

Jeanne Burris Johnson | Artist Statement

I make work that catches you off guard.

Most of my paintings start with a glance—something unassuming, even forgettable. A sneeze. A sideways stare. A wax mustache from the drugstore. But once it's on canvas, it lands like a punch. Not because it's loud—but because it's honest, precise, and completely unbothered by what's expected.

I work in photorealism with a graphic edge—high contrast, clean lines, no shortcuts. My goal isn't to impress with technique (though it's there). It's to make you stop, look twice, and reconsider what you thought was ordinary. Humor is part of it. So is irony. But under that is something sharper: the tension between what we show and what we suppress.

The Cold turns a sneeze into a study in raw vulnerability. **Teenage Negativity** uses a photo-negative palette to show the quiet fire of adolescent mood. **Upper Lipholstery** turns my daughters into silent-film-era outlaws—with candy wax mustaches and the dead-serious faces to match.

Not everything I make is paint. I work in fused glass and mixed media, where control gives way to improvisation. These pieces aren't random—they're layered in both form and idea. I like storytelling that builds with texture, tension, and wit.

My influences? Chuck Close for the obsession. Audrey Flack for the brains. Warhol for the cultural play. And the silent films? They taught me everything I need to know about gesture, drama, and how much you can say without a single word.

If my work makes you laugh, flinch, or do a double take—good. That's the point. These aren't background pieces. They're made to hold their own in any room—and they don't need anyone to explain them.