

The studio was too still and too quiet.

A longtime friend stopped by and suggested a video of Sara Bareilles singing before President Barack Obama, "You've Got a Friend." The song is a cover song from Carol King. Solitude and loneliness are often welcome in the studio and help generate great art. But, when stuck, it helps to have curious and wise friends.

My friend then suggested that I return to my artistic beginnings and basic iconography. See the people of Chattanooga like you once saw Europeans within their culture. I recalled I was lifting the importance of the individual within their cultural iconographic language. Later, I talked about this friend's conversation with my Pops. He smiled. Dad added, "In your painting, paint each individual as created in the image of God. Serve with a visual language that does not require the necessity of a college degree to understand. Just serve..." So now I go back to the beginning, trusting my heart and my eyes. I will paint with a simple understanding of quality, truth, and beauty. I will smear pigments and be a friend with my art to the world.