



# The Gib Singleton Newsletter

*"I'm not decorating somebody's living room. I'm not decorating somebody's garden. I'm decorating somebody's heart."*

## The Baptist

John was a guy who believed that if you were baptized, you could go to heaven. Because by being baptized, your sins were washed away and your soul was cleansed. He was Jesus' cousin, and he was wandering around in the desert, dressed in clothes of camel's hair, and living on locusts and wild honey, and preaching that the Kingdom of heaven is at hand.

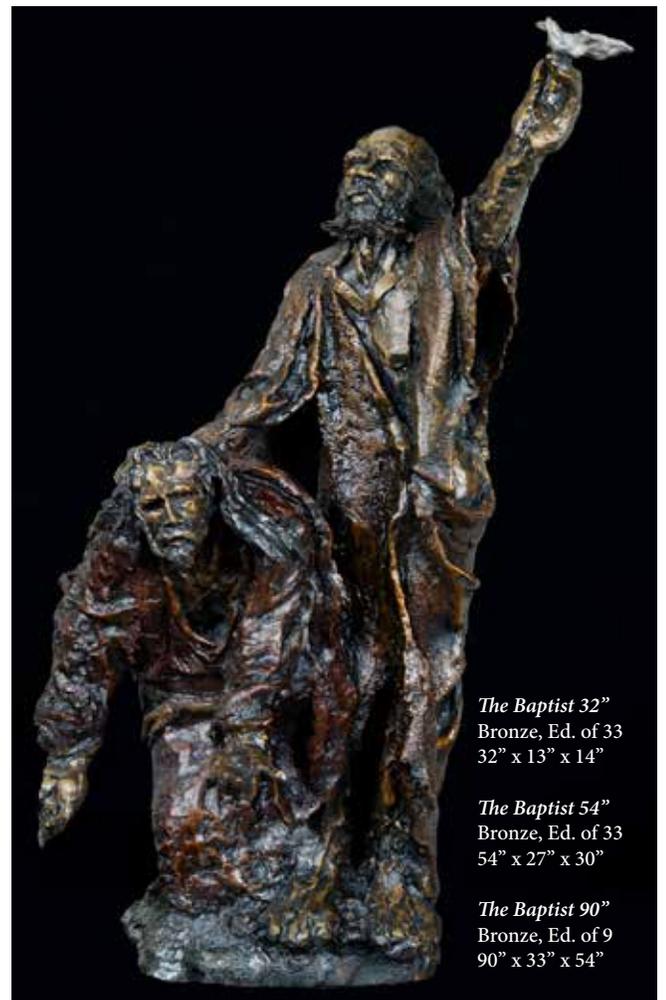
Christ was baptized by John just a few months before the crucifixion. When John put his hands on Jesus, he knew, and he said, 'This is the Messiah.' And when he baptized Christ, a dove came down from heaven. It landed on John's hand and a voice from heaven called out, 'Behold, He is my son, with whom I am well pleased.'

There was a picture in an old version of the King James Bible I had a long time ago, and I'm pretty sure it was of a painting by Rafael. In it, the dove lands on John's upraised hand as God speaks to him, and that was the image I had in my mind for this piece as far as the pose.

But I wanted to do two things in this sculpture that I don't think have ever been done in a painting

or sculpture. My whole thing is emotional realism – what you're seeing emotionally is just as real as what you're seeing with your eyes. And what you see here is John baptizing the Christ with the dove on his finger, realizing this is the son of God, and the Christ knowing – because he's still living as a human being – that being baptized is also a step toward his own death.

So I had to get the look of John hearing God through the dove, and John knowing he's hearing it, but Christ not knowing. So John is ecstatic, almost in a reverie because the Messiah is coming. And Jesus is uncertain. He knows what's going to happen – that he's going to be crucified and lie dead and buried, and rise again – but it's always been somewhere in the future. And now suddenly he realizes his crucifixion and death are not only inevitable, but imminent.



*The Baptist 32"*  
Bronze, Ed. of 33  
32" x 13" x 14"

*The Baptist 54"*  
Bronze, Ed. of 33  
54" x 27" x 30"

*The Baptist 90"*  
Bronze, Ed. of 9  
90" x 33" x 54"

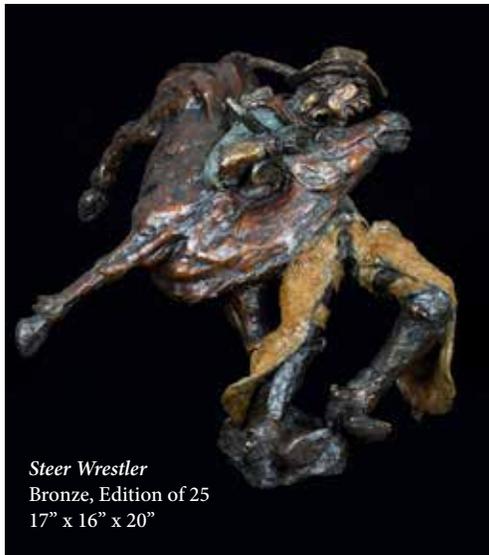
So I had to get the look on Christ's face of that. And I think this is the truth. Christ looks almost bewildered. He looks beaten up. Because he's going to his death and he knows it. And he's not very willing in this scene, because he doesn't yet fully understand it.

