

SEASONS



SEASONS

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by

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ABSTRACT

My wife and children are my greatest source of inspiration in my multi-figurative paintings and sculptures. Making art of my family and myself feels like the most honest way to create art from my experience as a human. I'm pulling from a deep well of observation and interactions to create art from real moments we share. I capture intimate interactions between us that other people all over the world in different cultures experience in their own way. My process and style are a blend of traditional techniques and loose, impressionistic paint/clay application. I want my artwork to show beauty in the raw. I am interested in vulnerable moments that families share—a mother breastfeeding her baby, a father holding his newborn for the first time, a pregnant mother intertwined with her husband. My hope is that as viewers observe these works, they will feel encouraged to reflect on their own story and revere the passing moments with their family and loved ones.

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DEDICATION

To my wife, Hannah Hamborg, and my sons, Shepherd Zion, Iver Ray, and Axel Blue.

Without my love and connection with you, this body of work would not exist.

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SEASONS

DESCRIPTION

“I’m having contractions! I can’t do it: the pain is too strong!” my wife yelled to wake me in the middle of the night. After being conscious enough to realize what was happening, I thought, “You want to have a natural home-birth, and you’re already losing it?” But instead, I said, “It’s okay babe; it’s all going to be okay. You were made for this Hannah. Breathe. Just take one contraction at a time.” She calmed down and her breathing slowed down to a normal pace. She only needed to be reassured: to know that she was not in this alone and reminded that she was capable. This was the beginning of the long and intense forty-three-hour labor of our first-born. The experience we had together working through the contractions and the pushing, and the eventual birth, profoundly changed me. It was not just the birth of our first child, but the birth of a profound inspiration and sense of meaning for my art.

Just after turning nineteen, I moved to Florence, Italy to study drawing and painting at various art academies. The focus was on classical techniques, with no attention to concepts behind the work or developing a personal style. My time in Florence was immensely beneficial for developing my skills and craft as an artist, but after finishing my four years of intensive study, I felt a bit lost with what I wanted to say with my work. I was painting portraits, still lifes, and landscapes, but I was longing for a deeper meaning within my art and something more profound to say with it. When we had our first child, I was in awe of my wife’s changing body and the connection she developed with our baby. My art began to focus on this and began to suddenly feel more meaningful. I was capturing something so tender and intimate to us, and something that is such a big part of the human experience.

I wanted to paint my new family because I was captivated by the beauty, but I also started to be driven by wanting to comment on issues I became aware of in our society. After the birth of our first son, Shepherd, we were in that season of resting, healing, and getting to know our new baby. I found myself savoring the moments when my wife, Hannah, would breastfeed Shepherd. Hannah was nurturing and feeding this new life, and their bond was growing. Seeing the beauty and intimacy of this act inspired me to create art on this subject. After creating several sketches from life, I started working on a life-size painting, titled *Mother and Child* (Fig. 1). As I worked on this painting, I became more aware of how



Fig. 1. Chapman Hamborg, *Mother and Child*, 2020, Oil on wood, 66" x 48"

breastfeeding in public could be controversial at times. I learned of women's stories' of being asked to leave a public space when breastfeeding or being forced to nurse in a dirty bathroom stall. Why is it that something so pure and life giving can be frowned upon or shamed? I thought about the numerous paintings I had seen in museums of women breastfeeding their

children and thought to myself, when did it all go wrong? When did the cultural views on breastfeeding change?

Modern culture has taken breasts and cast them worldwide as sexual objects. Not so long ago, breasts were primarily viewed as life giving. We can forget that before the pasteurization of animal's milk and the invention of formula, a lactating mother meant life or death for her baby. Therefore, it makes sense that so much of the history we see in art was focused on the subject of breastfeeding: Ancient Egypt's famous sculpture of the goddess Isis breastfeeding her son Horus; the paintings of the Ancient Greek legend with the goddess Hera pushing Hercules from her breast, causing her milk to spurt into the heavens, creating the Milky Way; the depictions of the Roman story of *Filial Charity* that tells of a daughter nursing her mother in prison (Chasity). There are countless paintings in churches around the world of the Madonna breastfeeding Jesus. Breastfeeding has been celebrated in art throughout our history (Yalom 17).

I began wanting to advocate on behalf of my wife and for other mothers, so I continued painting *Mother and Child*—showing the beauty of breastfeeding, saying: this is natural, this is beautiful, this should be celebrated and honored. I made the figures life-size to highlight the importance of this life-giving act. This is not something that should be hidden away or looked down upon. This was the first large painting I created that both felt personal and important in a larger way, and it was the beginning of my body of work focused on family.

I continued to do more paintings focused on breastfeeding and other aspects of motherhood as our family grew, feeling moved and inspired by the connection between my



Fig. 2. Chapman Hamborg, *Bathing*, 2020, Oil on linen, 10'' x 9''



Fig. 3. Chapman Hamborg, *Nursing in the Bath I*, 2020, Oil on linen, 9'' x 11''



Fig. 4. Chapman Hamborg, *Mother and Children on the Coast*, 2021, Oil on linen, 12'' x 9''

wife and our kids. I painted them bathing together (Fig. 2), breastfeeding in the bath (Fig. 3), and sitting on the beach (Fig. 4).

I then decided I also wanted to create

art inspired by my connection with my kids and my experience as a father. I began by creating a painting of me holding my firstborn Shepherd for the first time, just after his birth. The painting *New Father* (Fig. 5) is about a father meeting his son, feeling overwhelmed from the whole experience of the birth, and the newfound joy of holding his child in his arms. The unresolved background and the lively brushstrokes represent the whirlwind one feels during the birth and the immediate aftermath. Rather than focusing on the details and



Fig. 5. Chapman Hamborg, *New Father*, 2020, Oil on linen, 11" x 8"

likeness of my portrait, I depicted it in a more impressionistic and loose manner. I hope that this helps the focus be on the connection and warmth between the father and newborn and makes it more relatable to all fathers.

A father's involvement in their children's life has an impact not just on the child, but the community at large. Studies show that having an involved father in the household

can lead to: children committing fewer crimes, improved school behavior and grades, lower teen pregnancies, and increased family self-sufficiency (Institute for Research on Poverty).

There is often more of a focus on a mother's important role in a child's development, but research indicates that both the mother's and father's involvement and nurture are important for a child's well-being.

I hope that my art can highlight the importance of a father's role in their children's lives. I'm not a perfect father, and I don't have it all figured out, but by sharing my personal experience and thoughts about fatherhood through my art, I can encourage other dads in their role and emphasize their importance. In my current work, I'm focusing on the connection and tenderness between father and child. This subject is something I want to further explore in my art, along with the struggles and hardships of fatherhood.

Juggling

Children (Fig. 6)

shows me holding my four-year-old son, Iver, in one arm, comforting him just after scraping his knee. He cries as he buries his chin into my shoulder.

Meanwhile my baby, Axel, is squirming about in my right arm.

I am juggling my children—but I remain steadfast, holding them strongly



Fig. 6. Chapman Hamborg, *Juggling Children*, 2023, Oil on linen, 14" x 11"

and gazing out to the distance, at whatever may come. This painting shows both the chaos and beauty of fatherhood. It shows that fathers can be nurturing as well as strong and unwavering at the same time.



Fig. 7. Chapman Hamborg, *Self Portrait with Son in Studio*, 2022, Gouache on paper, 8” x 4”



Fig. 8. Chapman Hamborg, *Spring*, 2023, Oil on linen, 14” x 11”

Self Portrait with Son in Studio (Fig. 7) is a painting about my identity as a father and an artist. My nakedness is meant to symbolize the vulnerability I express through my art, as well as my choice to be a vulnerably father. My baby sits on the studio floor beside me, and behind us hangs a large painting of my wife. She and my children are my greatest sources of inspiration.

