

## Artist Statement

Raised the son of a minister, I was instilled with a desire to link myself to a purposeful life. With promises of being bound to a higher power, I found little doubt about my place in this world. As I grew older and moved away from the church, it left a wound that leaked fear and doubt into every aspect of my existence. My work has always come from this place of longing to better understand the world around me and my place within it. I work narratively, creating characters based on the struggle of balancing relationships, where I can navigate the landscapes of emotions experienced but not quite understood. It is in this continual self assessment where I find the restlessness of my mind soothed, my vulnerability eased and my empathy expanding as I grow more honest with myself and loved ones. Through this practice of work, disguised as play, I have begun to mend my faith in what I find sacred. The studio has become my church, the work my prayer, and the completion of pieces my testimony to a pursuit of healing, in an effort to find myself at the threshold of a meaningful and purposeful life.

## Bio

Rickie Barnett grew up in the Northern California city of Redding. He attended California State University, Chico, receiving a Bachelors of Fine Art degree with an emphasis in painting and ceramics. After Graduating in the fall of 2013 he took up a year long position as an Artist in Residence at Taos Clay Studio in Taos, NM. He then moved to Seattle for a long term position as a Studio assistant to Deborah Schwartzkopf at Rat City Studios. During this time he also worked for sculptor George Rodriguez. In 2016, he moved to North Carolina, to become a studio assistant to ceramic sculptors, Cristina Cordova and Jeannine Marchand. His work has been shown both internationally and nationally. He has taught and done numerous short term residencies all over the country. Currently, he lives near Penland School of Craft, where he shares a home and studio with his partner, Lynne Hobaica, in the beautiful Blue Ridge Mountains.