



Nest

WOMEN ARTISTS OF HELPER

The Helper Project

Our mission is simple: Foster revitalization,
Promote Beautification and Cultural Enhancement
for the City of Helper, Utah.





Nest
Women Artists Of Helper

August 12 - September 30, 2017
amjworks.

167 South Main Street
Helper, Utah 84526

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Artists

Erin W. **BERRETT**

Sonja M. **BLACKHAM**

Lisa **CHAMBERLAIN**

Wendy **CHIDESTER**

Silvia L. **DAVIS**

Lindsay **FREI**

Nancy **GREEN**

Janelle **JAMES**

Anne **KAFERLE**

Kate **KILPATRICK-MILLER**

Marilou **KUNDMUELLER**

Phyllis Anne **LASCHÉ**

Kathryn **MARTINEZ**

Anne **MORGAN-JESPERSEN**

Melanie **PRICE STEELE**

Hadley **RAMPTON**

Kathleen **ROYSTER**

Karen **JOBE TEMPLETON**

Anne **WOLFER**

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Cover: Sonja M. Blackham

Uncommon
Branches, Textiles, Paper,
Feathers, Vintage Milner Floral,
Vintage Jewelry
8.5" x 11"

Page 2: Erin W. Berrett

Shelter
Oil on Panel
12" x 12"

Catalog Design: Kathleen Royster
Printing: Digital Printing Solutions



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Anne MORGAN-JESPERSEN, Curator
NEST: Women Artists of Helper



A Bird's Perspective 4 2017
Benjamin Moore House Paint on Panel
40" x 44"

"The Nest": The historic City of Helper is organized around the location of the railroad and the Price River. It is nestled at the base of the Book Cliffs, a series of desert mountains and cliffs in Eastern Utah. Looking down onto the city from the surrounding buttresses its natural to see similarities between the cityscape and a nest.

My intention in creating this exhibition was to honor the presence of professional women artists who have a history with Helper. It is their perspective I was seeking. As a curator, I wanted each woman to have an independent voice for her own creative work. The exhibition and catalog not only exemplify the influence of Helper on them, but how they are helping to influence and define a new history for Helper.

As a native Utahan, I have visited Helper periodically throughout my life. I have always been drawn to Helper because of its rugged beauty, its history, its architecture, the slowness of pace and most recently the burgeoning artist's community. Most of the eighteen women, whose exceptional work is displayed in this exhibition, initially came to Helper for similar reasons.

After practicing architecture for over a decade, in the mid-nineties, I made a specific decision to further my education in drawing and painting and enrolled in as many art foundation classes I could at the University of Utah Art Department. There, I met David and Marilou Dornan and Paul and Silvia Davis all who have had a profound positive influence in my life as an artist.

Paul Davis and David Dornan decided to take an early retirement from teaching Art at the University and set up Artists Workshops in Helper Utah. Their influence and willingness to share their knowledge was the beginning of one of the most important Artists Movements in Utah's history. Furthermore, their influence on the women in this exhibition is significant.

My husband and I are committed to the arts and chose to settle in Helper City a few years ago. We purchased an old grocery store on the Main Street and are completing an adaptive reuse renovation of the building. It is our nest and we will be living and working in this new space.

Over the past two decades Helper has experienced an economic decline. It has been a difficult time for the community, but they are making a heroic effort in reconsidering new ideas. The community has set about "rebranding" itself. It is in the process of transitioning into a different economy, one that supports tourism, the arts and celebrates the exceptional natural beauty surrounding Helper.

The artist movement has played an integral role in helping the community recognize its own value. Art, whether written, spoken, painted, sculpted or danced, becomes a historical record. It informs us, and future generations, about cultural diversity, economic conditions, technological advancements and social attitudes present at the time of the creation of the work. The work exhibited here, by these remarkable artists, is destined to become part of the unique historical record of Helper, Utah.

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Hadley Rampton, Artist

Moving Forward, Looking Backward: Emerging from The Nest

Donna L. Poulton, Ph.D.

