

Illustrated family portraits

I grew up watching cartoon families like the Jetsons and the Flintstones and always wondered what my family would look like if we were animated. A few weeks ago, I saw a friend post an adorable digital family portrait and decided that I had to have one myself.

The artist, Sarah Wilder, has a virtual store on Etsy, an online marketplace where artists, artisans, and craftsmen (and women!) sell their one-of-a-kind wares. I shop on Etsy frequently for everything from custom jewelry to hair accessories for Teagan to invitations for special events to gifts that are as uniquely wonderful as their recipients. I stopped by Sarah Wilder's store, Live a Little Wilder to order my Illustrated Family Portrait. I also browsed her selection of inspirational art, many of which featured quotes from scripture. I'm a huge fan of her "My Cup Runneth Over" piece, which is inscribed upon a teapot. It would be perfect in Teagan's room. It's only \$3 and is an instant digital download I can print and frame at home. Voila! Instant art!

I ordered my portrait and sent Sarah a dozen pictures of our family - as individuals and together. I told her a little bit about us, too. It took about five days for Sarah to complete my Illustrated Family Portrait (see above), but it was worth the wait. She managed to capture the essence of each of us, from the shape of our faces to our hairstyles to the shape and color of our eyes, all the way down to our favorite colors. Sarah even went back to modify the image so that our animal-lover Leo was positioned next to our cat, Jameson. Our Illustrated Family Portrait is a fun addition to our kitchen. This would be a fun gift to give to those people in your life who have *everything*!

I asked Sarah to tell me a little bit about herself and was surprised to learn that digital media is not her first love. Like me, she loves watercolor painting and calligraphy. She considers herself a DIYer who can imagine what she wants in her head then finds a way to make it happen. She has a fun-loving husband, a son who is curious about the universe, and a pint-sized princess who was born with spina bifida, but has "found her independence in the form of a hot pink wheelchair". Sarah says, "having a child with special needs has absolutely shaped who I am as a mom, and

even just as an everyday person. I've discovered such a passion for appreciating the beautiful way that God makes each one of us." As the mom of an autistic child, I can totally relate.

Right now, Sarah's favorite quote is "from little seeds grow mighty trees. It speaks so much to where I am personally in life right now with two young children. I feel such a responsibility to teach them and love on them deeply, helping cultivate them into kind and beautiful adults that love Jesus. They are seeds right now, but oh how I pray for them to become mighty trees in this world."

Sarah says that her faith, "plays the most pivotal role in all that I do! It is the focus of my little moments and my big moments. Within my work, I want to encourage and empower those around me with words or art. I want people to know that everyone is loved and valued by our incredible God, who made each of us with such a unique purpose. That goal is behind every piece that comes out of my shop."

I am so blessed to own one of Sarah's creations. If you would like to purchase one of her Illustrated Family Portraits or an affordable, instantly downloadable inspirational piece of art, visit her Etsy store and use the promo code FAMILY for 15% off.