

# The Story of Us

## Artist's oil paintings define well-worn beauty of heirlooms

LORI STEINDORF  
FEATURES EDITOR

Years of art instruction coupled with intrinsic talent are paying off handsomely for professional artist Leslie Lewis Sigler, a 2001 San Marcos High School graduate, whose breadth of work is culminating with an upcoming art exhibition in New York City.

The still-life images of silver pieces in various oxidation stages she paints are remarkably detailed and leave enthusiasts with the impression that they are viewing photographs of time-worn heirlooms.

Sigler perceives these family objects as families of objects – individual silver heirlooms that are related to one another in a single collection and, collectively, to the individual families who put them into domestic practice and social circulation.

"I'm interested in the histories and lifespans of these objects, their ability to reflect our own personal life stories and family histories, and the way they continue to connect us to one another in time and space in an increasingly digitally mediated and disconnected world," she said.

Sigler said silver family heirlooms such as flatware, platters and vessels fascinate her because they span generations, withstand the elements and have storied pasts.

"Although they may tarnish and age beyond recognition, polishing them quickly returns their original luster. Such items pass through family generations as cherished heirlooms, survive the purgatory of antique markets or perhaps find new life at estate sales. As their stories evolve, they form a lineage that connects us to one another, across generations and geographies," Sigler said.

She personifies the images in her paintings she creates by observing their individual attributes and assigning them meaning. She sees these images on a deeper level rather than just for utilitarian use.

"By composing individual portraits of silver heirlooms, I explore the character evident in their inherent design and ever-changing patina. Each singular object's form, condition and character transform an otherwise functional object into



PHOTOS COURTESY OF LESLIE LEWIS SIGLER

Graphic designer and professional painter Leslie Lewis Sigler, originally from San Marcos, now lives in Santa Barbara, California. The 2001 San Marcos High School graduate is preparing for her first solo show outside of California at the George Billis Gallery in New York City in the Chelsea Art District. The exhibition runs December 15 through January 23.

something rich with history and artistic beauty, with the power to reflect our own life stories and family histories," Sigler said.

While in high school, she was heavily involved with the art department in honing her natural talent.

As an artist, the 2006 University of Texas at Austin graduate has always worked in an array of mediums. It was midway through her college years that she became enamored of oil painting.

She has lived in Santa Barbara since 2008 where she works as a successful graphic design artist.

"I create graphic design print work for local and na-

tional organizations including Santa Barbara Museum of Art, Direct Relief International and Cottage Hospital," Sigler said.

She is renowned for her Relatives and Matriarchs series, adding that the Relatives series studies a family of objects that vary in size, form, function, personality, detail and condition.

"Not unlike a human family or relatives. En masse, they are a family portrait," she said.

The Matriarchs series encompasses vessels that are each a member of a functional family.

"Isolated, these portraits represent the beloved mother figures in a family. Their

individual polishes suggest, age, their postures proclaim purpose and their reflections mimic our own," she said.

She has exhibited her masterpieces in solo and group shows and has been recognized in several publications.

Since 2011, Sigler has been scavenging and painting family heirlooms while witnessing their stories and histories unfold as she translates their portraits.

Her upcoming show at the prestigious George Billis Gallery in New York City's Chelsea Art District runs Dec. 15 through Jan. 23. A reception will take place Dec. 17.

Her website is [www.leslielewisigler.com](http://www.leslielewisigler.com).



The Forefather, Oil on Panel, 2015



Silver Spoon #87, The Fortune Teller, Oil on Panel, 2015



The Madonna, Oil on Canvas, 2014

## Bluebonnet Lions Club

### San Marcos civic organization installs new member



PHOTO BY TRISH WILDER

The San Marcos Bluebonnet Lions Club has installed Melissa Soto as a new member of the club. Left to right, member chair Judy Aswell, Soto and Beth Morrisset, one of the organization's founding members.

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