An important part of raising my kids is adventuring in nature with them. *Spring* (Fig. 8) shows me wearing my son Iver and carrying my son Shepherd on my back, on a hike

surrounded by yellow flowers. Exploring outside strengthens our connection and provides opportunities for me to teach them the importance of our connection with nature. It's important to me to have these moments to create memorable experiences outside of our day-to-day routines.



Fig. 9. Chapman Hamborg, *Protector*, 2023, Oil on linen, 30" x 40"

Protector (Fig. 9) is about my role as a husband and father, protecting my family. My arms are wrapped around my kids, and my body shields them, creating the shape of a house. There is a dark line surrounding me which is symbolic of my body acting as a shield, protecting my family from the darker forces around us.



Fig. 10. Chapman Hamborg, *Homebirth*, 2023, Clay, 6" x 6" x 6"

It's not uncommon for husbands to take an absent role in the labor and birth of their children. With the advancements in modern medicine and evolving cultural views around birth, couples are often detached from the birthing process. Birth can be a very sacred experience, which the husband and wife can share, working as a team. My sculpture *Homebirth* (Fig. 10) and my painting *Waterbirth*

WIP (Fig. 11) are about a husband and wife's strength together as a couple. There are few things in this world that can compare to the raw power and fortitude that a woman exhibits during childbirth, and the incredible feat of her body creating and delivering new life is truly a wonder to behold. *Waterbirth* is depicting a

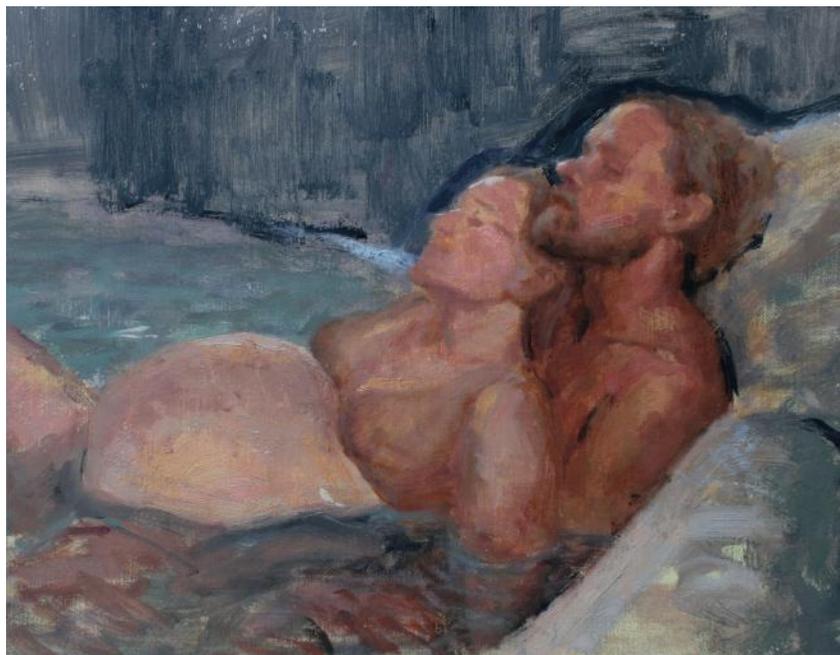


Fig. 11. Chapman Hamborg, *Waterbirth WIP*, 2023, Oil on linen, 9" x 12"

recent birth of our son Axel. Hannah is in the middle of a contraction, breathing through it, lying on my chest holding firmly my knees, while I support her and squeeze her pelvis together with all my strength during each contraction to help relieve her pain. My goal is to highlight how husbands can be involved in the birth and support their wives in this sacred moment.

I originally was drawn to composing more intimate and idyllic scenes of family life to highlight the beauty of precious and intimate moments. A few years ago, I decided I wanted to depict the harder aspects of parenthood and family life as well. Those challenging moments are powerful, can feel life-changing, and have dramatic effect on us. An example of is my painting *Labor* (Fig. 12), which shows a mother laboring on the toilet during a



Fig. 12. Chapman Hamborg, *Labor WIP*, 2023, Oil, acrylic, and charcoal on gessoed paper, 66" x 48"

homebirth. The painting depicts a raw, powerful moment, which could make some viewers feel uneasy. You can see that the mother is in pain, perhaps in the middle of a contraction. You can sense the weight of her pain as she supports her weight with her arms on her knees. Some have argued that this is not beautiful and should not be painted, but I see beauty in the way the light is falling on her full forms, highlighting how she is sacrificing her body and comfort to bring forth new life. Within art there is a long history of the male gaze. Women are often depicted in a sexualized and idealized way to appeal to men, which can be degrading. In my art I like to depict the nude figure in a non-sexualized context. For me, it is



Fig. 13. Chapman Hamborg, *Breastfeeding Mother*, 2022, Oil on board, 18" x 24"

important to capture the real female beauty, tenderness, and reverence that women and mothers deserve.

In contrast to *Mother and Child*, which shows a more

idyllic breastfeeding moment, my painting *Breastfeeding Mother* (Fig. 13) depicts a mother who is in anguish while breastfeeding her child. Breastfeeding can be very challenging for new mothers. I painted *Breastfeeding Mother* from life recently after the birth of our third son, Axel. He was tongue tied and not getting a strong latch, causing my wife's nipples to



Fig. 14. Chapman Hamborg, *Reclining Pregnant Woman*, 2022, clay, 4" x 9" x 4"

bleed. My focus was to capture the emotion of that moment rather than perfectly render the details. Although the painting may look very unfinished, it in a way feels more powerful because it captured a true, and fleeting moment from life. With my terracotta sculpture *Reclining Pregnant Woman* (Fig. 14), I seek to convey not only the ample curves of an expecting mother, but also the powerful emotions of anguish and anticipation that come with this transformative stage of life. Her body is at its limit, she can bear no more. She is lying down, unable to carry on walking. Her hand is on her forehead trying to relieve the pain of a migraine. Towards the end of her pregnancy, she seeks escape from her unending discomfort. I witnessed this moment with my wife, and I felt it would be best expressed in clay to capture the bulging forms and heaviness of her body.

I hope that when people view my art, they feel as if their experience is being shown and celebrated—not just their happy family moments, but their struggles and sacrifices as well. Modern culture revolves around self-gratification—focusing all your energy on your career, doing what makes you feel good—but family often revolves around sacrifice. You give aspects of yourself up to feed and care for the ones you love. Whether it's with your partner or your kids, you make sacrifices, but the rewards are so great that come from those connections you foster. Even if someone else's experience is very different from mine, I hope that aspects of my artwork will encourage them to do the hard work to fight for connection among their loved ones.



Fig. 15. Jenny Saville, *The Mothers*, 2011, Oil on canvas, 106 3/8" x 86 5/8".

RESEARCH

It is important to see the art that has come before me, and is happening around me, rather than creating art in a vacuum. During much of my atelier training, I was forced to paint in a very realistic, tight, and finished style. Since then, I have been on a journey of not only finding personal subject matter, but also developing my personal style in my mark making, sense of color, and design. In my early study as an artist, I was

mostly surrounded by more traditional art that idealizes subjects and beauty. About four years ago, I made a conscious effort to understand abstract art and other styles that I was less familiar with and had always ignored. After learning about how these different art movements were innovative for their time and were reacting to other art movements or specific dynamics within the culture, it helped me have a deeper admiration for these artists and their work. My taste has broadened, and it has influenced my developing style.