This exhibition examines the work of a group of women artists who share, in myriad ways, the experience of the artist community in Helper, Utah. The idea for The Nest draws its inspiration from the form of the bird's nest, examining how the fundamental drive to gather, assemble, and create is a function of both nature and the artistic process. 'Nest' is a common word, but when used as a metaphor for human experience, it is among the most powerful of all symbols. On a denotive level, nests are the homes of birds. They can be found in simple mounds or burrows but their architecturally intricate creations in trees, on top of telephone poles, or in rocky crags are better known. Birds are small creatures whose instincts prod them to scavenge for the detritus nature provides and transform their found objects into secure sanctuaries—fortresses of a sort that support the one instinct all living creatures share: the instinct to create.

What does the young bird do when it first begins to comprehend the splendor that spreads beyond the nest's warm walls? Without much thought or hesitation, it spreads its wings and takes flight, leaving the safety of the nest behind, and soaring above the trees, in pursuit of a new reality, and the exhilaration of flight and freedom. Thus begins the limitless adventure and the circle repeats itself in perpetuity: creation, life, nurturing, safety ...and ultimately, the universal desire for expression.

The idea or connotation of a nest is laden with strata of intertextual meaning, from the most obvious tropes to the deepest and most profound experiences available to human beings. To extend the metaphor of the nest to humans invites an array of associations. Parents create a space of safety for the child in the home. The child doesn't need to worry about the external world in all its discrete particularities. It is freed from the anxiety of the tasks of survival and with that comes the luxury of being able to connect with the spontaneous products of its own mind. In childhood such connections emerge as play; in adulthood they emerge as creativity. That is why such things as nurturing parents, teachers and supportive social groups are so important to artists: they prepare our imaginations for flight. Many of the women counted among the artists in this exhibition have either very close and or at least peripheral ties to the Helper Artists who, spearheaded by David Dornan, founded the colony over twenty-five years ago. Sonja Blackham describes the Helper Colony "as a place of refuge. It was safe, slow and comfortable. There are people who care for us and that we care for. My time in Helper was the first time I truly began nesting."

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For many of the artists in this exhibition, the Helper Colony has been both a model for teaching and a sanctuary, a generative place for them to learn, and a supportive environment that encouraged their individuation. The nest or home Helper provided became something like a springboard, a launch pad, where, when the time was right, these artists stepped to the edge and gathered their own creative potential into unique stylistic and thematic approaches. These nineteen extraordinary artists are as diverse both personally and stylistically as the birds in the sky. They juggle personal responsibilities with careers, and some of the traditionally female responsibilities they have taken on have become the source material for their exploration and imagination.

A common theme among a few artists in this exhibition is the signified image of the nest with all of its many connotations and repetitions of the ideas of communities, homes, and relationships. The construction of many of these works starts uniquely with deconstruction. To analyze the creation of a nest, one has to imagine the thing undone, in its conception—at its beginning. For Anne Morgan-Jespersen, who is formally trained as both an architect and an artist, the experience of painting is both instinctual and analytical. She quite literally builds a two-dimensional nest on paper. Beginning with the tactile experience of collecting twigs, she dips them into ink and rolls them on paper. She then builds additional layers of twigs and grasses, above and around these initial markings, using the texture and reflective property of color found in infinite varieties of house paint—colors she believes closely capture the verisimilitude of a bird’s visual spectrum. Erin Barrett’s tonal work in this series is not the result of blending in a painterly style, but building the work with thousands of individual strokes, which can be seen in the elaborate construction of her paintings “Roost” and “Shelter.” She explains that “the bolder I’ve become in exploring the boundaries between representational and abstract art, the more I’ve discovered how permeable those boundaries actually are. By loosening my strokes and allowing more breath into my work, I find that I’m able to convey more fully how I actually see the world.”

Of the four artists who painted nests, Marilou Kundmueller’s “High Castle” challenges our point of view and dislodges our comfortable and path-worn perspectives on nests. Kundmueller, who also lives in Helper and ties her work to the environment, is a medical Illustrator who is working now as a fine artist. Exploration of media such as textiles and tools used in “both decorative and utilitarian [ways] make for logical, accidental, and aesthetic juxtapositions...towels, hardware and rags, paints and paper towels, everyone and their laundry.”

