

SOME ONE

by

Paul Bradford Heaston

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree

of

Master in Fine Arts

in

Art

MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY
Bozeman, Montana

April 2008

©COPYRIGHT

by

Paul Bradford Heaston

2008

All Rights Reserved

APPROVAL

of a thesis submitted by

Paul Bradford Heaston

This thesis has been read by each member of the thesis committee and has been found to be satisfactory regarding content, English usage, format, citation, bibliographic style, and consistency, and is ready for submission to the Division of Graduate Education.

Sara Mast

Approved for the School of Art

Richard Helzer

Approved for the Division of Graduate Education

Dr. Carl A. Fox

STATEMENT OF PERMISSION TO USE

In presenting this thesis in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a master's degree at Montana State University, I agree that the Library shall make it available to borrowers under rules of the Library.

If I have indicated my intention to copyright this thesis by including a copyright notice page, copying is allowable only for scholarly purposes, consistent with "fair use" as prescribed in the U.S. Copyright Law. Requests for permission for extended quotation from or reproduction of this thesis in whole or in parts may be granted only by the copyright holder.

Paul Bradford Heaston

April 2008

LIST OF IMAGES

Image	Page
1. Gallery view, <i>Lori and Ninia, Paul and Linda, Madeline, Chris</i>	3
2. Gallery view, <i>Heather, Sarah, Alexa</i>	3
3. Gallery view, <i>Madeline, Chris, Drew, Elizabeth</i>	4
4. Gallery view, <i>Self Portrait, Elizabeth, Caleb</i>	4
5. Gallery view, <i>Lori and Ninia, Paul and Linda</i>	5
6. Gallery view, <i>Heather, Sarah, Mike, Lori and Ninia</i>	5
7. <i>Alexa</i> oil on panel 60" x 30".....	6
8. <i>Caleb</i> oil on panel 60" x 30".....	7
9. <i>Chris</i> oil on panel 60" x 30".....	8
10. <i>Drew</i> oil on panel 60" x 30".....	9
11. <i>Elizabeth</i> oil on panel 60" x 30".....	10
12. <i>Heather</i> oil on panel 60" x 30".....	11
13. <i>Lori and Ninia</i> oil on panel 60" x 60".....	12
14. <i>Madeline</i> oil on panel 60" x 30".....	13
15. <i>Mike</i> oil on panel 60" x 30".....	14
16. <i>Paul and Linda</i> oil on panel 60" x 60".....	15
17. <i>Sarah</i> oil on panel 60" x 30".....	16
18. <i>Self Portrait</i> oil on panel 60" x 30".....	17

In the wake of the emergence of the photographic portrait over the last century, I aim to examine the current relationship between the painted portrait and photography; specifically, the use of the photograph as a tool that can inform and transform the investigation of identity in painting. While a great deal of my interest lies in translating the photographic image into paint, I am more interested in what the nature of my process can reveal about the people I know. I believe my intimacy with the sitter turns the process of transcribing a clinical and often unflattering photographic examination into a more challenging psychological exploration of my relationships with both the subject and the viewer. I force myself to make editorial choices to reconcile the impartial and detached information provided by the camera with what I already know about the sitter.

I give limited but specific directions to each sitter: they are to stand with both feet planted, not shift their weight, smile, gesture or pose in a way that might suggest any kind of activity or event. The variations in how each subject interprets my instructions offer brief and sometimes inscrutable glimpses into the minds of people with whom I am supposedly familiar. I paint the figure in a nondescript space, engaging either the viewer or no one. I use this ambiguous setting to isolate the sitter and offer the viewer specific but limited information, thereby setting up an uneasy encounter between the viewer and a subject who is simultaneously identifiable and unfamiliar. Through this relationship I can explore the paradoxical interpretations of identity as either autonomous individuality or as being characterized by cultural and relational influences. I can also evoke in the viewer a sense of disquiet and uncertainty that references our contemporary cultural and individual insecurities and anxieties.

While overt expressive and gestural aspects of identity are largely unclear, there is little cultural ambiguity. The viewer may recognize the clothes, the hairstyles, the ages and genders of the subjects and draw conclusions. The viewer may also identify emotionally with a subject's posture or gaze. But any attempt to otherwise know the subject is confounded by a lack of location and narrative specificity. Like Beckett's Vladimir and Estragon in *Waiting for Godot*, the people I paint seem to wait eternally for an existential conclusion that will never appear.