One of these artists whom I learned of after my atelier training is Jenny Saville. When I first discovered her work, I was taken aback by her brutal honesty and grit. One of Saville's paintings that has especially moved me is *The*



Fig. 16. Chapman Hamborg, *In the Shower WIP*, 2023, Oil on jute, 40" x 24"

Mothers (Fig. 15). This work helped me see how there is beauty in the pain and chaos of parenting. It also helped me form my ideas around depicting hardships and struggles. An example of this is my painting *In the Shower WIP* (Fig. 16), which depicts an exhausted mother holding her son. You can sense her anguish and how hard this work is on her body. This is similar to Saville's *The Mothers*, where you can see the tenderness between a mother and her sons despite the chaos. The way Saville blends abstraction and realism on a huge scale (*The Mothers* is 9 x 7 ft) has inspired my current art style, and is something I plan to explore further in future paintings. The scale of her work has been my inspiration to creating life size figures within my paintings. I feel that having the figures at life size or bigger can

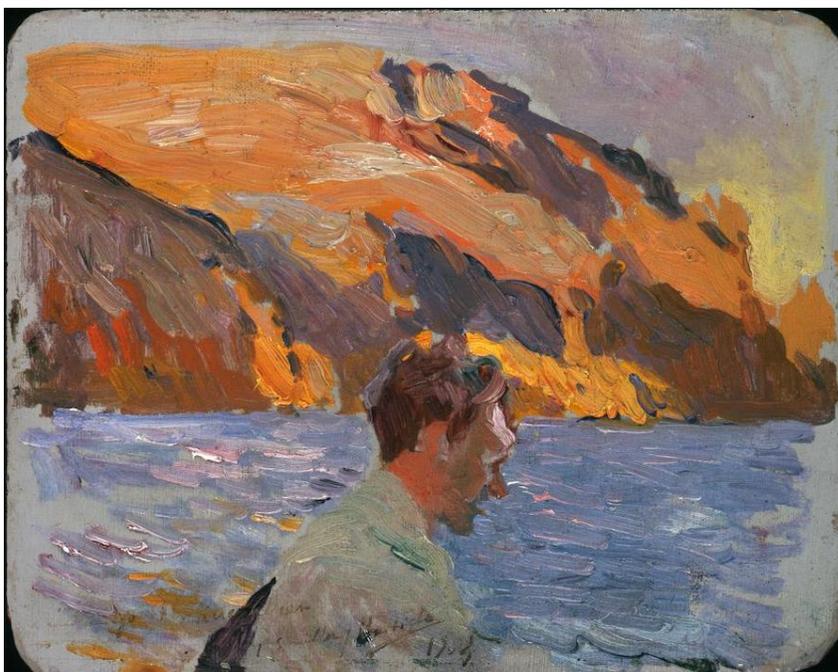


Fig. 17. Joaquín Sorolla, *William E. B. Starkweather Fishing, Javea*, 1905, Oil on composition board, 50" x 58.2" The Hispanic Museum and Library

help them have a monumental or universal quality.

I am also captivated by Joaquín Sorolla's paintings, and the way they depict the natural light of the outdoors. His unblended, loose brushwork and sense of color have

helped me see colors differently in nature and simplify details into masses. The book *Sorolla and the Paris Years* contains a section featuring small studies or sketches he would paint on location within just around one to three hours. In them, Sorolla focuses on what is important

in the scenes he is seeing to compose his paintings. They are the artist's raw thoughts—he is not worried about them being a perfect or finished painting. Sorolla carries this approach and process into his larger works. An example of this is *William E. B. Starkweather Fishing, Javea* (Fig. 17) where you can see Sorolla is not worried about the large painting's



Fig. 18. Chapman Hamborg, *A Day at the Beach*, 2022, Oil on linen, 20" x 26"

unfinished quality. I want to maintain that energy and perspective when working on my own paintings. In my painting *A Day at the Beach* (Fig. 18), I am drawing inspiration from Sorolla's brushstrokes and sense of color. When creating this painting *en plein air* at the beach, rather than getting caught up in unimportant details, I needed to paint rapidly to capture the overall effect and feeling of the scene. My goal is to bring this kind of approach



Fig. 19. Auguste Rodin, *The Young Mother*, 1885, Plaster, 14.3" Victoria & Albert Museum

was moved by the many Rodin sculptures that filled a room, but I was pleasantly surprised by the small-scale sculptures of his that were there too. Although smaller, they still carried such emotion and meaning. I was especially captivated by *The Young Mother* (Fig. 19). This sculpture inspired me to create my sculpture titled *Young Mother* (Fig. 20).

into my studio work as well. When I have all the time in the world to work on a painting, I can over-think things, get too caught up in details, and lose the fresh and loose look I am going for in my work.

The work of Auguste Rodin has been a great source of inspiration for my sculpture. His figures are so expressive, and they have an introspective, psychological feeling to them. I am also inspired by his loose and rough application of clay. When I first went to the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, I



Fig. 20. Chapman Hamborg, *Young Mother*, 2021, Terracotta, 10" x 10" x 3"

The small terracotta sculpture sketches of Jean-Baptiste Carpeaux have also been a source of inspiration for my sculptures. For example, his sculpture *Pietà* (Fig. 21) is under a foot in height, very loosely executed, but still manages to convey an immense amount of emotion, showing the mourning Mary holding Jesus' dead body. During my MFA I have primarily been focused on my oil paintings, but it is important for me to create



Fig. 21. Jean-Baptiste Carpeaux, *Pietà*, 1864, Terracotta, 11.5" x 7" x 6" The Metropolitan Museum of Art



Fig. 22. Chapman Hamborg, *Father and Child Embrace*, 2022, Terracotta, 6" x 3.5" x 3.5"

sculptures in clay as well. Seeing Carpeaux's smaller scale sculptures has shown me how I can still create powerful sculptures in even a small amount of time. These small sculptures like *Father and Child Embrace* (Fig. 22) are like sketches in clay that help me express emotions without overthinking. One day I hope to develop some of them at a half-life or life-size scale. Other artists I draw inspiration from are Michelangelo, Leonardo da Vinci, Gustaf

Klimt, Mary Cassatt, John Singer Sargent, Vincent Van Gough, Alexander Kanevsky, Colleen Barry, Anna Gale, Zoe Frank, and Vittorio Lavazzo.

While I paint, I often listen to podcast and audio books. I especially enjoy listening to art podcasts where artists are interviewed. I find it very inspiring to hear an artist open up about their journey—their struggles or shortcomings, how their style and concepts developed, and how they found success with their work. I can learn from their mistakes or successes, and it can help shape my own journey. One podcast that was particularly influential was an episode of *John Dalton – Gently Does It* with Colleen Barry. In it, Barry talked about how when she became a mother, she had something more meaningful to say with her work as a whole. She didn't have to paint about someone else's story. Her own experience as a human was worthy of being the subject of great work. When I heard her say that, I felt inspired and empowered. Not long before hearing her interview, during my first semester of my MFA at LCAD, an instructor shared that autobiographical work is less meaningful. Instead, he thought that great art must be about the world at large, things happening in our society, social justice issues, etc. This perspective discouraged me and belittled my art and the art I wanted to create. Barry helped to reset my position. To hear her experience helped me feel that I am enough—my life as a father, as a husband, as an artist, and what I personally witness are worthy subjects of art. Even though these paintings and sculptures are autobiographical, they have a universal quality, focusing on the human experience. I believe that being authentic and sharing my real experiences makes my artwork more relatable than if I tried to create some great work of art about the world at large.