In a nod to the emergence of new life, Wendy Chidester's "Empty Nest" gives us cracked, abandoned egg shells, the first of many extrications from real and metaphorical nests that are negotiated over a lifetime. Wendy paints still life, treating consumer relics as though they are some kind of "icon": "I capture the wear of age by scratching into the painting surface, flicking paint and applying multiple glazes making the object appear to have endured on canvas what it has endured in its life."

Two artists, Sonja Blackham and Kathleen Royster have long histories of employing the nest motif as symbols in their three-dimensional sculptures. Since 2011, when Blackham brought nature into her home in the form of a mobile for her first child, she also started building nests. Using natural elements like sticks and grasses, she combines them with the dross of human incursion – paper, plastic, and fabric – calling attention to the resilience of birds and their capacity to improvise. She notes that "it felt natural and perfect for my state of mind as a new mother." Helper was "my own personal nest that offered protection and a place to grow and create." After a long academic career, Kathleen Royster moved to Helper to establish a studio on Main Street. Her work is an expression of personal and aesthetic influences "drawn from years of working outdoors." Much like the tenets of Chaos Theory, which ironically postulate that the universe and the elements of earth are systematic and repetitive, Royster recognizes that she is drawn to the beauty of repetition. She observes that the recurrence of imagery in "flocks of birds, leaves on a tree, icy granules in a snow pack and order in a flower ...and in the pleasure of daily rituals..." are dominant themes in her work.

Anne Kaferle is another artist whose paintings were created in, as she describes, an "orbit around her new baby daughter." The birds-eye perspective of her landscapes is largely abstracted, absorbing motion from ethereal heights. It is a place that "with its beauty, wildness, and vast openness, will help form the foundation of my child's own sense of self." While Kaferle's work views the earth primarily from the sky, Janell James' work is rooted in terra firma. Like other pieces in this exhibition, James' paintings are first deconstructed and then assembled, much like the sections of an MRI scan. It is an additive process in which each layer informs an adjoining layer. There is an ingenious pop art element in her work, suggestive of a paint by number structure where hard edges rigidly contain color. The effect, though, is of mesmerizing movement, of light and gentle breezes moving through the branches. For James, these multi-layered paintings are a metaphor for "the many layers within community, the ways we all come together for the benefit of the greater good, providing a means for success and the ability to thrive. A supportive 'nest' for growth, rooted in the wonder of the creative spirit."

Similarly, the motif of trees and forests are features that have occupied much of Hadley Rampton's work and career. Painted almost entirely en plein air, the images are evolving toward greater abstraction. Swaths of earth and horizon are indistinguishable, with a camouflage pattern disguising the actual environment she inhabits. Rampton paints year around, often standing for hours, "working, feeling there is nowhere else I would rather be," she says. "I'm energized by the challenges and beauty of nature, by the dynamics of light, atmosphere and temperature in the Rocky Mountains and in the deserts of the southwest." The abstract expressionist paintings by Nancy Green and Phyllis Lasche are also rooted in the environment. Lasche recounts a powerful early experience that has informed much of her subsequent work: "[I was in] another dimension of time and space, everything was wordlessly but deeply experienced at once: joy and fear, aloneness and connectedness, mystery and wisdom. From my window on the hill, the cycles of life and death I witness in the flora and fauna offer a vague but persistent recognition of another dimension of space and time." The line between dimensions is porous in Lasche's work, suggesting the circular nature of being, which is a recurring theme in most of the work in this exhibition. Each of Green's paintings, "Sanctuary" and "Refuge," offers a similar dominant symbol that is reminiscent of a protective enclosure. Each enclosure, though, is penetrated by a single line that links internal with external, familiar with alien, speaking to the necessity of holding both in mind for any act of creation.

Both Lindsay Frei and Kathryn Martinez painted flower motifs for The Nest. While Martinez painted a single blossom equating its form and function to a nest, Frei painted a bouquet of roses in various stages of collapse—emblematic of the cycles of life. Frei writes "My excitement for the work grew when I discovered that a realistic description could be a vehicle for emotional content. I choose neutral subjects because they are often free of expectations. My hope is that these objects will take on anthropomorphic qualities. The beauty in painting this way lies in the transformation of an ordinary thing into a specific statement with human attachments." Like Frei, Anne Wolfer is interested in using commonplace objects as vehicles for expressing her emotional experience of them. In "Pear with Jar" and "County Cow," Wolfer paints these objects as though seen through a mirage, emphasizing not only the emotional impact they may have on the viewer, but also the very act of perceiving them.

