

Brenda Singletary:
We Hold These Truths...
July 11 – September 19, 2026

20 NORTH
GALLERY

18 N. St. Clair Street, Toledo, Ohio 43604 419-241-2400
20northgallery.com — info@20northgallery.com

A personal and collective history observing our nation's 250th anniversary

The *Brenda Singletary: We Hold These Truths...* solo exhibition features sculptural, mixed-media paintings by internationally-acclaimed, Toledo, Ohio artist Brenda Singletary, celebrating her family's history of military service—and our nation's 250th anniversary.

Included in the exhibition are all-new paintings from Singletary's "Love Letter to a Complicated Nation" series, wherein she combines photography, paint, wire, found objects, textured canvas and other fiber mediums—capturing emotionally complex stories layered with history. As the nation marks its Semiquincentennial anniversary, Singletary shares a body of work that records & reflects on her and her ancestral reality in the United States.

20 NORTH
GALLERY

View the online catalogue
at 20northgallery.com

Brenda Singletary:
We Hold These Truths...
July 11 – September 19, 2026

A Patriot in Plain Sight

Our Path is Freedom

BACKGROUND: *The Flag Knows Our Names (detail)*; retired flag

All-new sculptural & mixed media paintings from the artist's *Love Letter to a Complicated Nation* series, celebrating her family's proud history of military service

18 N. St. Clair Street
Toledo, Ohio 43604
419 - 241- 2400
20northgallery.com

Gallery Hours:
Wed. - Sat.
Noon - 4 p.m.
Or By Appointment

© 2026 20 North Gallery. All rights reserved.

Brenda Singletary:

We Hold These Truths...

July 11 – September 19, 2026

Index

Exhibition Text	Page 2
Artist Information	Pages 3 - 4
Artwork	Pages 5 - 9

Forward:

“We hold these truths to be self-evident...” announced the beginning of a new nation 250 years ago. This declaration, however, served not as a claim of past accomplishment, but rather a promise and challenge to future generations of American citizens, to strive to create that more perfect union envisioned by our founders. In this Semiquincentennial exhibition, Brenda Singletary has created a moving and passionate visual testament to the meaning of citizenship and the role Black Americans have played in the foundation and preservation of those American ideals.

Two years in the making, her “Love Letter to a Complicated Nation” series deploys her sculptural painting technique to poignant effect, the folds of canvas can be viewed as either roiling in turmoil or softly embracing the figures, symbols and hand-written text collaged and painted into her work, that are visible but not completely revealed. Her gestural paintings blend hints of representational and abstract imagery with freehand “faux script,” teasing a narrative that can be sensed but not fully known—each work a striking metaphor for history that has been indelibly marked by its contributors but not always recorded for posterity.

Just as compelling is her inclusion of antique photography, of her own family members as well as historic figures, who proudly served their nation as civil rights advocates or military servicemen (including her own father) who, alike with the framers of that Declaration in 1776, were willing to pledge their lives, fortunes and sacred honor to defend their country. And incorporated into two of Singletary’s sculptural painting for this exhibition are remnants of respectfully retired U.S. flags, provided by local organization *Operation Respect*, reverently and lovingly draped by Singletary to enfold these two canvases—reminding us and celebrating that continuing promise of our unalienable Rights.

Condessa Croninger
Art Director, 20 North Gallery

Brenda Singletary

Toledo, Ohio

Artist Biography

Brenda Singletary received her BA from Morris Brown College, an HBCU in Atlanta (Georgia) and received her MFA-IA from Goddard College (Plainfield, Vermont). A native of Detroit (Michigan), Singletary began her career working in public affairs for broadcast news in Atlanta, before embarking on her profession in the fine arts. She served for two years as a panel judge for the President's Commission on White House Fellows in Washington, D.C. and, in the category of ArtMaker, her oral history of family memories is included in the Library of Congress' *HistoryMakers* project, the digital repository for the Black experience.



Brenda Singletary
Photo courtesy of the artist

Among her many art awards and grants are recognition from the Georgia Legislative Black Caucus, Atlanta Business League, American Express, as well as The Golden Sable from The College Fund, Daimler-Chrysler Motion through Expression Award, an artist residency at Camac Centre d'Art in Marnay-sur-Seine (France) and a 2021 Merit Award and 2022 & 2024 Accelerator Grants from The Arts Commission (Toledo, Ohio), as well as solo exhibitions—most recently at the Savage Community Gallery of Toledo Museum of Art (Ohio) in 2024. Her work is represented in numerous corporate collections including AT&T, Ford Foundation, Fox Television, Kaiser-Permanente, Marriott and McDonald's Inc., among others. Her artwork forms part of the White House Collection and hangs in the conference room of the Whitehouse Fellows Administration Office.

