

# JANET BRUESSELBACH

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## BIOGRAPHY

Janet was raised by optical physicists near Los Angeles, CA in the 1980s and 90s. It attended the Mirman School and Crossroads School as an Honors student and GSA president. It took classes from O'Neill Studio and began oil painting at age 11, focusing early on representational figuration, and beginning a continuous series of yearly self portraits. It was an art prodigy, attending adult figure drawing and painting classes and taking portrait commissions starting at age 15.

Aspiring to illustrate science fiction, Janet attended the Rhode Island School of Design while continuing to pursue eclectic electives at UCLA, Brown, and Columbia, graduating in 2006 with a BFA in Illustration and a Concentration in European History. After college it moved to its mother's birthplace in Queens, NY and began several years through the awakening gauntlet of unpaid art labor combined with low-paid retail at book stores.

Janet pursued an MFA in Figurative Painting at the New York Academy of Art, graduating in 2009 after producing a thesis series, Deterration, based around maximalist, multidirectional meldings of space photography, human models, and invented imagery. Its work shifted more into a fine art context. Janet found its way into the mentorship of Steve Cannon, and from around 2009-2013 curated A Gathering of the Tribes, a nonprofit interdisciplinary arts organization in the East Village, which also hosted its independently produced solo show, "I Hate Art".

In 2011-2012 the artist produced a series of portraits painted from live remote poses over videochat, Teleportraiture, and exhibited them in Long Island City. Out of its love for its friends grew its most well-known series to date, Daughters of Mercury, a series of full-length portraits of trans women, which were painted throughout 2014-2015 and exhibited in Manhattan at babycastles and at the Leslie-Lohmann Museum of Gay and Lesbian art. It attempted to work in emergency medicine, then as a bike courier, then whatever it could.

Janet married in 2017 and increasingly volunteered in community building efforts, including medical activism, organizing with Reclaim Pride, and running an event space. It painted portraits of acquaintances and had a small showing of them. In the pandemic, it researched deep time and made a series of tiny speculative paleobiology paintings, Paleofacture, which is ongoing. In 2021 it crowdfunded its long-planned Beloved Monsters series, the pace of which has remained slow due to the artist being forced out of its home studio. Janet made its first human child in March 2022, and they are also an ongoing labor of creation.