Karen Templeton and Kathryn Kilpatrick-Miller use portraiture to find personal expression in their paintings and to examine the crescendos of artistic exuberance. In Templeton's "Joann Falletta" and Kilpatrick-Miller's "Taking Flight," both artists not only capture other artists (a musician and a dancer) at the peak of their creativity, possessed by the passion of the moment, but we can imagine they are portraying themselves as well, exploring their own identity in the instants they themselves take flight. Melanie Price-Steele investigates "how the marketing and advertising we see every day becomes a subtle part of our identity." Her paintings combine "hand-cut, gessoed canvas with thinly layered enamel and/or acrylic with oil paint, abstracting the familiar into a subdued noise that both enhances and detracts from our daily lives."

Sculptor Lisa Chamberlain describes her work in bronze as "serious whimsy" and adds that nearly all of her pieces suggest the journey of being human, although she often uses the likenesses of the animal world to underscore her message. The same characteristics might apply to the work of Sylvia Davis. Her sculpture titled "Invitation" is playful, while "Trance" anthropomorphizes a sly cat sitting on an edge. Davis, who works with wood, equates a painter's glaze to her preferred technique of "adding and subtracting and chopping and destroying the laminated surface until something surprising occurs. This back and forth of destruction and rebirth allows for color, pattern, form and expression to evolve organically and simultaneously."

The artists in this exhibition are well aware that The Nest is a creation in and of itself. Within its confines, ideas and visions were hatched. The group dynamic infused individual members with energy and the nucleus of inspiration took many forms. For each artist, the work for this show began as perhaps vague and imperceptible snippets of the mind's eye...until, gradually, with great care and cultivation, a simple concept took on a gestalt, began to grow almost of its own will, until, at last, with a final brush stroke or flourish, a strong and expressive creation took flight...and the work was done.

Donna L. Poulton, Ph.D.
Curated, Fine Art Consultant
Salt Lake City, Utah

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Erin W. BERRETT

The paradox of the term “still life” inspires me. There’s a fundamental tension between the still and the life, isn’t there? That’s what I try to capture when I paint. To me, objects are never completely motionless, or emotionless for that matter. They tremble. They vibrate. And those vibrations are produced not only by the construction of the object, but by the external forces exerted upon it --- the angle of the light, for instance, and the perspective of the viewer.

I push myself to be as abstract as possible in the details while still achieving the perception of reality. To do this, I’m meticulous in placing the object and getting exactly the right light. Then, when I begin to paint, I never blend. Instead, I place thousands of precise strokes side-by-side, swaths of color that are then translated by the observer. Two inches of canvas viewed from a few inches away might have a hundred strokes that seem to form nothing, but when the piece is considered as a whole, the effect is highly representational.

Shelter
Oil on Panel
12" x 12"



Of late, I’ve found myself contemplating another paradox, one tidily summed up by the old aphorism that few things in life are what they seem. To see the truth of a subject, even an inanimate one, requires considering the physical while probing beyond it. The bolder I’ve become in exploring the boundaries between representational and abstract art, the more I’ve discovered how permeable those boundaries actually are. By loosening my strokes and allowing more breath into my work, I find that I’m able to convey more fully how I actually see the world.

Even then, I believe that any work, in and of itself, cannot stand alone. When the object comes alive on the canvas because the environment, the viewer and I have all participated to make that happen – that’s the truth I strive for.

Roost
Oil on Panel
30" x 30"



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Uncommon (detail)
Branches, Textiles, Paper,
Feathers, Vintage Milner Floral,
Vintage Jewelry
8.5" x 11"

Sonja M. BLACKHAM



"A nest is a place of refuge to hold an animal's eggs and/or provide a place to live or raise offspring. They are usually made of some organic material such as twigs, grass, and leaves; or may simply be a depression in the ground, or a hole in a tree, rock or building. Human-made materials, such as string, plastic, cloth, hair or paper, may be used."

