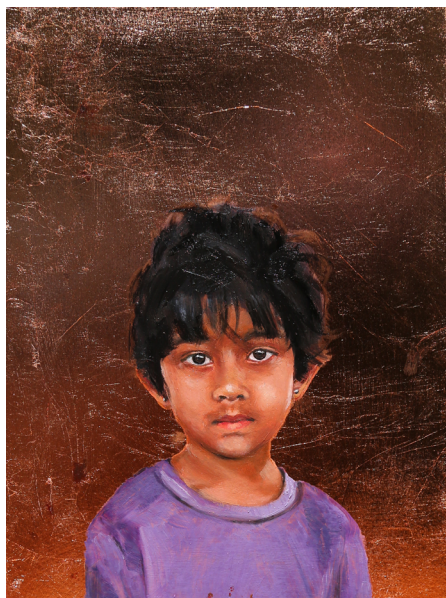


ORDINARY SAINTS



*Featuring artwork by
Sonya Menges & Allison Streett*



ALL SAINTS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

GALLERY • ORDINARY TIME, FALL 2019

GLORIOUS CHILDREN

There is a tension in the title of this show: *Ordinary Saints*. We borrowed it from a collaborative project presented last fall at the Cody Center at Laity Lodge. Our conversation about this title grew from two independent bodies of work: Allison Streett's sculptures and my recent paintings, and the potential of an exhibit during this liturgical season called "ordinary time." The question is, what is "Ordinary"? Who are "Saints"? Who are we to call anyone *ordinary*, or even more, why would we call them *saints*?

Historically, this season in the church focuses on discipleship, growth, outreach, and mission. This time between holidays is not mundane, but ordered as we are moved forward through our daily life with intentionality - working toward growth and renewal. As artists, this focus is reflected in our process of making. We must cultivate practices of studio time, quiet space, and moving material from the disorganized to the organized. For me, I begin the process of making each piece with order and control, but it is the ordinary, organic, personal interactions that transform the materials.

We are also encouraged in this season to look outward, toward our relationships. Our work in this show is modeled after individuals with whom we have personal connections. Allison writes that she desires to challenge the viewer to "acknowledge our true relationship to each other."

Allison and I both want to communicate the significance of each individual we have represented, a presence that cannot be ignored, and innate "glory" each person possesses, because God created them, and loves them. We all appreciate nature - the beauty of a heron on the river, or a rainbow after a downpour - but people are God's greatest, most treasured creation. In Psalm 8 we read, "When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place, what is man that you are mindful of him, and the son of man that you care for him? Yet you have made him a little lower than the heavenly beings and crowned him with glory and honor."

The psalmist speaks of the universe, our most vast glimpse of creation, that God made with his *fingers*, and then says God personally cares for the people He made! Consider what PCA pastor Tim Keller says: “Two things we want so desperately, glory and relationship, can coexist only in God.”

One man, Jesus, who already possessed relationship in its perfect form, and had the greatest glory as Creator of the Universe, left heaven and became the smallest and meekest figure on earth - a baby. His body was broken through a shameful death on a cross. He was rejected by His loving Father. And why? Because He loves us, so we can be weighty, significant, loved, and lovable, and so that we can be clothed in His glory. We are made right with the Father because Jesus rose from the dead, defeated death and sin for all time, and sent His Spirit. Because of Jesus, we can be brought into a true relationship with the God who created us, and be transformed into glorious people, His children, His saints.

- Sonya Menges

“It is a serious thing to live in a society of possible gods and goddesses, to remember that the dullest most uninteresting person you can talk to may one day be a creature which, if you saw it now, you would be strongly tempted to worship, or else a horror and a corruption such as you now meet, if at all, only in a nightmare. All day long we are, in some degree helping each other to one or the other of these destinations. It is in the light of these overwhelming possibilities, it is with the awe and the circumspection proper to them, that we should conduct all of our dealings with one another, all friendships, all loves, all play, all politics. There are no ordinary people. You have never talked to a mere mortal. Nations, cultures, arts, civilizations - these are mortal, and their life is to ours as the life of a gnat. But it is immortals whom we joke with, work with, marry, snub, and exploit - immortal horrors or everlasting splendors.”

- C.S. Lewis, *The Weight of Glory*

SONYA MENGES



Anna
Oil, copper leaf on panel
8 x 6 in., 2019
Private collection



Annie
Oil, copper leaf on panel
8 x 6 in., 2019
NFS



Ava Skai
Oil, copper leaf on panel
8 x 6 in., 2019
NFS



Edie
Oil, copper leaf on panel
8 x 6 in., 2019
NFS



Gaea
Oil, copper leaf on panel
8 x 6 in., 2019
NFS



Hattie
Oil, copper leaf on panel
8 x 6 in., 2019
NFS



Jane
Oil, copper leaf on panel
8 x 6 in., 2019
NFS



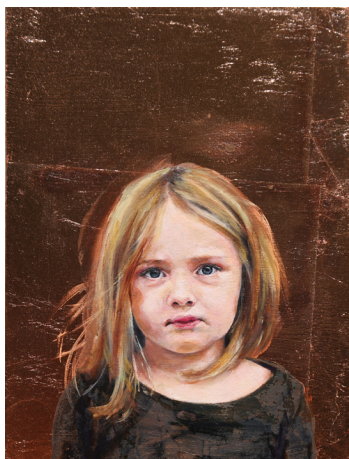
Linnea
Oil, copper leaf on panel
8 x 6 in., 2019
NFS



Lucy Jane
Oil, copper leaf on panel
8 x 6 in., 2019
NFS



Luka
Oil, copper leaf on panel
8 x 6 in., 2019
NFS



Lyle
Oil, copper leaf on panel
8 x 6 in., 2019
NFS



Ruthie
Oil, copper leaf on panel
8 x 6 in., 2019
NFS

SONYA MENGES

Artist Statement:

Made in the image of God, we have value in our bodies, minds, and being. Children often understand this uniquely, challenging us adults to recalibrate our view of the world around us. Jesus says in Matthew 19, "Let the little children come to me and do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven." My portraits of children are focused on their presence and their worth as persons. This collection of portraits includes my two daughters and the girls that are in their circle of influence. Little sisters, ages four to nine; all friends, all daughters, and all significant.