**Gib Singleton**

# Eight Seconds to Glory

Gib was infatuated with the Old West. He loved the landscapes, the culture, the history and the artifacts. He always had a pair of high-top riding boots with spurs on his bedposts, and his Colt .45 in a quick-draw rig was usually draped over the back of a chair.

He loved movies like *Lonesome Dove* and *Tombstone*, and often appeared as an extra in westerns made at Eaves Movie Ranch outside of Santa Fe, such as *Silverado*. As part of all that, Gib liked riding horseback and he loved rodeos – the cowboys, the animals, the clowns, and, of course, the cowgirls.



*Steer Wrestler*  
Bronze, Edition of 25  
17" x 16" x 20"

About 20 years ago, Gib decided to do a series of rodeo pieces. He collaborated with Paul Zueger and his brother Emil to get the details right. Paul and Emil grew up on the family ranch in North Dakota, where they ran cattle and broke horses, and later began to ride in rodeos. Emil mostly rode bronco, while Paul specialized in riding bareback and bulls.

'We competed purely for the money,' Paul said. 'You have to

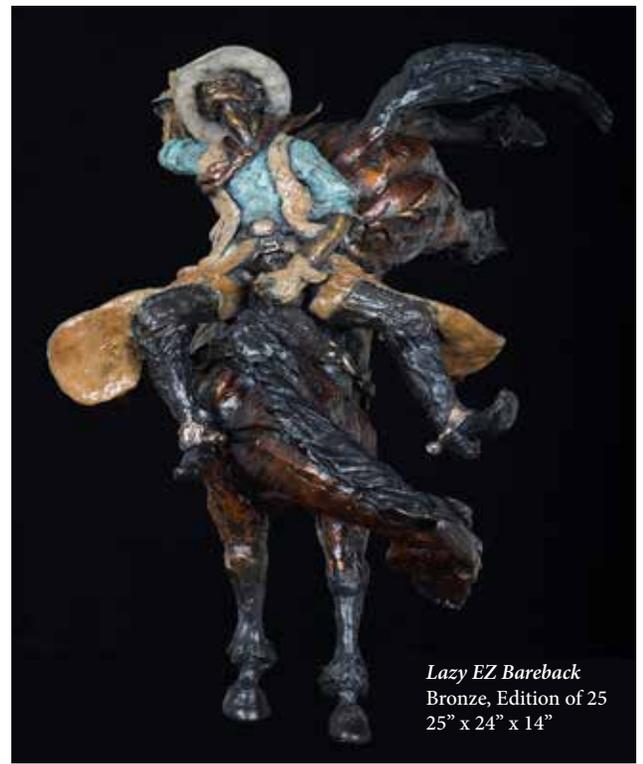
remember a dollar an hour was a typical wage back then. But riding rodeo, if you were any good, you could make \$30 to \$150 in eight seconds. In smaller rodeos they paid an extra \$5 for every horse you'd ride out if they didn't have enough riders for that event, so I'd ride as many events as I could. Sometimes I'd ride eight events in one rodeo. In the season, we might ride three or four rodeos in one week.

'You had to be a member of NDRA and the other associations to get a discounted entry fee for their events, and we couldn't afford to belong to all of them, so a lot of times we rode under somebody else's name. Starting out, we were so poor we'd share a saddle, and sometime boots.'

Between the two of them, Emil and Paul taught Gib about the tack and rider's gear, the physiology of the animals, and the small tricks that might get a skilled rider to the magic 8 second mark. When experienced rodeo riders comment on the accuracy of Gib's depiction in these pieces, it's that history they're seeing.

Gib did 'Bareback', 'Bronco Buster' and 'Lazy EZ Bareback' based on Emil's bronco riding. 'Brahma Rider' and 'Steer Wrestler' were more for Paul. (The 'EZ' that Gib put on some of the pieces represented the Zueger Ranch brand.)

'End of the Day' reflects a cowboy who is 'rode out' after a hard day in the ring. 'Silver Bullet', Paul said, was because sponsorship by the Coors family brought rodeo into the big time. And because Gib liked the beer!



*Lazy EZ Bareback*  
Bronze, Edition of 25  
25" x 24" x 14"



*End of the Day 16"*  
Bronze, Edition of 250  
16" x 5" x 5"

*End of the Day 25"*  
Bronze, Edition of 25  
25" x 9" x 9"