ABOUT THE ARTIST

John Sproul

John Sproul grew up in Simi Valley, California, and Orem, Utah, and studied art at the University of Utah and Brigham Young University. John and his wife, Emily, who is also an artist, lived for many years in Los Angeles before recently moving to Salt Lake City. They now live in the Sugarhouse neighborhood with their three sons where John serves as high priests’ group leader and chairs the community council’s Arts and Culture Committee.

John begins his pictures by finding the desired expressive gesture and body language, but the surfaces of his paintings and drawings are as intriguing as the subject. He builds layers of acrylic paint onto paper or canvas to create a richly textured surface. The colors vary greatly in value and intensity but are layered in such a way as to create a vibrance and a sense of history—as if the surface has been used for many years. The sense of history continues in how John draws and paints, leaving early blocking in and gestural drawings in place as he establishes the final position and gesture of the figure.

John’s drawings and paintings are centered around the human figure, which he uses to explore personal and universal themes. Referring to his work as “a dialogue of thought, both conscious and subconscious, realized in paint,” he believes that “one can come to know the spirit or self through the body and by extension the universal through the individual, the infinite through the finite.” In his work, John uses the figure and body language to reveal individual characteristics but also seeks to resonate with viewers on a larger level, as fellow human beings. As viewers, we bring an instinctual understanding of body language and the subtle cues of facial expression and gesture to our understanding of the work and a communication is established. We identify with the figures in a way that, as John says, “we are aware of, but never able to define.”

More of John’s work can be seen on his website: www.johnsproul.com.