It is integral to my work that I paint from my own photographs. I am influenced by early photographic techniques and the aesthetic from the resulting pose, orientation, color palette, and facial expression. I find my painting process enriched through the personal interaction I have with the subject during the photography session. I see the incidental marks and shifting reflections from the fragile copper leaf as reminders of those things that are out of our control, but that aren't always mistakes. The marginal and ordinary often move us to wonder, and reveal glimpses of God and His beauty, His faithfulness, His love, and His work to redeem all things.

Bio:

Sonya received an MFA in painting from The University of Texas at Austin in 2010, and a BA in Studio Art from Messiah College in 2005. She has had multiple solo and group shows around Texas and the US, and is exhibiting at Women & Their Work in Austin in September, and The Contemporary in Dayton, Ohio in February. She currently lives and works in Austin.

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ALLISON STREETT



Becoming
Resin
12.5 x 21 x 6 in., 2019
\$3,000



Jack
Bronze
8.5 x 13 x 7 in., 2019
\$4,000



Matty
Bronze
11 x 13.5 x 1.5 in., 2018
NFS



Olive Mae
Plaster
10.5 x 11.5 x 1 in., 2018
\$1,200



This Is She, I
Plaster
13.5 x 15.5 x 1 in., 2019
\$1,500



This Is She, II
Plaster
13 x 15 x 1 in., 2019
\$1,500



This Is She, IV
Plaster
14.5 x 18 x 1 in., 2019
\$1,500



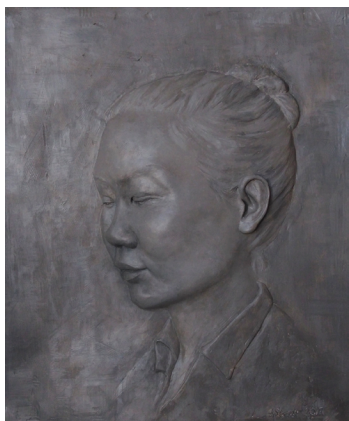
This Is She, V
Plaster
12.5 x 16 x 1.5 in., 2019
\$1,500



This Is She, VI
Plaster
13 x 15 x 1 in., 2019
\$1,500



This Is She, VII
Plaster
13 x 15 x 1 in., 2019
\$1,500



This Is She, VIII
Plaster
13.5 x 15.5 x 1 in., 2019
\$1,500

ALLISON STREETT

Artist Statement:

I work in the tradition of the masters of figurative sculpture. Through the common language of the human face and figure, we instinctively recognize and respond to one another's physical and emotional conditions. I desire to use this natural affinity in my work, whether through narrative or allegory, to provoke insights into ourselves and those around us, and challenge us to acknowledge our true relationship to each other.

Each of the sculptures in this exhibition are portraits of actual individuals. Whenever I create a portrait my primary concern, even beyond an accurate representation of the subject's physical appearance, is to honor the individual person.

Becoming is a portrait of my eldest daughter when she was twelve years old. She seemed to be a child one moment, a young woman the next. I could see the beautiful woman she was becoming, but the soft turn of her cheek gave me a flash of her childhood self. I was impressed by the in-between character of adolescence and I wanted to capture her at this fleeting time in her life.

Jack is a portrait of my late grandfather. I chose this expression to show how tender he had become in his later life, as well as the weight of grief over his past. He understood the preciousness of Christ's forgiveness. In the words of my mother, "He was my greatest answered prayer. He was the answer to a child's lifetime of prayer. I loved my daddy and never, never doubted his broken but true love of me."

Olive Mae is a portrait of my youngest daughter when she was three years old. *Matty* is a commissioned portrait.

This Is She is a continuing series of relief portraits of women from diverse ethnic backgrounds; it is a reflection on female identity and western societal standards of beauty. I have met each of these women, and tried to depict them in a way that honors their dignity as individual women and communicates something of their identity beyond physical features. Each of the sculptures in the series is entitled *This Is She* in order to emphasize the subjects' individual identities.

"This Is She makes me stand up straighter. It shows the many different forms that beauty takes. I feel like these pieces show more than just the physical beauty. There's a different kind of strength, peace, defiance, joy, even subtle pain in each. Which is also what it means to embody womanhood and humanity and the image of God."

- Megan Othling, author and women's advocate

Bio:

Allison Streett has received local and national recognition in various group exhibitions and competitions. She was featured in the "Emerging Stars in American Sculpture" at Brookgreen Gardens with the National Sculpture Society, and won Best in Show at the 2016 Texas Sculpture Association Members Show. She received an honorable mention at the 2016 Art Hop, a grant from the Sumasil Foundation in 2006, an award from the 2006 TSA Membership Show, judged by Patricia Meadows, and a grant from the Hillsdale College Christian Visual Arts Educational Fund in 2003. She was one of ten sculptors selected to participate in the 24th Annual National Sculpture Society Figure Modeling Competition, and placed first in sculpture in the 2002 Michigan Small College Art Competition.

Allison lives outside of Fort Worth, Texas with her husband and their six children.

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ALL SAINTS

PRESBYTERIAN

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