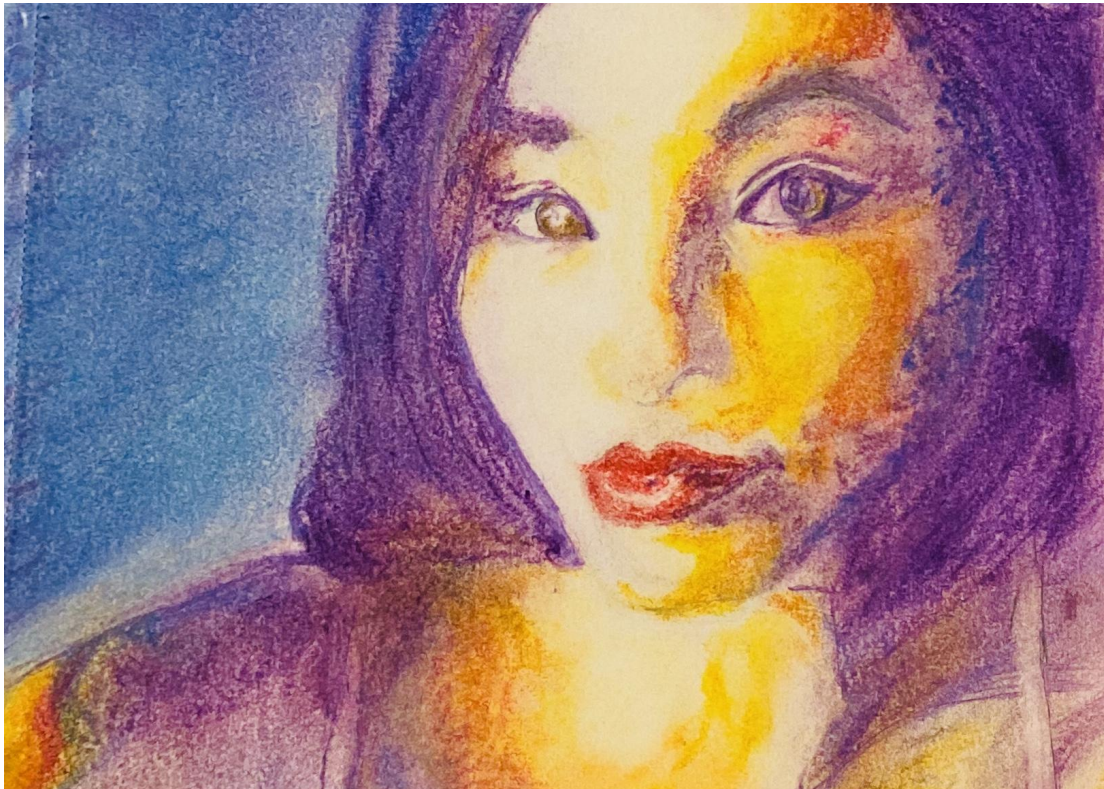


Lilianna Raven Leon

Artist Statement

Ordinary People



The beginnings...

"I'll never be as good as you!" Five-year-old me slammed the table in frustration. My dad is a self-taught artist and I remember we would spend time drawing together when I was little. He was the first one who taught me how to draw people. Since then I have been fascinated by drawing people! There's something magical about being able to capture, or at least try, not only a physical essence of someone but something deeper. I remember as a kid being frustrated that my people didn't look realistic and I couldn't render them like my father did. But I wanted to. Fast forward, I grew up going to art classes through my school and eventually stumbled into teaching art. One day in college my dad told me "You did it honey. Your art has surpassed mine."

Now an art teacher, I teach my kids how to capture people. I teach them especially how to draw eyes. I spend a long time on this project because the eyes are the window to the soul. I want the kids to be able to capture the interplay of the light in someone's eyes with shading or colors or whatever medium they choose. I teach them to try to record that which is invaluable. I try to teach them how to capture someone's essence.

Present Day

I believe art is the recording of human experiences. It is the beautiful and glorious. The painful and sad. Art is also an elevation of the mundane; the everyday experiences that ultimately make up our life. In my art I try to share human experiences. I share both my own experiences and the ones of people around me. My work is much more impressionistic in nature. I create emotional representation of my subjects and objects rather than the exact technical representation of these experiences exactly looks like.

A window to the future

Portraits remain my favorite thing to draw and paint. I like spending hours with a picture of someone and bringing who they are to life on paper or canvas. When I draw people I immortalize them. Share a part of them with the world, with people who may never meet them.

As a blossoming painter, I desire to do portraits of people around the world. I want to represent people in their many complexities and accompany my work with stories, memories, poems etc. about them. These will be people in my own life, of course. But I also yearn to travel and paint the people I meet. Grab a snapshot of their life in my work. Tell their stories. Eventually, I will do community murals in which I represent the people of that community in the murals I paint. I believe the highest beauty I can achieve is understanding people and truly seeing them. Art is my way of loving people more intimately by creating in my art an attention to and love for the previously invisible details of them. Because there are no ordinary people.