Another source of inspiration for this body of work has been *The Place We Find Ourselves* podcast by Adam Young, who is a private practice therapist. Young and guests

discuss their stories associated with trauma, attachment, and interpersonal neurobiology. Young leads listeners into dissecting their own story and starting the journey of healing, wholeness, and restoration. In one episode called “How Your Story is Affecting Your Relationship with Your Children Part 1,” Young focuses on a multitude of family dynamics and how they shape who we are. He begins with a quote of William Faulkner, “the past isn’t dead, it’s not even past.” Our parenting failures are often bound up in our story. The single most important thing you can do to improve your parenting is engage your own story and your own family of origin growing up. According to Young, most parenting failures are caused by dysregulation in the parent, which is caused by unprocessed trauma and harm from the parent’s past. Young then quotes neuroscientist Dan Siegel: “the best predictor of how

our children will become attached to us (how emotionally healthy they are) is how well we as parents have to make sense of our lives—how well we tell a coherent story of our early life experiences.” What I have learned from these podcast episodes

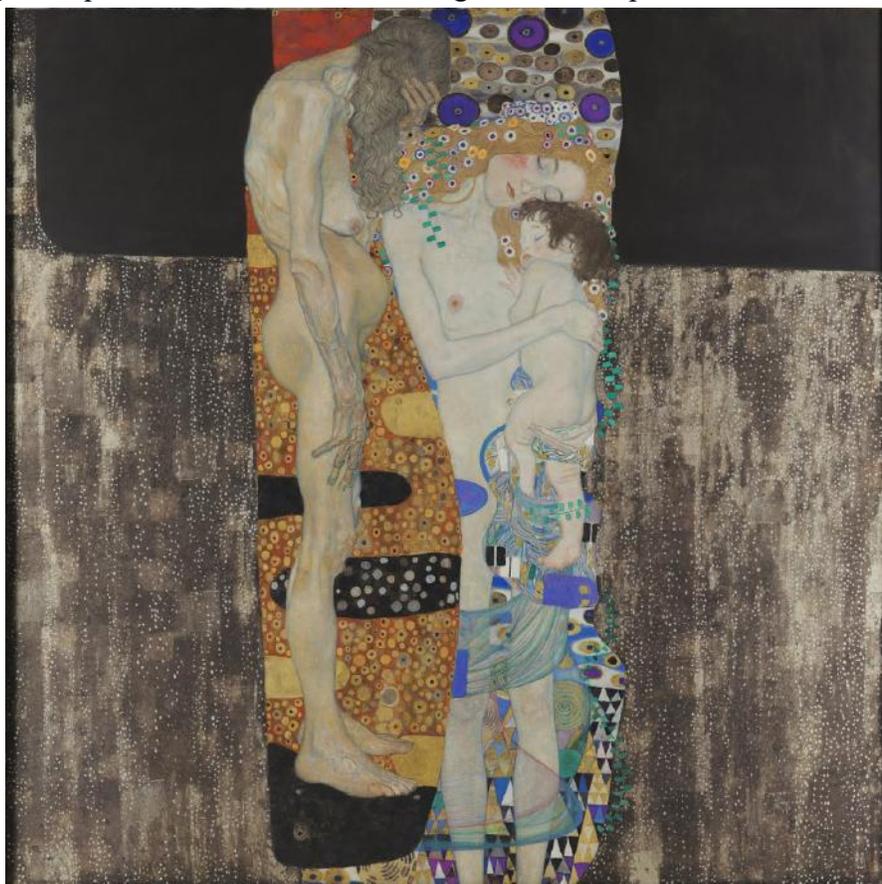


Fig. 23. Gustav Klimt, *Le Tre Età*, 1905, Oil on canvas, 71 in × 71 in, Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Moderna, Rome

has helped me with my personal journey, reflecting on my own story, and it has influenced the concepts behind my art. I want to encourage viewers to reflect on their own story and work to heal past wounds. To reflect this idea, I have been working on some sketches for a new painting that would depict multiple generations of a family. This painting would also draw inspiration from *Three Ages of Woman/Le Tre Età* (Fig. 23) by Gustav Klimt. I am very drawn to the way Klimt's depictions of families share deep emotions and a universal message—something I wish to relate in my own art.

METHODOLOGY

Nursing in the bath, kids washing in the kitchen sink, laboring on the toilet, juggling children—these are the moments from which my art originates. Sometimes I will start with an idea or concept and begin drawing sketches, and it will develop into the painting or sculpture. More often, something will catch my eye in the midst of everyday life with my family, and I will have the thought, “this could be a great painting!” I then take a photo trying to capture the fleeting moment before it changes. I start thinking of how I would compose the painting, and the ideas form from there. For example, *In the Shower* (Fig. 14) originated from a specific moment when my wife was trying to take a shower at the end of her pregnancy, and my three-year-old son Iver barged in crying and pleading for his mother to hold him. Although my wife was telling him often that she couldn't hold him anymore because of how late she was in pregnancy and how big Iver was getting, she picked him up, and he straddled his legs over her belly. He wrapped his arms tightly around her neck. On a personal level the painting is about that specific moment, and the dynamic of their connection and the hard season it was for all of us. But I want the painting to be bigger than that one situation with

my wife and son. The painting is about motherhood, the beautiful connection you can share with your child, but also the challenges.

Often, I have a very clear idea of what the painting means to me, and what I want to say with it. Sometimes, I am inspired by the subject or reference, and as I paint, the concept holding the painting together comes to me. My idea for a painting may start with a personal moment, but then it grows into something bigger or changes completely as I am working.

At times, I am captivated by the visual and emotional qualities of a situation and feel that I must create a work of art from that experience, but I also value creating compositions with a concept from my imagination. An example of this is my painting *Protector*. Rather than capturing a moment that happened, I began creating thumbnail sketches from my imagination. Although many of my recent works are of motherhood or fatherhood, this is the only painting of the whole family unit. I wanted to create a painting of my immediate family together, and I imagined a circular composition of us huddled up almost in a ball. I sketched out variations of this idea and ended up with a drawing (Fig. 24) with my wife holding our baby close to her chest. I have another child lying on my lap, and I am wrapping my arms across Hannah's back protecting them. My pose shows that I am their support and their



Fig. 24. Chapman Hamborg, *Protector - sketch I*, 2022, Graphite on paper, 4" x 5"



Fig. 25. Chapman Hamborg, *Protector - sketch II*, 2022, Graphite and colored pencil on paper, 4" x 6"

protector. I set up a camera on a tripod and filmed my family in my studio, trying to re-create the composition.

Trying to get everyone to work together and get in the right position was difficult.

But I managed to get some references close to my drawing. Although only two of my sons were in the initial sketch, we tried including our oldest son, Shepherd, and it worked out well to include him.

He is resting on my wife's legs. Adding him in the composition created more of a tear-drop shape. Using the photos as reference, I did another sketch (Fig. 25).

I decided to crop the composition tighter, removing Shepherd's legs to create more of an egg-shape composition to symbolize birth and the circle of life.

The tighter crop makes the composition feel more intimate and brings the focus on our, texture and so on, as shown in the color studies shown in Fig. 26.

Painting at this smaller scale (and



Fig. 26. Chapman Hamborg, *Protector* - color studies, 2022, Graphite and colored pencil on paper, 4" x 6"



Fig. 27. Chapman Hamborg, *Protector* - progress photo, 2022, Oil on linen, 30" x 40"



Fig. 28. Chapman Hamborg, *Protector*, 2022, Oil on linen, 30" x 40"

hopefully in a short amount of time), I am not as invested or committed as I would be in a larger scale painting, so this often helps me loosen up and focus on what is essential. In *Protector*, I am protecting and shielding my family from foreboding events or forces beyond our control. After staining the canvas light blue, I blocked in the drawing, mapped in the shadows, and painted a first pass of the flesh colors on each portrait/figure, as seen in Fig. 27. I then added more layers, adjusting shapes, values, colors; building texture; and refining the painting until I brought it to a finish as seen in Fig. 28.

