

Emily Barnett/Statement on ‘Military Police’ for ‘These Truths’:

I felt compelled to begin the ‘Protest Series’ when the demonstrations erupted after the killing of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and countless other persons of color, at the hands of police. I wanted to make art that reflected our society, chronicled our time, and shone a light on those fighting for social and racial justice.

The image ‘Military Police’, one of the gouache paintings in this ongoing series, is derived from a photo of protestors at H St., Lafayette Square, Washington DC on May 30, 2020. The striking image highlights a powerful moment in a face-off between peaceful protestors and the military forces arrayed against them.

As an older person, I have refrained from attending protests during the pandemic, although I wanted to be a participant. Since I couldn’t join in the demonstrations, I decided to add my voice as an artist. Being stuck at home, I relied on the TV screen and Internet to provide and mediate visual information of those events. While using and interpreting those images as the foundation for my paintings, I always remain conscious of the facts, and true to the spirit, of the actual events.

I make these paintings to not only reflect and remember this moment in our history, but to honor the courage and resilience of the protestors, and their contributions to social justice.

Emily Barnett/Brief Bio:

Emily Barnett is a painter and printmaker whose work has been exhibited in museums and galleries in New York and throughout the U.S. She has received numerous honors, including the Salmagundi Club First Prize for Printmaking, Thomas B. Clarke Award from the National Academy of Design, the City of Seattle Print Purchase Award, a New York Foundation for the Arts Special Opportunity Stipend, the Millay Colony Artist Residence Grant, the Medal of Honor from the National Association of Women Artists and a First Prize in Contemporary Portraiture from Philip Pearlstein. Barnett has been reviewed in the New York Times, Newsday, and the Christian Science Monitor. Her work is in public and private collections, including the City of Seattle, Zimmerli Art Museum, Adelphi University, the Fine Arts Museum of Long Island Collection at Siena College, West Publishing Company and Nassau Community College. She is listed in Who’s Who in American Art and currently teaches at Parsons School of Design, The New School. Barnett served as President of UAW Local 7902, from 2014 – 2020, representing adjuncts and other workers at The New School and NYU.