

PEOPLE AND PLACES

Tara Moorman

East Gallery

March 27- May 8, 2021



"Every place, every person has a story to tell. As artists, our mission is to tell that story - not as journalist, but more as poets." - Mary Whyte

I spent the majority of my life painting and creating art. My favorite medium is watercolor for its magical qualities. Edgar Whitney, the founder of the modern day watercolor movement, said "watercolor does what we cannot do," meaning there is a quality of unpredictability about it, no matter how adept one becomes with the medium. An artist's ability to let go and relinquish control over their creations allows for wonderful and sometimes extraordinary results.

In my creative process, I invite a connection to divine light, which the nineteenth-century poet William Blake called "Peculiar Light." Blake believed that true freedom was based on the expression of each individual's internal radiance. By connecting to my inner light, I create in an attitude of oneness and unity that connects us all. I have found watercolor to be the best medium for the light radiance that I embody in my work.

When my mother, Patty Nation Fisher, of Erie, Kansas passed away, I inherited a large cache of old family photos and was immediately struck with the idea of bringing my relatives "back to life." At the time, it was a way for me to honor my mother and to keep the family memories alive. The photos became an invitation to merge my art with my love of family, history, and storytelling. I painted their spiritual light with an aura of rainbow colors, to create an ethereal atmosphere. At the same time, showcasing their period clothes, beautifully patterned dresses, boots, hats and cars.

As I began to interpret these old family photographs into paintings, a dialogue of sorts was begun with my ancestors. Their stories are published in a book accompanying the show. My great, great grandparents, Samson and Nancy Nation with their family, homesteaded in Doniphan County, Kansas, in 1860, via covered wagon from Polk City, Iowa. His brother, David, my third great uncle, was married to the once infamous, Carry A. Nation.

My ancestors bring to mind Garrison Keillor's phrase, "all the women are strong, all the men are good-looking, and all the children are above average". Please

enjoy getting to know my spunky, maternal grandmother, Anna Stubblefield Nation. Follow her life as a young girl living on the farm, through her marriage to her childhood sweetheart, Charlie Nation, and her life as a widow. If you see your family in mine, please join me in reconnecting and honoring those who came before.