When creating *Father and Sons* (Fig. 29), I decided to not



Fig. 29. Chapman Hamborg, *Father and Sons*, 2023, Oil, acrylic, and charcoal on paper, 70" x 47"

start with color studies, even though that is usually a part of my process. Instead, I wanted to explore with the colors straight on the larger painting. After blocking in the shadow shapes and drawing with a purple color, I decided to paint bright yellow into the background and over the figures, as seen in Fig. 30. I wanted to push myself with the color—forcing myself to do something unfamiliar and very bright. In a way, it created a problem for me to solve. The yellow represents warmth and happiness, a part of the connection a father and his sons share. I then decided to paint a darker green wash over the yellow as in Fig. 31. This created a more solemn mood, but I allowed parts of the yellow to come through. I continued to



Fig. 30. Chapman Hamborg, *Father and Sons – progress photo I*, 2022, Acrylic, and charcoal on paper, 70” x 47”



Fig. 31. Chapman Hamborg, *Father and Sons - progress photo II*, 2022, Acrylic, and charcoal on paper, 70” x 47”

darken the background with an even darker green and black mixture. This began to feel a bit oppressive, so I painted a blue-green color over much of the background, which brought me to the final result. The blue felt more peaceful and introspective. This layered process turned out to have an interesting effect, and you can see hints of the different colors in the final



painting. For example, in

Fig. 32. Chapman Hamborg, *Father and Sons* - detail, 2023, Oil, acrylic, and charcoal on paper

Fig. 32, you can see some bright yellow showing through my temple region. Some green shows through in my forehead, and blue comes through on my nose and hand. These colors complement the pink flesh, creating an interesting contrast, but they also help add more of a psychological feeling to the work, hinting at the various emotions of a father.

I try to keep some of the loose brushwork from the early stages of my painting in the final result. I like to have a sketchy, unfinished quality within the painting, because for me that is symbolic of the subject matter—we as parents don't have it all figured out. We are works in progress ourselves. Life is chaotic. Just as these are raw gritty aspects of family and

parenthood, the mark making is rough. The process of making the art is evident in the final painting. Those techniques can help give meaning to the concepts behind the work.

I often create maquettes or small sculpture studies of the figures shown in my paintings. An example of this is *Labor Maquette* (Fig. 33) for my painting *Labor* (Fig. 34). Creating these maquettes helps me have a deeper understanding of the forms, weight, structure, and anatomy of the figures in my paintings.



Fig. 33. Chapman Hamborg, *Labor Maquette*, 2022, Terracotta, 8" x 4" x 4"



Fig. 34. Chapman Hamborg, *Labor*, 2023, Oil and acrylic on paper, 66" x 48"

My process for my sculptures varies based on the subject and type of clay. When creating these smaller terracotta sculptures, I begin by blocking in the figures loosely, focusing on the big forms. I spin the sculpture and make sure it is working well from all views. I then start to suggest some details by carving and using my modeling tools. Once the

sculpture is complete, I fire it in a kiln. My sculptures are made with loose marks that match the loose brushwork in my paintings, to convey the immense energy within our familial connections. I enjoy seeing how the paintings and sculptures come together in one space. They express different elements of my family theme. The paintings can express emotion through the colors and the expressive brushstrokes, whereas the sculptures take up physical space in the room and carry a tangible presence. I hope that viewing them together will create a meaningful and awe-inspiring experience for the viewer.

CONCLUSION

Creating this body of work focused on family has been a dream come true. This season in the MFA program has allowed me the time and space to create these works of art which are so close to my heart and carry such deep meaning for me. I am proud of the progress I have made and the art I have completed. Through the process, I have reflected on my relationships and connections with my family. Writing about my art has helped me articulate my thoughts and ideas about the concepts behind my work. I am eager to create more—to see how this body of work will continue to grow and develop. I am excited for what lies ahead. This is not the end, but rather, the beginning.

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APPENDIX



Plate 1. *Protector*, 2023, Oil on linen, 30" x 40"



Plate 2. *Father and Sons*, 2023, Oil, acrylic, and charcoal on paper, 70" x 48"



Plate 3. *Labor WIP*, 2023, Oil and acrylic on paper, 66" x 48"



Plate 4. *In the Shower* WIP, 2023, Oil on jute, 40" x 24"



Plate 5. *Juggling Children*, 2023, Oil on linen, 14" x 11"

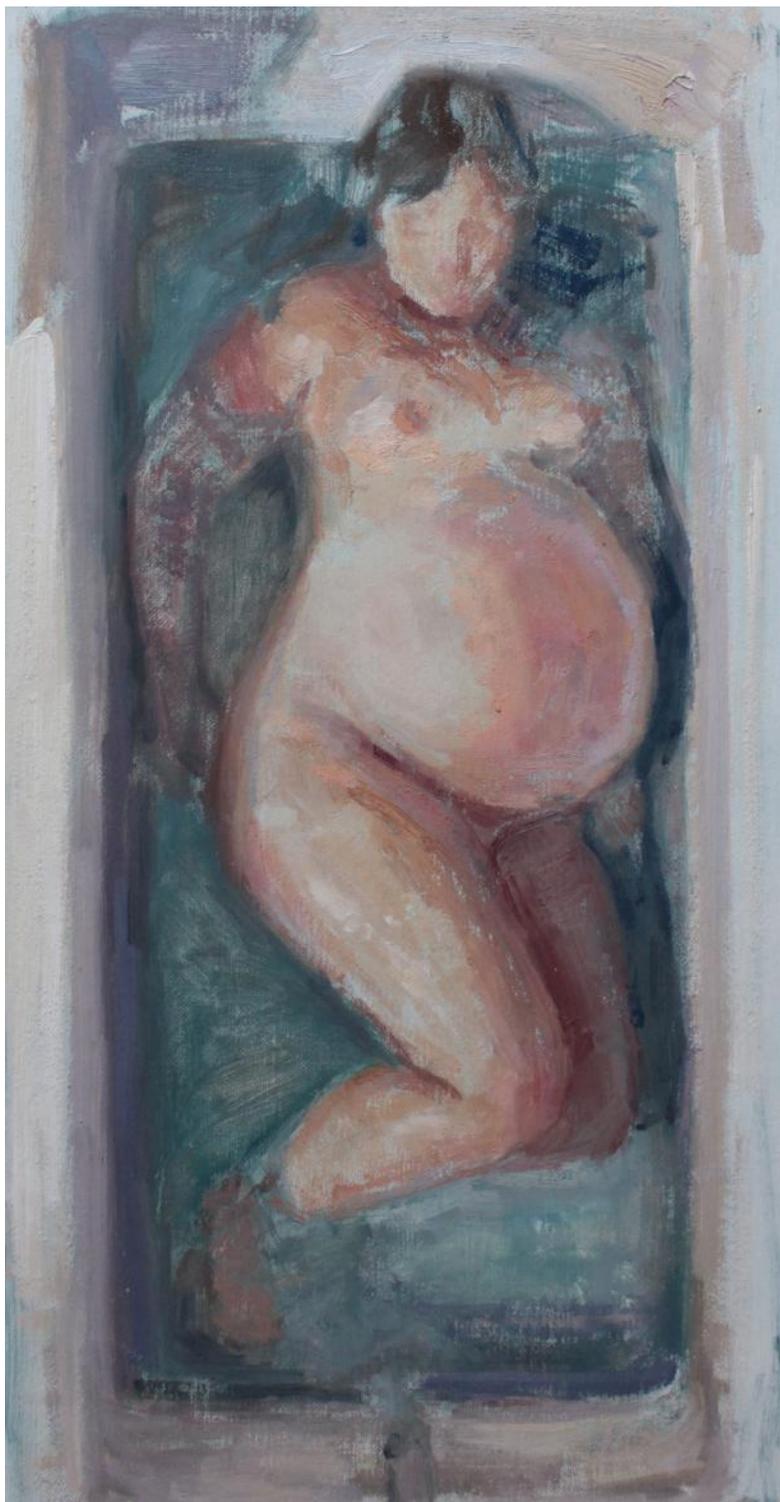


Plate 6. *Pregnant Mother Baiting*, 2023, Oil on linen, 17" x 8.5"