1. Gallery view. 1 to r: *Lori and Ninia, Paul and Linda, Madeline, Chris*



2. Gallery view. 1 to r: *Heather, Sarah, Alexa*



3. Gallery view. 1 to r: *Madeline, Chris, Drew, Elizabeth*



4. Gallery view. 1 to r: *Self Portrait, Elizabeth, Caleb*



5. Gallery view. 1 to r: *Lori and Ninia*, *Paul and Linda*



6. Gallery view. 1 to r: *Heather*, *Sarah*, *Mike*, *Lori and Ninia*



7. *Alexa* oil on panel 60" x 30"



8. *Caleb* oil on panel 60" x 30"



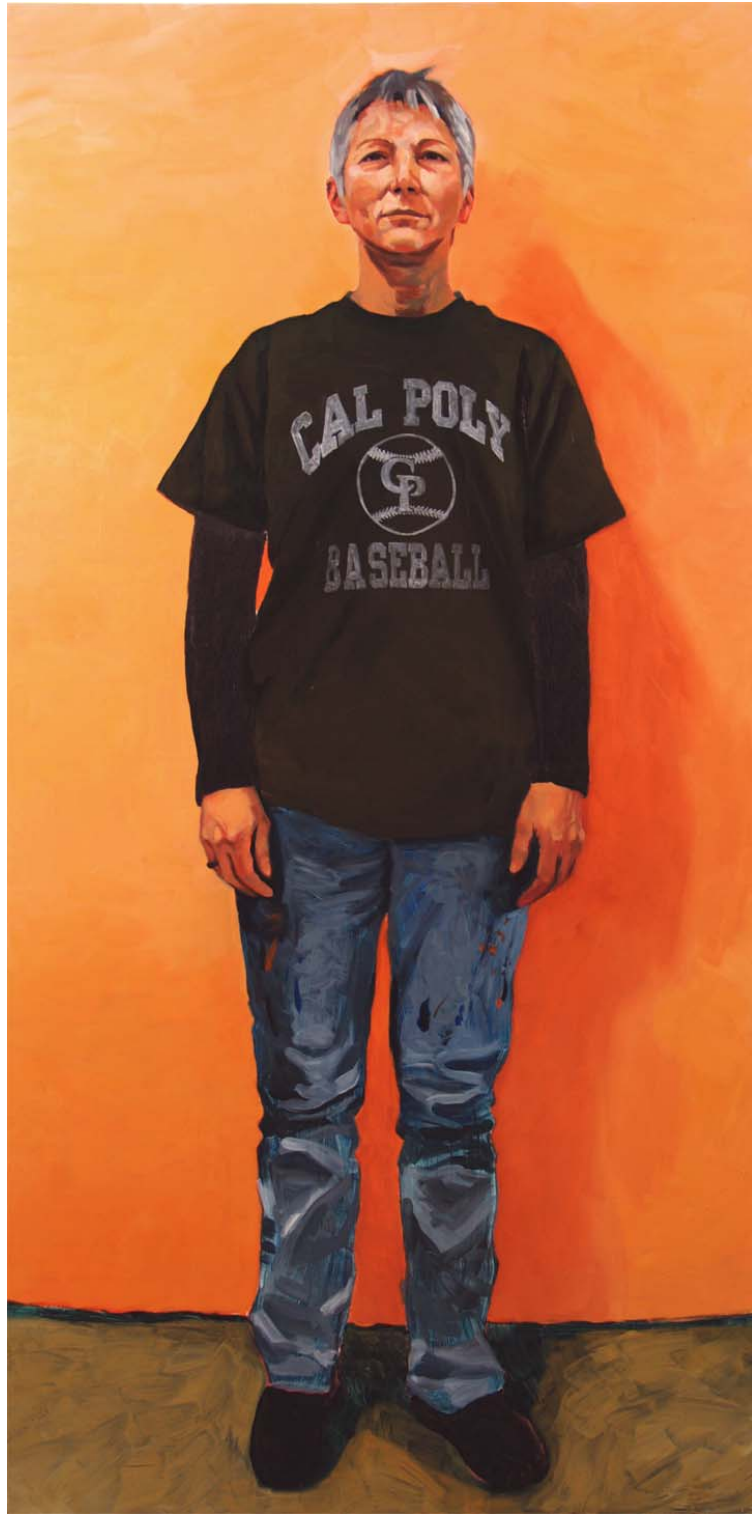
9. *Chris* oil on panel 60" x 30"



10. *Drew* oil on panel 60" x 30"



11. *Elizabeth* oil on panel 60" x 30"



12. *Heather* oil on panel 60" x 30"



13. *Lori and Ninia* oil on panel 60" x 60"



14. *Madeline* oil on panel 60" x 30"



15. *Mike* oil on panel 60" x 30"



16. *Paul and Linda* oil on panel 60" x 60"



17. *Sarah* oil on panel 60" x 30"



18. *Self Portrait* oil on panel 60" x 30"