Additionally, Singletary is an inaugural member of Detroit's "The Breakfast Club," a weekly networking session connecting artists to collectors in Southeast Michigan. She also serves as an arts instructor at the Toledo Museum of Art, as well as in her Downtown Toledo studio. She is a proud descendant of generations of U.S. military veterans.

Artist Statement – *Love Letter to a Complicated Nation*

From the earliest days of the Revolutionary War to the present, African Americans have stood in dedication, service, and sacrifice for a nation that has not always fully recognized their humanity. This exhibition honors that enduring commitment through vintage photographs, military narratives, and sculptural works created with retired American flags—symbols carrying both the weight of history and the depth of personal memory.

These works reflect generations of African Americans who believed in the promise of the Constitution and the ideals of freedom, equality, and belonging. They served this country with pride, courage, and loyalty, even while confronting the realities of racism and injustice that continue to shape the American experience.

Rather than turning away from these truths, this exhibition holds them together: love of country alongside the demand for equality; patriotism alongside perseverance. The flags within these works become more than national symbols—they become vessels of remembrance, resilience, grief, honor, and hope. Through personal family histories and collective memory, this body of work asks viewers to reflect on what it truly means to belong to America, and how generations of African Americans have helped shape and defend its identity while continuing to call it toward its highest ideals.



Brenda Singletary in her studio
Photo courtesy of the artist

Artwork

All work available for purchase. All artwork images provided by Brenda Singletary, unless otherwise noted.



The Flag Knows Our Names (Burial Flag); \$5,000
Sculptural painting; 58"H x 81"W x 13"D; 2026

Retired U.S. flag provided by Operation Respect



Beneath the Stars; \$550
Mixed media
16"H x 20"W; 2026



The Dream; \$550
Mixed media;
11"H x 14"W; 2021



Our Path is Freedom; \$1,800
Mixed media; 34.5"H x 34.5"W; 2026

Photo by 20 North Gallery



Mattie; \$3,600
Acrylic on canvas; 60"H x 48"W; 2025



Wounded Liberty; \$3,000
Sculptural mixed media painting;
43.5"H x 36.5"W x 9"D; 2025

*Retired U.S. flag
provided by Operation Respect*



Destiny; \$1,200
Sculptural painting; 27.5"H x 30"W x 6.5"D; 2024



The Smile Beneath the Uniform; \$1,200
Mixed media on canvas; 36"H x 36"W; 2026

Photo by 20 North Gallery



Photo by
20 North
Gallery

Love Letter to a Complicated Nation; \$550
Mixed media on canvas; 16"H x 20"W; 2026



America in Bloom; \$550
Sculptural painting on raw canvas;
28.5"H x 26"W x 8.5"D; 2022



The Dance of Hope; \$3,500
Acrylic on canvas; 60"H x 48"W; 2022



The First Family; \$3,000
Mixed media; 40"H x 40"W; 2026



The Face of Justice; \$2,000
Mixed media; 48"H x 36"W; 2022



Loss Gravity;
\$6,000
Mixed media
on canvas;
76.5"H x
70.5"W x
16"D; 2025



Fields of Possibility;
\$350
Mixed media
on canvas;
10"H x 8"W;
2026

*Photo by 20
North Gallery*



A Patriot in Plain Sight I; \$700
Mixed media; 16"H x 20"W x 3.5"D;
2026



A Patriot in Plain Sight II; \$700
Mixed media; 16"H x 20"W x 4"D;
2026



Mississippi in France; \$1,100
Mixed media; 18"H x 24"W; 2016

Reserve Artwork:

Reserve artwork available for private viewing and immediate acquisition. Contact a Gallery Associate for details.



Sweet Mercy; \$3,500

Mixed media; 60"H x 48"W; 2024



A Place for Hope; \$385

Mixed media; 11.5"H x 12"W x 2"D; 2022



Artificial People; \$385

Mixed media; 11"H x 12.5"W x 2.5"D; 2022



Construction of Color; \$2,000

Sculptural painting; 38"H x 42"W x 5.5"D; 2022

Brenda Singletary's "Love Letter to a Complicated Nation" series project is partially funded by an Arts Commission Accelerator Grant (Toledo, Ohio), through support from the Ohio Arts Council, the National Endowment for the Arts and other generous supporters.

Brenda Singletary: We Hold These Truths...

Catalogue editor:

Anastasia Wagner

Associate Art Director, 20 North Gallery

Copy editor: Condessa Croninger

Art Director, 20 North Gallery

© 2026, 20 North Gallery. All rights reserved.

For purchase inquiries, please contact 20 North Gallery.

20 NORTH

GALLERY

18 N. St. Clair Street, Toledo, Ohio 43604 419-241-2400

20northgallery.com — info@20northgallery.com