



ANELECIA HANNAH BROOKS

Keeping time

When Anelecia Hannah Brooks paints, she says she completely loses her sense of time. Five minutes of applying pigment might feel like hours to her, as she recreates moments, symbols and personal icons she feels a deep connection to on the canvas. She aims to integrate a sense of stillness and solitude in her works, images that evoke emotional responses in viewers who, although aren't personally connected to them, can relate them to their own lives.

Brooks' grandfather, a contemplative figure in *Dream of Days Gone By*, inspires those who see the painting to contemplate how they've spent their time. A simple bar of soap, wasting away in the triptych *Lifespan*, has human qualities despite its inanimateness. The stuffed tiger toy on crumpled sheets in *Childhood Familiar* is a display of innocent times, while the knotted string held by Brooks' sister in *Untier of Knots* relates to the tangled direction of life.

Brooks calls the title of her upcoming exhibition at WaterWorks Gallery in Friday



1
Dream of Days Gone By, oil on panel, 36 x 36"

2
Lifespan (triptych), oil on panel, 12 x 12" each

3
Untier of Knots, oil on panel, 48 x 36"

4
Childhood Familiar, oil on panel, 24 x 24"



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3

Harbor, Washington, *Keeping Time*, a bit of a double entendre, relating both to keeping rhythm in the sense of music, as well as to her holding on to particular



4

moments in life. “My hope is that the subjects in my paintings are symbols other people can relate to,” says Brooks. “Hopefully even if people don’t know the whole story, they have a sense of memory.”

Brooks’ collection of 17 works at the gallery includes images of the infant child of one of her childhood friends, the wedding shoes her husband wore to their wedding and the roses she carried, and keys. Her mother’s wedding dress, which was burned in a house fire when she was 7 years old and saved by firefighters, will also be on display. Before Brooks was married, her mother, married to Brooks’ father for 34 years, pulled the garment out of storage. It became the subject of the first painting Brooks created during the time of her own wedding, *My Mother’s Wedding Dress After the Fire*.

Despite the intimately special subject matter, Brooks’ aim to elicit meaningful responses from viewers is achieved, says her collector Rick Petry.

“Anelecia’s work challenges us to pause and consider the beauty and significance inherent in everyday objects,” Petry says.

“As with her figurative work, these images function as talismans that suggest a broader narrative about what it means to be human.”

WaterWorks Gallery director and curator Ruth Offen agrees, Brooks’ paintings “are contemporary realism painted with depth and emotive qualities that remind us of our place in the world.”

“All these images strike a chord within us,” Offen says. “Her paintings allow reminiscing about these special moments, in which time is fluid and moving.”

Brooks says she’s inspired by everything from the scientific mindfulness of her friend’s 1-year-old, to the wisdom her grandfather passes down about how precious spending time with family and friends is. Even in images depicting a sense of loss and ending, such as *Lifespan*, Brooks encourages viewers to feel the sense of something beautiful, too.

“I honestly hope people are able to engage with the paintings in a personal way,” Brooks says. “The show has a lot of meaning to me and a lot of quiet, and I love when others are able to find their own individual connection with the work, as well.” ●

