

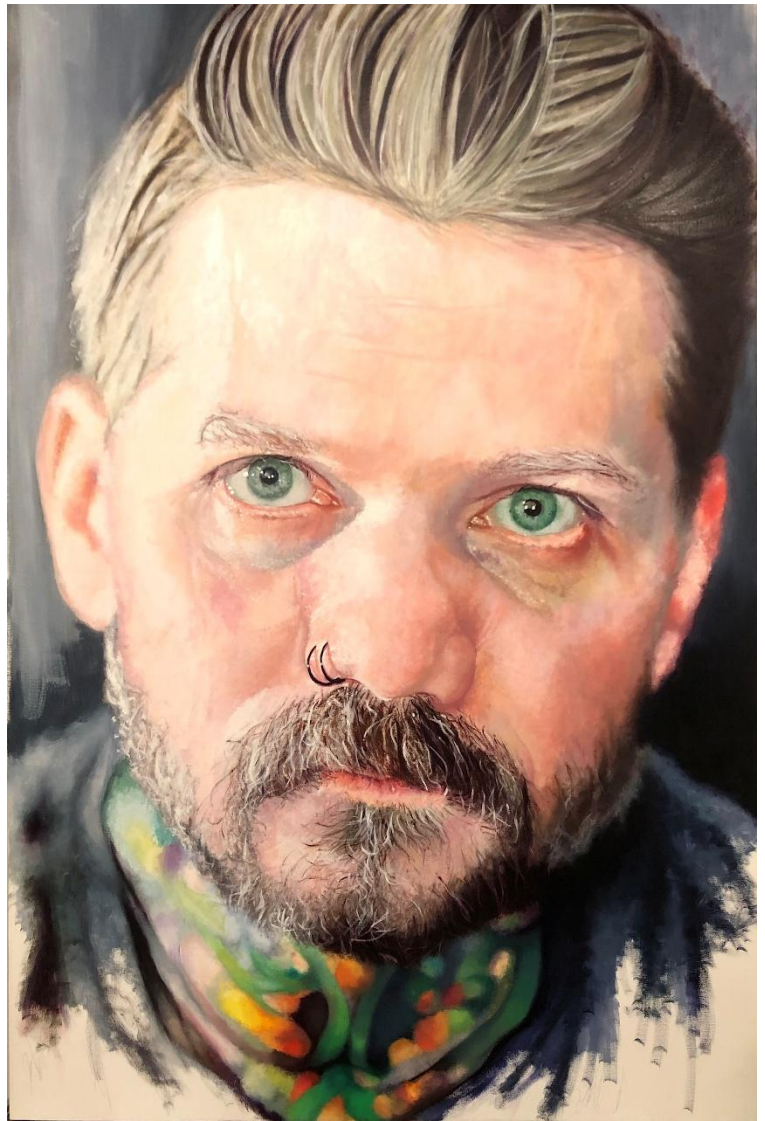
Ray Allen Parker

Artist Bio

Ray Allen Parker was born in San Diego, California. The son of a sailor, he grew up in U.S. Navy towns from California to Florida to Hawaii and Washington before the family finally settled in rural Egypt, Arkansas. He earned a B.A. and an M.A. in English from the University of Arkansas, where he also took his first painting class. Following a three-decade career in retail advertising, Ray returned to art and his lifelong interest in portrait and figure painting. Through large-scale works that strive to be both old masterly and contemporary, he explores the complex topography of the human face and figure. Ray's paintings have been shown both nationally and internationally and his work has been honored by the Museum of Modern European Art and the International Biennial Portrait Competition as well as the AMFA Delta Exhibition. His portraits have been the subject of exhibitions at Arkansas State University, Hendrix University and the University of Arkansas-Little Rock. His work is part of several notable art collections, including those of Jackye and Curtis Finch, Jr., University of Arkansas-Little Rock, Arkansas State University-Jonesboro and J.B. Hunt. He lives and works in Fayetteville, AR.

Artist Statement

I create larger-than-life portraits that explore the faces and figures of friends, family and fellow artists, who are typically the inspiration for my paintings. I want these works to be bold but intimate, naturalistic but expressive, dense but revealing. I try to reimagine these people, not just depict them, in a convincing, painterly way that simultaneously renders the paint both as arresting mark and as flesh. Like the artists who have most deeply influenced me — Jenny Saville, Odd Nerdrum, Rembrandt — I want the painting to feel like the person. The face is my central concern, the road to the inmost self, and I want my paintings to examine, preserve and protect the mystery of humanity in these figures. The impact of these large-scale portraits, with their intimate scrutiny of surface and self, is to demand and hold our attention, connect us to others and reveal insights about our all-too-human, too brief lives.



Sunflower, 40 x 60 inches, Oil on canvas, \$7,800.