

Painting a Passion for Life

Through painting, I am interested in exploring connections between human, animal and natural worlds. The human face and flesh, animal eyes, skins, bones and feathers speak to me revealing life's wonder and mystery. Inspiration for the work comes from sources ranging from ancient wisdom traditions to modern Jungian psychology and contemporary physics; timeless philosophies suggesting the interconnectedness of all life, and reminding us of an instinctive orientation towards union where seeming opposites of matter and spirit, masculine and feminine, darkness and light exist in harmony. Working with archetypal images culled from nature, myth, art history and my own personal experiences and memories, a montage of colorful visual impressions emerges, forming new narratives celebrating life's complexity, diversity and unity; and also it's amazing beauty.

Study of the methods and materials of master painters informs my practice, working with rich oil pigments and using glazing to create a sense of depth or inter-dimensionality. Intuitive mark making, lines and patterns of color enter the picture, infusing energy. I usually begin a painting with an idea of what I want to express, but inevitably fresh aspects come into play - thoughts, associations, feelings and impressions - that make their way in. Through the paint, I explore these forces working both on, and beneath, the surface. There's a place I arrive where the paint is processing for me; things start to take shape and come into form that I had never anticipated. I go with this flow and am always surprised by how the process of painting, itself, seems to know more about what needs to be expressed than my own conscious intent. The resulting paintings are a personal expression of primal life force; a way of documenting and sharing my reverence for the natural world and its enduring spirit.

For the last several years a set of recurring images and motifs have surfaced from this unconscious process, prompting me to research their origins and meaning. This creative inquiry led to an exploration of the ancient feminine, and to works by other women artists who have encountered similar expressions of the archetypal feminine in their work. Countless feminist artists, writers and theorists have explored this emerging feminine consciousness, and their work is an inspiration and influence; I see myself as a trajectory of this lineage of women artists exploring the internal world of psyche as a force of nature and source of creative power.