



PHILAN M. EBENHACK

Jonathan T. Simon

Native Southerner Jonathan Simon is a realist painter who recently relocated to Orlando. He is the newest face at Gallery on First in Sanford, and the only artist there who works in oils. "I prefer to paint in oils because they possess an almost endless array of properties," he says. "Oil paints have a long working time and offer a full range of hues, value and chroma, which I use to achieve depth, vibrancy, subtlety of form, atmosphere and inner light. Oils can be thick or thin, opaque or transparent, even within the same painting, creating natural luminescence, varied surfaces and distinct character."

Simon makes many of his own oils by hand, which he says provides him greater control. "It also gives me the option of including additives, such as ground glass, iridescents and pearl dust, enabling me to push and pull subtle nuances and create distinct points of interest."

He holds a B.F.A in illustration from Memphis College of Art and an M.F.A. in painting from the New

York Academy of Art. He has also studied with Jacob Collins and Michael Grimaldi of Water Street Atelier/ The Grand Central Academy of Art and Frank Porcu at the Art Students League of New York.

Primarily using linen canvas, Simon focuses on light, depth and color to create vibrant paintings. His work includes still lifes and portraits; however, his passion is for the figure and his inclination lies with complex narratives. His extensive anatomical knowledge and exceptional drawing skills translate to his paintings, which he creates with a combination of compositional, textural and abstract processes ranging from those of the old masters to more contemporary techniques.

Simon prefers to work from life, as opposed to photographs or abstract concepts. "Using live models and setups affords me the opportunity to study, interact and change course in real time," he says. "I enjoy this careful examination of my subjects, as much for the artistic process itself as for the end result."

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