Plate 7. *Self Portrait with Son in Studio*, 2022, Gouache on paper, 8" x 4"



Plate 8. *Boy Takes a Bath*, 2020, Oil on linen, 28" x 26"



Plate 9. *Mother and Child*, 2020, Oil on wood, 66" x 48"



Plate 10. *Spring*, 2023, Oil on linen, 14" x 11"



Plate 11. *Hammock in the Mountains*, 2023, Oil on linen, 13" x 10.5"

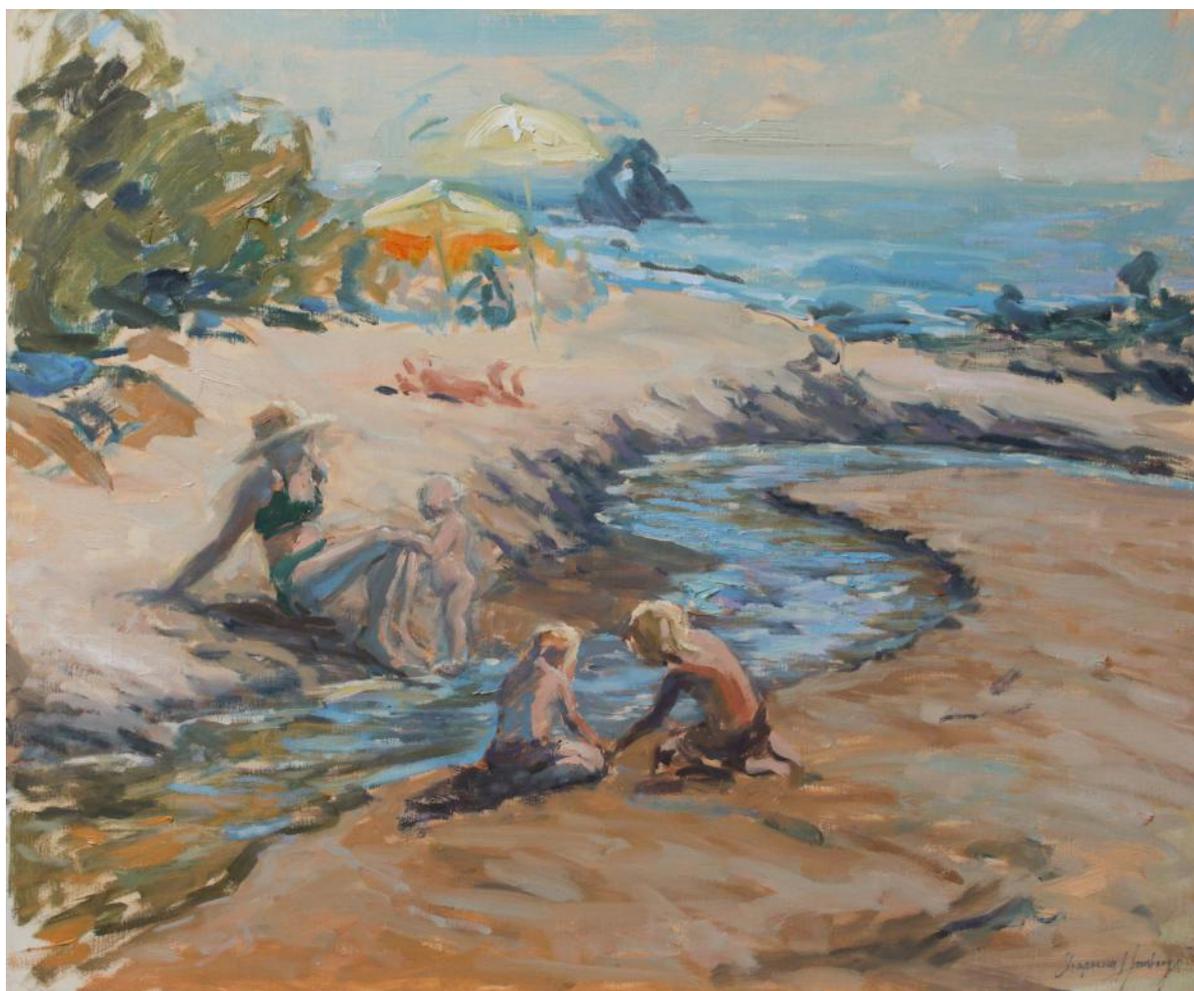


Plate 12. *A Day at the Beach*, 2022, Oil on linen, 20" x 26"



Plate 13. *Mother and Children on the Coast*, 2021, Oil on linen, 12" x 9"



Plate 14. *New Father*, 2020, Oil on linen, 11" x 8"

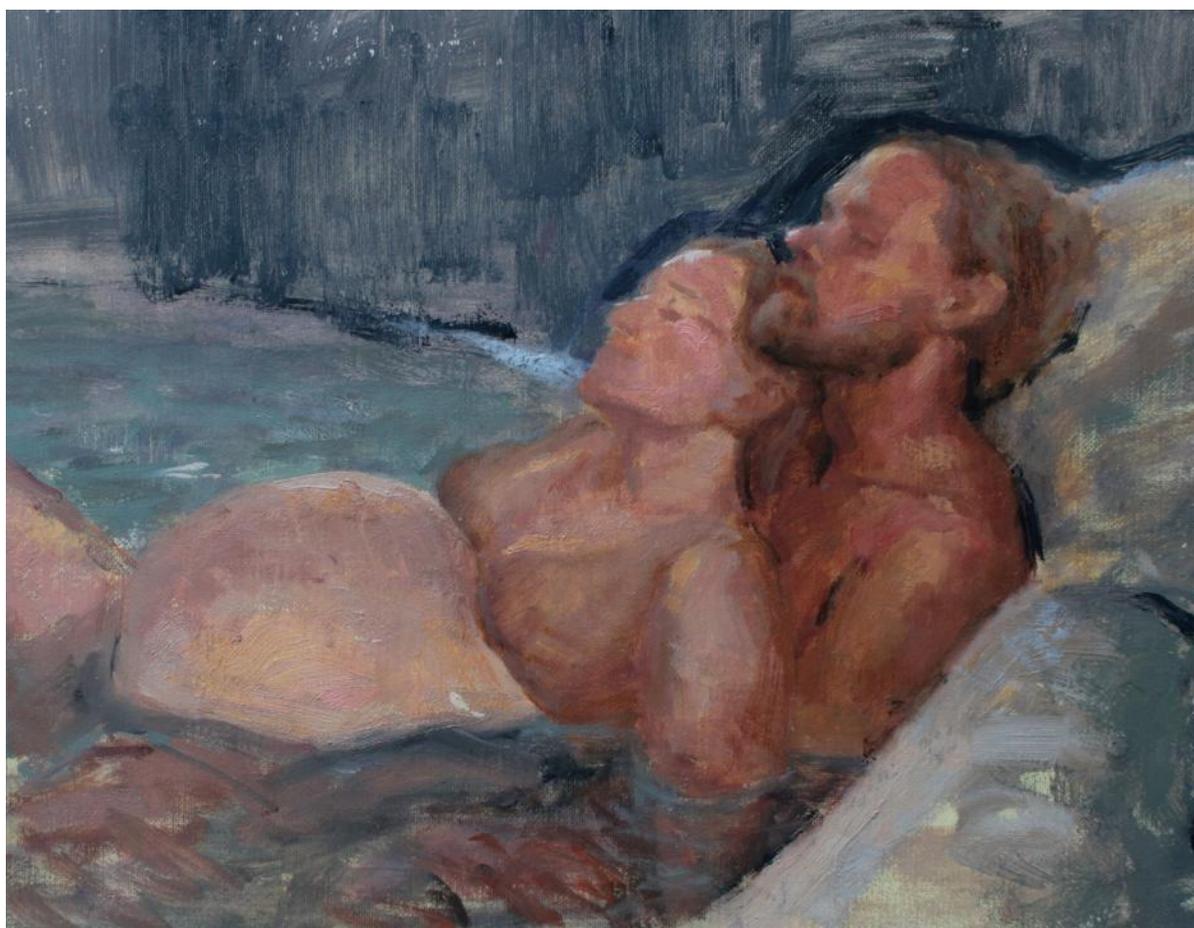


Plate 15. *Waterbirth*, 2022, Oil on linen, 9" x 12"



