

Dear Workshop Participant!

Working in the traditional style of van Eyck and Velazquez, but featuring a modern social commentary on the human toll of history, my portraits are intimate, most sized 12"x12". The work seeks to build bridges, enhance intercultural understanding and provoke dialogue. Even when viewed without commentary, my paintings are resonant, creating a human-to-human connection.

When Michael Britton asked me to create a piece for the conference that showed a journey from tragedy to joy, I knew it had to be a multi-generational piece.

To fully do justice to the task, I found help in an in-depth dialogue with Michael Britton, meetings with Auschwitz survivor Irene Weiss, from the books *A Season for Healing* by Anne Roiphe and *Children of the Holocaust* by Helen Epstein, and by looking at Rembrandt's "Self-portrait at 34" at the National Gallery London, to name a few. The result was the painting "Dignity Totem." I wanted the faces in this double portrait to show strength, resilience, and triumph as well as compassion. Further, my intention was for the older generation to have eyes deep with secrets, but also a knowing look that in the existence of her grandchild she has seen triumph, and the younger to feel protectiveness and an inherited depth and seriousness about life too early for her years.

Judith Peck