

Emerging Artists | Casey Childs

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Expressing the human condition



Casey Childs, *Playlist*, oil, 30" x 20"

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Casey Childs considers all of his figurative paintings to be self-portraits, even though none may depict the artist himself. Childs explains that the models and family members he paints become part of him, and each portrait is an exploration of him as an artist. In general, the Utah painter says his goal is to reflect the human condition. "My interest in the people around me comes from the idea that we look at people every day, but we never really stop to see them," he says.

This year the Portrait Society of America certainly stopped to see Childs' evocative work, awarding him top honors for two different pieces in its prestigious annual competition—one a charcoal drawing and the other an oil painting, *NOCTURNE ON THE RESERVOIR*. The latter depicts Childs' wife, Amanda, standing alongside a reservoir near Cody, WY. For Childs the painting was all about conveying mood and drama. "I was inspired by the busyness of the rocks and the calm of the water," he says. "Combined with the colors of her jacket and those created by the sun just setting, I felt it would make an interesting painting."

A self-described contemporary realist, Childs is always trying to push the boundaries of traditional composition and design. Like many fine artists, he began drawing at an early age. It was during his college art classes that Childs realized he wanted to become a painter someday. However, upon graduating from Brigham Young University in Provo, UT, he first entered the graphic-design field for 10 years, opting to pursue fine art in his spare time. Childs eventually studied privately with William Whitaker before deciding to focus on a full-time painting career five years ago.

Childs is currently working on paintings for a solo show opening in September at Principal Gallery in Alexandria, VA. He is also finishing a large-scale historical diptych that will be featured in a new permanent exhibit in a history museum at The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Salt Lake City, UT. —*Bonnie Gangelhoff*



Casey Childs, *Nocturne on the Reservoir*, oil, 48" x 24"



Casey Childs, *Natalie*, charcoal, 14" x 11"



*Casey Childs, Afternoon Repose, oil,
30" x 24"*



Casey Childs, Natural Beauty, oil, 24" x 32"



Casey Childs, Running Late II, oil, 24" x 16"