

Local artist releases latest work

By Alicia Lacy
Killeen Daily Herald

They say a picture is worth a thousand words, but Rhea Brown's work is worth so much more.

Her paintings are more than art on a canvas. Brown's work captures the stories, trials, tribulations and triumphs of many through her testimony paintings.

Brown launched the series of paintings — Testament of the Miraculous — last year and has about seven paintings in the collection, so far.

"This is the discovery of my particular gift," she said about the testimony paintings. "Every artist has something different that is specific to them ... this is the beginning of what I have to offer as an artist."

The task of capturing the heart-felt and powerful testimonies sent to her and transforming them into something visible through painting sounds daunting, but Brown said she gathers the inspiration to create the reflective works of art after reviewing the testimony and praying and meditating on it.

The inspiration for one painting came to Brown while sitting in a church service.

The painting depicts a woman draped in an American flag. "It's not based on somebody's testimony, but an accumulation of testimonies."

Brown paints portraits of fallen soldiers for their families free of charge, and her work for those families inspired the painting, she said.

Brown's effort to capture the testimonies has proven to be a testimony to her own.

"I think it's taken faith itself to do that because like these

Rhea Brown is a local artist who focuses the artwork on people's religious testimonies.

Herald/STEVEN DOLL



Artist: Began studio 9 years ago

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testimonies I've had to believe it's going to be provided for," she said about the undertaking of the testimony paintings, which she financed herself.

Brown began her studio, Phoenix Art Studio, nine years ago, but art wasn't her first career choice.

After high school, Brown as awarded a full scholarship to study veterinarian medicine, but she turned it down after she had her daughter. Brown said her love for family and being around her family and doing artwork for friends blossomed into her opening her

own art studio and exploring into other art works. Without much professional training, besides attending a fine arts high school and a degree in commercial art from Central Texas College, Brown studied under several artists and muralists to develop her gift.

"I followed my dreams and kept pursuing it and working with what I have," she said. "I encourage people to use the talent they have."

Since starting the line of paintings, Brown has displayed them at several venues in Central Texas and hopes to expand to churches and art galleries across the state and the nation using the art-

work as a tool to minister to others.

"(I want to) use it to reiterate the fact that God is still making miracles and that he's still real because I think that was a changing point in my life, when I saw people living with their testimonies and experiencing their testimonies."

"I want to show that to other people."

For more information, go to www.PhoenixArtStudio.net or e-mail Brown at rheabrown@PhoenixArtStudio.net.

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