Plate 16. *Homebirth*, 2023, Clay, 6" x 6" x 6"



Plate 17. *Reclining Pregnant Woman*, 2022, Clay, 4" x 9" x 4"

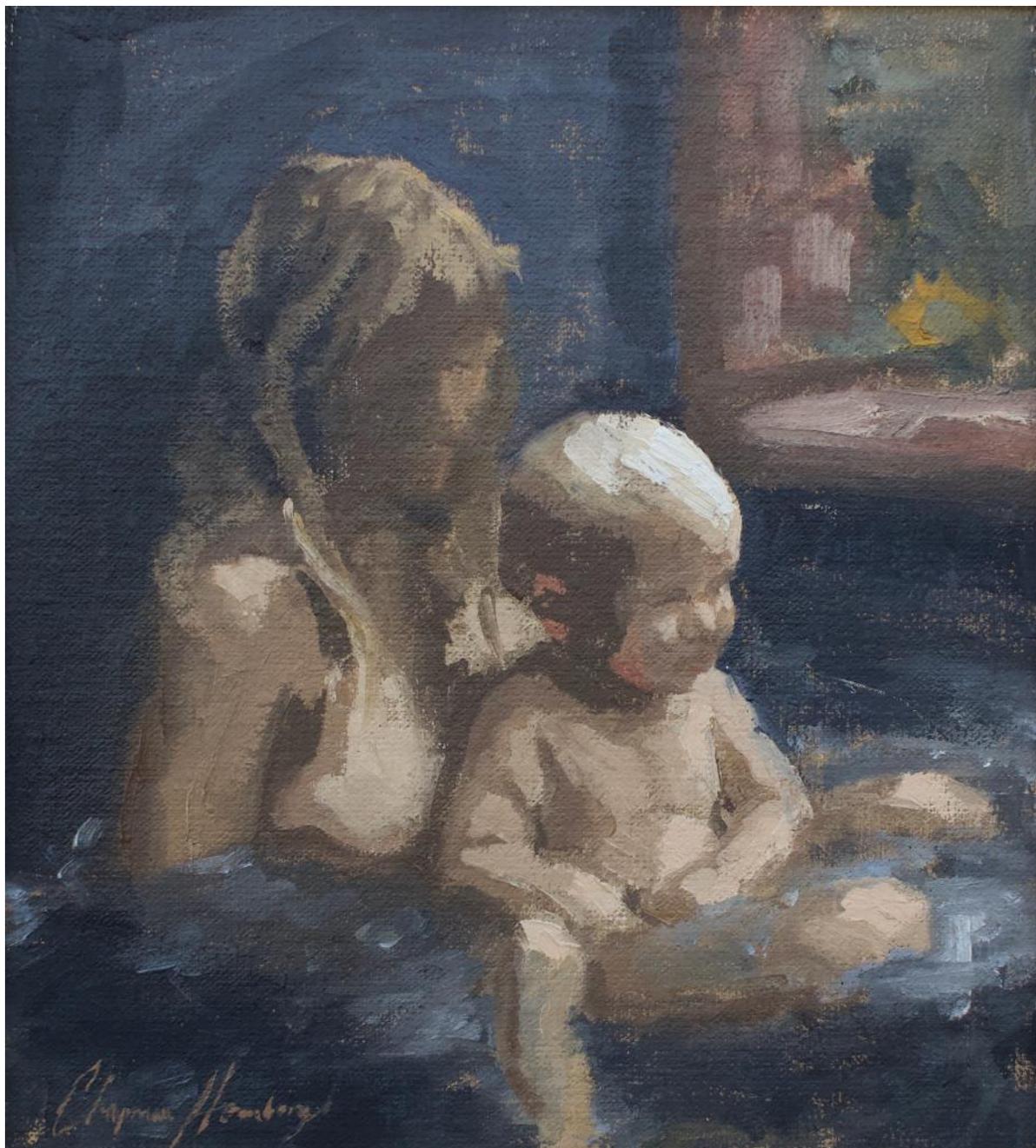


Plate 18. *Bathing*, 2020, Oil on linen, 10" x 9"

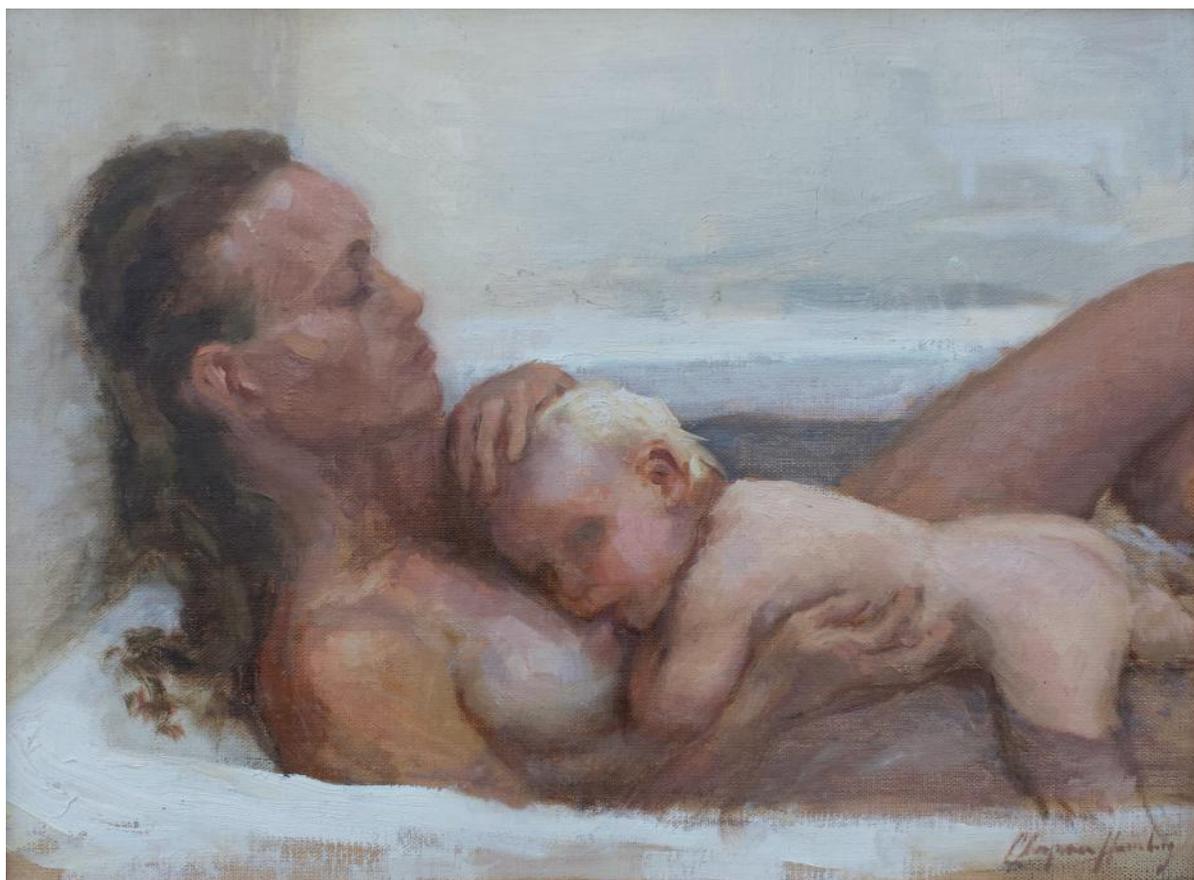


Plate 19. *Nursing in the Bath I*, 2020, Oil on linen, 9" x 11"

