

BIOGRAPHY

Latonja Davis-Benson considers herself to be a mixed media, multi-process artist – making art that convinces her viewers that the art comes from her soul and her material. Latonja is a breast cancer survivor who ardently considers her artwork practice to be therapy through her recovery.

Continued creative curiosity focused her attention on nature and its effortless waste as a prudent catalyst in fine art. Keeping our worldly recycling and reclamation effort in the forefront, Latonja understands the sensitivities of our culture and uses that knowledge to create visual, tactile and thought-provoking art with many re-purposed materials to introduce a new dimension in her art making. This movement in her art parallels with the rediscovery and spiritual rebirth in her life after cancer.

Latonja's style includes realistic drawing, figurative-abstract painting, and abstract combine assemblage paintings. Her realistic work finds pure detail of every inherent quality of her subject matter while using graphite and charcoal; her figurative-abstract creates a connection with representational painting and innovative distortions of color, shape and line; and her abstract combine paintings relies on the inclusion of many non-art intended items that add conceptual twists throughout the work.

Latonja is a planner in many areas of her life, but in her art, she is driven by emotion and vision while often times taking risks. Once she has decided on a material of choice, Latonja is known to allow a natural spontaneous revelation that the material has to offer, as each piece progresses to its finish. While working with oil, acrylic, pastel, wax, dye, latex, pencil and/or found materials, she realizes that her mission was not only to produce unique art, but also to advocate and re-validate the discards of our environment into a greater purpose –art. Latonja's ceaseless motivation to create visually inviting works on panels, paper, and canvas dares to be overlooked.

Latonja Davis-Benson was born and raised in a small country town of Beaumont, Texas, with her three younger brothers (Craig, Lauren and Dane), her mother (Annie) and father (Preston, an Air Force Man). Home is where Latonja found appreciation in ordinary, basic things to use in drawing – from simple cartoons to nature's abundance of textures. Although her dad was a military man, he was somewhat of a natural artist, so she watched and learned as he created his "doodle" art, while mom encouraged her by always providing art supplies. The Flintstones, Disney, and Looney Tunes, were among her favorite images and served as an important foundation for her art to begin. She practiced the art of "seeing" and understanding simple forms, line, and tone at an early age, which is where her love for drawing and painting evolved into admirable art works.

The family moved to California just before she entered junior high school where she began to experiment with new ideas, media and advanced techniques – art was becoming more and more fascinating as she explored new possibilities. She went on to earn her Master of Art in Painting, Bachelor of Art in Graphic Design, and an Associate in Radiology Science. As she continues to explore new concepts and artistic possibilities,

her husband, Dwayne; daughter, Aineko; and son Scott continue to encourage and support her quest. Latonja is an Associate Art Professor at Mount San Jacinto Community College, and a licensed Radiologic Technologist in Mammography.

Latonja Davis-Benson

"see, touch, and live the arts"