide variety of sources, built up over a lifetime of looking at art and solidified during my years studying art at [name withheld] University, where I earned my BFA in painting. The art I am most drawn to – Egyptian hieroglyphics, bejeweled medieval manuscript covers, Howard Finster's paintings, Gaudí's buildings – has density of composition, contrasts of light and dark, stylized figures, and colors that sparkle and sing. In my work I incorporate all of these elements, creating a mosaic of memories, with layers of paint built up like so many years.

[optional paragraph for commissions – insert between paragraphs two and three above]

My current series of work began with a photograph from my wedding that showed both extended families newly formed into one. Though much of my art remains deeply personal, I also paint commissioned family portraits, working from photographs and from conversations with the patron about what he or she

wants to convey about the people depicted. I see these paintings as a celebration of a family or a couple, and I integrate the things that are important to them, like a favorite place, building, or hobby.