

Artist Statement/Gary Westford

As a representational painter and narrative/conceptual artist, my work focuses on non-traditional views of the US American landscape. My paintings are meditations on, and reflections of, the contemporary national cultural environment. Subjects include homelessness, immigration, environmental concerns, gun violence, and social equity. I often combine painting with found- objects and/or architectural building materials to create site specific environments that depict and juxtapose images of the human figure, landscape, architecture, cloud formations, and vehicles of transportation along with three-dimensional found architectural items such as screen doors, prayer stands, and classical wooden columns. In 2020, I began a series of paintings that depict contemporary miracles or miraculous occurrences.

Miraculous Occurrences: Saint Benedict Levitating (Steven Rodgers)

Saint Benedict, the patron saint of the homeless, is seen levitating in the clouds above a jet liner. He lived a life ministering to the homeless in Rome and died in poverty in 1783. Saint Benedict had visions when contemplating Christ's crown of thorns and during these states, it is said, he would levitate or bi-locate. Steven Rodgers is homeless in Salem, Oregon. Every day for almost a year he sat downtown on the corner of Court and Liberty Streets asking for spare change.

Vita: Gary Westford

Salem, Oregon

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Education

University of California, Berkeley, M.A. (studied with Elmer Bischoff, Joan Brown, Robert Colescott)

San Francisco State College, B.A. (studied with novelist George Price)

Chabot College, Hayward, California, A.A.

Laney College, Oakland, California (studied with Bay Area Visionary Artists Gerald Gooch and Robert Moon)

One- Person Exhibitions

“One If By Land,” Gray Lab Studio, Salem, Oregon, 2020

“Time Transfixed,” Gretchen Schuette Gallery, Salem, Oregon, 2016

“Motion,” Guistina Gallery, Oregon State University, 2009

“Vermeer Paints Saturn,” Oregon Museum of Science and Industry, Portland, Oregon, 1996

“Begin the Revolution,” Blackfish Gallery, Portland, Oregon, 1995

“Luna Park: Meditations on Life in a Violent Land,” Blackfish Gallery, Portland, Oregon, 1992

“Modern Times,” Elizabeth Leach Gallery, Portland, Oregon, 1982

Group Exhibitions

2021 San Diego Museum of Art Artists Guild International Exhibition (online), San Diego, California (Juror: Anita Feldman, Deputy Director, Curatorial Affairs and Education, SDMA)

“2021 Artworks Northwest Biennial,” Umpqua Valley Arts Association, Roseburg, Oregon (Juror: Grace Kook- Anderson, Curator of Northwest Art, Portland Art Museum, 2021)

“That Which Surrounds You,” National Juried Exhibition, Arts Benicia, Benicia, California (Juror: Aysa Abdraham), 2021

“Blue” National Juried Exhibition, O’Hanlon Center for the Arts, Mill Valley, California (Juror: Jen Tough), 2021

“Disrupted Realism” National Painting Exhibition, Buckham Gallery, Flint, Michigan (Juror: John Seed), 2021

“These Truths,” National Juried Exhibition, Gallery 114, Portland, Oregon, 2021

“Hero’s, Heroines, Heroic Acts,” National Juried Exhibition, Fleegeer County Arts League, Florida (Juror: Robert Leedy), 2021

“Heeled: A Western Ballad,” Dab Art, Ventura, California, 2021 (Curated by Yessica Torres)

“Panic,” National Juried Exhibition, O’Hanlon Center for the Arts, Mill Valley, California (Juror: Chester Arnold), 2020

“Get the Message: Words and Images”, National Juried Exhibition, Benicia Arts Center, Benicia, California (Juror: Dewitt Chang), 2020

“Art In The Time Of Corona/A Global Art Project,” Dab Art Gallery, Los Angeles, California, 2020 (Juror: Yessica Torres)

“Recent Acquisitions: Hung Liu, Alison Saar, Enrique Chagoya, Gary Westford, Hallie Ford Museum of Art, Salem, Oregon,” 2020

“Signals,” Gray Lab Studio, 2020

“40th Anniversary Group Show,” Blackfish Gallery, Portland, Oregon, 2019

“Empire of Dirt”, Dab Art Gallery, Ventura, California, 2018 (Juror: Yessica Torres)

“Change in 2018,” Gallery 104, New York City, New York, 2018

Volume Two, A Group Exhibition: Westford, Napack, McGuifgan, Hausser, High Street Gallery, Salem, Oregon, 2018

Anniversary Group Exhibition, Blackfish Gallery, Portland, Oregon, 2015

“Radius 25,” Bush Barn Art Center, 2015

“Lure of the Local: Northwest Artists,” Hallie Ford Museum of Art, Salem, Oregon, 2001

“New Artists at Blackfish,” Blackfish Gallery, Portland, Oregon, 1991

Artquake: All Oregon juried exhibition, Portland, Oregon (Juror: Henry Hopkins, Director, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art), 1991

Artquake: All Oregon juried exhibition, Portland, Oregon (Juror: Patterson Simms, Curator, Seattle Art Museum), 1988

“Introductions,” Dana Reich Gallery, San Francisco, California, 1979