

## **ARTIST'S STATEMENT.**

November 12th, 2021

"As an artist, I have always been intrigued as to how things fit together or are connected. On a daily basis we engage in multiple roles, and try to balance all the different parts of our lives. We alternate between our roles at our job, being a husband, a father, a son, or a brother. We are constantly adapting, incorporating some new knowledge, a new experience fitting them into our layered lives.

Growing up I was taken with the image and idea of Ray Bradbury's "The Illustrated Man" And the notion behind his "Fahrenheit 451". In one story his tattoos tell or animate their disparate stories, etched on his body, the other the book recounts how we must be a book, learning it by heart, as books were banned and burned by 'firemen'.

We learn in a variety of ways, we constantly take in new information, new opinions new stories. Our formative education however far that goes is supplemented by a vast array of other, sometimes, odd sources of knowledge. All kinds of media; newspapers 'magazines, books, TV, Film, even our Phones... And others. We are made up of all these stories, and makeup stories, our story, and animate our lives through the telling and our doing.

At the time of my making these pieces, "No. 1 Son", "Three Form" and "In- To- It" I was at my home studio in the Hudson Valley NY, working, and in the afternoons looking after my then 4-year-old son. We would spend hours painting together, making

Card armor to battle dragons of his choice, draw alternate superheroes or Pokemon characters, and yes, Dragons. He would draw his characters and stories too. As I worked on the ever-growing number of Puzzle pieces, my illustrated Men, I started to incorporate my son's stories, characters, and even his drawings. All with his permission. I know artists are known to borrow ( steal ) others' ideas in pursuit of their expression! As he mixed colors, watching green emerge from blue and yellow, and grey form from one to many added colors. My color palette began to alter and I found myself in that bright primary-colored world of luminous reds, azure blues, and sunshine yellow ... then merging into other darker tones. For me the construct of the Puzzle Piece, with its interlocking parts and our acceptance of that system, allowed me to then depict different images, impressions and stories onto the surface of each piece, our minds accepting that they are all connected and part of a larger whole, and make up my illustrated Family and friends. Elgar in his Enigma Variations describes through his music the many friends and family members that were a part of his life. Distinct in their overtures and melody.

I invite you to spend some time with the remaining three members of my "family" one clearly a character describing my son. The other is more enigmatic and elusive. The third?"

-Simon Draper