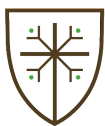


EASTER



Featuring artwork by Josh Welker



ALL SAINTS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

GALLERY • EASTER 2020

SHOW STATEMENT

Josh and I have been in dialogue about our artwork and respective studio practices for over a decade now, talking often about the challenge of making art, walking in faith, and having a family. I appreciate his affinity for materials and processes and his gift for creating things with layers of form and language and meaning. A recent series of Josh's work particularly resonated with me, not only because of the joy evident in the vibrant colors and lively marks but also because of his invitation to his sons to participate (see *Pink September*). With this series as impetus, Josh made an entirely new collection of work for display at All Saints.

I love imagining the process of hanging a huge piece of paper in the kitchen, giving free rein to crayon-wielding children, and then collaborating with those marks (and children) to build a drawing. And "building" is an appropriate word for Josh's pieces, for you can see layers of paint and chalk, collaged paper and printed shapes (see *Flowers with Concrete*). Delicate gestures of drawings are hidden under opaque marks (see *AEIOU+Y*). I want to peek behind forms and peel up shapes to find more details (see *Balcony with Flowers*). What Josh has left visible for us are pleasing curtains of colors, shapes, and textures that are both alluring and satisfying in their richness of surface and depth unseen (see *Lantern with Flowers*). These pieces contain journeys, roadmaps, and studies of expression and beauty completed both in solitude and in the company and collaboration of loved ones (see *Yellow January*).

I invite you to consider these works as we engage in this season of Easter, as unique as it is. What a rich expression of joy and beauty. How can we notice and appreciate the visible gifts to us? As we also mourn in this present moment the loss of physical closeness and tactile community, can we also grasp the depth, the cost, and the sacrifice of our Savior as he journeyed to the Cross? In doing so, let us be encouraged that, through Christ, we can be in communion with our Father and Creator. He desires to collaborate with us and create something in and through us, even though we may feel isolated and alone. And we trust that through this process, as painful and dim as it is, God will produce beauty more rich than we can imagine.

For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I have been fully known.

- 1 Corinthians 13:12

- Sonya Menges, Music + Arts Admin



Balcony with Flowers, multiple woodblock prints, multiple linoleum cut prints, and gouache on Rives BFK paper (4 pieces glued together), 45.5" w x 57.5" h, 2019.



Lantern with Flowers, multiple woodblock prints, multiple linoleum cut prints, and gouache on Rives BFK paper, 56" w x 72" h, 2020.



Flowers with Concrete, multiple woodblock prints, multiple linoleum cut prints, and gouache on Rives BFK paper (5 pieces glued together), 59" w x 44" h, 2020.



Pink September, watercolor, chalk, and oil pastel on paper,
49" w x 84" h, 2019.



AEIOU+Y, watercolor, chalk, acrylic, gouache, and oil pastel on paper, 51" w x 84" h, 2020.



Yellow January, watercolor, chalk, and oil pastel on paper,
59" w x 87" h, 2020.

ARTIST STATEMENT

These works are inspired by my love, observation, and experience of the earth and of language. Often a lack constitutes the fullest possibilities in life. In beauty and in pain language goes a certain distance and drops away. Presence and silence fill the remaining space. Language and art of all kinds flow out of (while simultaneously celebrating and mourning) this economy. Like this statement, my drawings and paintings are an attempt to illuminate—for myself first and then for any willing party—this precarious and endlessly beautiful earth we've found ourselves in against any sort of will of our own.

In making these works I utilize many different mediums; pencils, brushes, water-color, chalk, gouache, ink, woodblocks, rubber stamps, and more. I often stand in my garden or someone else's and draw flowers, plants, trees, and animals. Sometimes I take woodblocks with me, pieces of linoleum, or rubber and draw straight onto them with a pencil, pen, or marker and then cut them out when I am back in the studio in order to use them as prints and stamps. Once I am in front of paper or canvas, I begin describing the composition and color of the work with broad strokes in watercolor and ink. Often my boys will draw with me at this first stage and we will cover the paper with whatever is on our mind at the time. After this I'll begin printing the woodblocks or rubber stamps onto the surface going in with watercolor, gouache, or chalk to refine or change the color. I will continue these various means of mark making in no particular order until it seems apparent that the work is complete.

- Josh Welker

For purchase inquiries, please email joshuagrانتwelker@gmail.com.



BIO

Josh, his wife Michelle, and their three boys, Fred, Charlie, and Eden, live in San Antonio, TX. Josh's studio is behind their house. They like to ride bikes and swim together and when they're not under quarantine they spend a lot of time at their local climbing gym. Josh and Michelle attended All Saints when it was still in a gymnasium. In 2009 they both graduated from UT Austin (where Fred is hoping to study architecture). Josh's family reports to still feel a deep gratitude and connection to many of the congregants and pastors at All Saints who walked with them through some of their more difficult times.

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