



Photo: Kelli Uldall

Carmel Artist Brings New Significance to Still Life

BY RENEE BRINCKS

Elizabeth Barlow creates stunning still lifes called “portraits in absentia” in her artist’s studio in the Church of the Wayfarer in Carmel (by appointment only).

The paintings of Carmel artist Elizabeth Barlow feature unassuming items, from postcards and books to ballet slippers, golf tees and toys, artfully arranged against a simple backdrop.

Each humble object, however, tells a meaningful story.

Barlow calls the pieces “portraits in absentia.” Her version of the traditional still life puts a contemporary take on color, composition and perspective.

“I talk to individuals, couples and families about their belongings, and together we choose objects that they find particularly meaningful,” says Barlow. “We can capture a moment in their lives, or capture their whole life.”

Since creating her first such painting as a wedding gift for friends, Barlow has completed

commissions as birthday presents, holiday surprises and keepsake family portraits. She also paints similar pieces using cut flowers from subjects’ gardens.

Barlow, a Utah native, has happily settled in the community she grew up visiting with her artist father and family. She and her husband relocated from San Francisco to Carmel three years ago. Today, she welcomes guests to her Church of the Wayfarer studio by appointment.

“To have a studio in downtown Carmel, in this beautiful church, is so unusual. I walk from home to work through a gorgeous garden,” she says. “I pinch myself every day.”

To learn more about Elizabeth Barlow, please visit www.elizabethbarlowart.com.