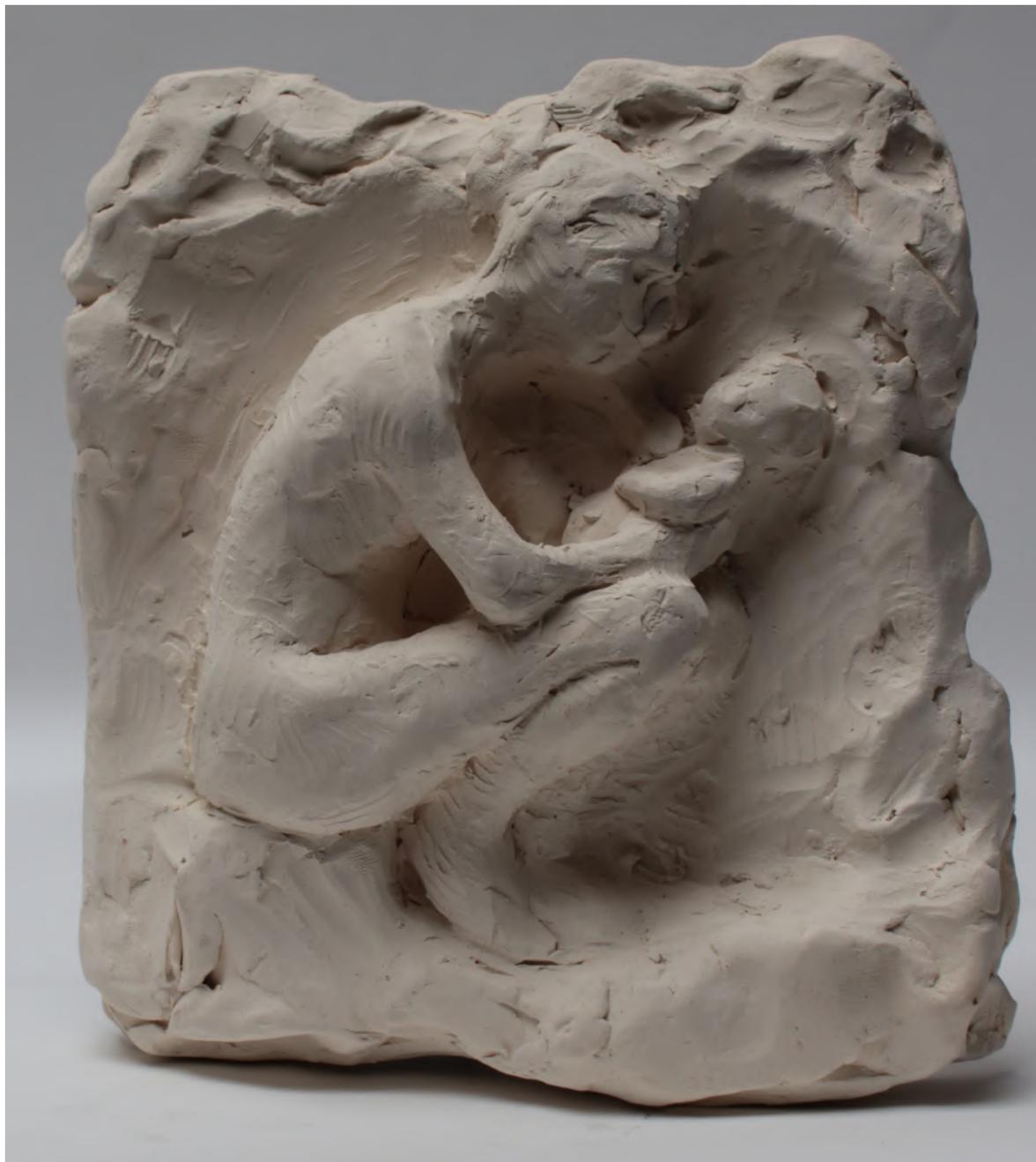


Plate 20. *Young Mother*, 2021, Terracotta, 10" x 10" x 3"



Plate 21. *Father and Child Embrace*, 2022, Terracotta, 6" x 3.5" x 3.5"



Plate 22. *Labor Maquette*, 2022, terracotta, 8" x 4" x 4"



Plate 23. Chapman Hamborg, *Juggling Children II*, Terracotta, 9.5" x 4" x 4"

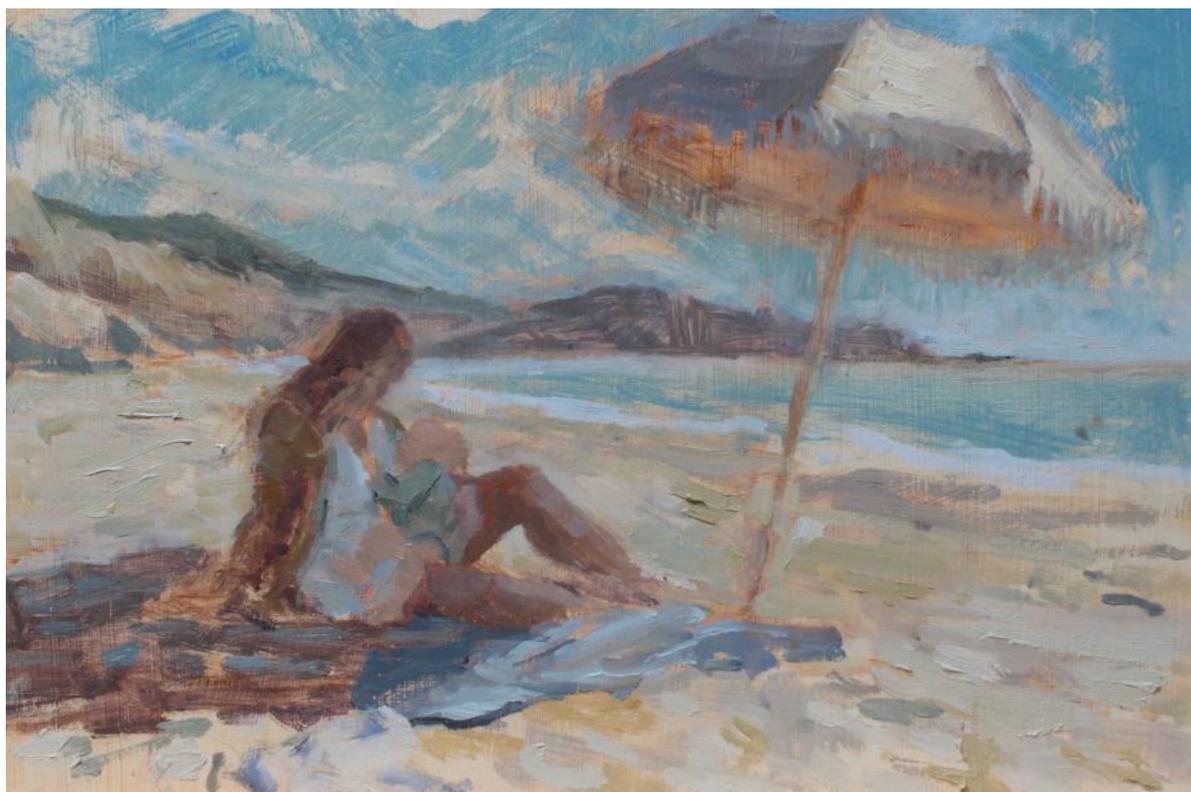


Plate. 24. Chapman Hamborg, Mother and Child at El Moro Beach WIP, 2023, Oil on board, 8" x 12"

ARTIST'S NOTE



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