Generally each species has a distinctive style of nest. Nests can be found in many different habitats. They are built primarily by birds, but also by mammals, fish, insects and reptiles. The urge to prepare an area for the building of a nest is referred to as the nesting instinct and may occur in both mammals and birds."

Helper, UT became a place of refuge for me from 2009-2012. It was safe, slow, and comfortable. There are people who care for us and that we care for that live and create right in this small town. We were able to let our guard down, slow down, and heal some deep wounds. My time in Helper was the first time I truly began nesting. We got pregnant. We had two beautiful babies right in our beautifully nested home on the hill overlooking the town that we love so dearly.

In 2010, right before our first child was born, I made a hanging mobile for the nursery out of textiles, sticks, and a large branch found on one of my daily trail walks. This started my curiosity of mixing found items with textiles. I started making nests in 2011. It felt natural and perfect for my state of mind as a new mother. I have fond feelings and memories of my time in Helper, UT. It was like my own personal nest that offered protection and a place to grow and create.



Quiet Revolution
Branches, Textiles, Vintage
Textile Tools, Paper, Feathers
14" x 18" x 3"

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Clear to the Frog
Bronze
28" x 20"

Lisa CHAMBERLAIN

Sculpting is my process of healing.
My art is in seeing what to build and re-build,
making safe a refuge for my voice.



Reflection
Bronze
11" x 13"



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Nest of Cases and Lenses

Oil on Canvas

40" x 45"

Wendy CHIDESTER

My work depicts a history of objects and machines that have been lost in the advancement of technology and time. My still life paintings of obsolete machines, worn and outdated luggage, used books, and tried but true toys are filled with reverence, reverence for the human ingenuity they represent and for the inherent beauty of the objects themselves. I paint the objects as relics as if they were some kind of icon. I'm constantly keeping my eyes open for subject matter that excites me to the point of wanting to bring the objects back to life by painting them on the canvas.

I really enjoy painting the surface of my still life objects. Mark making gets pretty creative in the process. I capture the wear of age by scratching into the painting surface, flicking paint and applying multiple glazes making the object appear to have endured on canvas what it has endured in its life. When viewed up close the painting reads as a painterly expressionist abstract but from a distance the painting is almost that of photo realism.



Empty Nest

Oil on Linen

8.5" x 11"



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Sylvia L. DAVIS

For many years and in many ways, I have explored the expressive possibilities of wood.

I've admired the way a painter can throw a glaze onto an evolving painting, opening to more possibilities and giving it new life and depth.

As a wood sculptor, my response to the flexibility of the painters' glaze was to add and subtract, chop and destroy the laminated surface until something surprising occurred. This back and forth of destruction and rebirth allows for color, pattern, form and expression to evolve organically and simultaneously.



Trance (detail)

Wood

19" x 67" x 7"



Invitation
Wood
59" x 21" x 21"

24

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I See

Oil on Canvas

36" x 48"

Lindsay FREI

When I started still life painting I thought of the paintings as studies and approached them as a way of satisfying my curiosity surrounding technique. My excitement for the work grew when I discovered that a realistic description could be a vehicle for emotional content. I choose neutral subjects because they are often free of expectations. My hope is that these objects will take on anthropomorphic qualities. The beauty in painting this way lies in the transformation of an ordinary thing into a specific statement with human attachments.

Beautiful

Oil on Canvas

36" x 48"





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Nancy GREEN

Sandstone cliffside catching breath
meandering tree branch inviting journey
columbine blossom embodying fragility
hummingbird nest offering haven

Heart and mind sing in response

To capture that song
through color, mark, texture
layers of paint, pigment, wax
laid down, scraped away
built up and eroded, geology in miniature
simplifying the complex, seeking essence

The past reflected in the present
the inner reflected in the outer
the hidden made evident
the evident, hidden

In the end, parts come together as whole,
buried subtleties and mysteries
supporting and deepening the finished surface



Sanctuary

Oil & Cold Wax Medium

24" x 24"



Refuge
Oil & Cold Wax Medium
48" x 36"

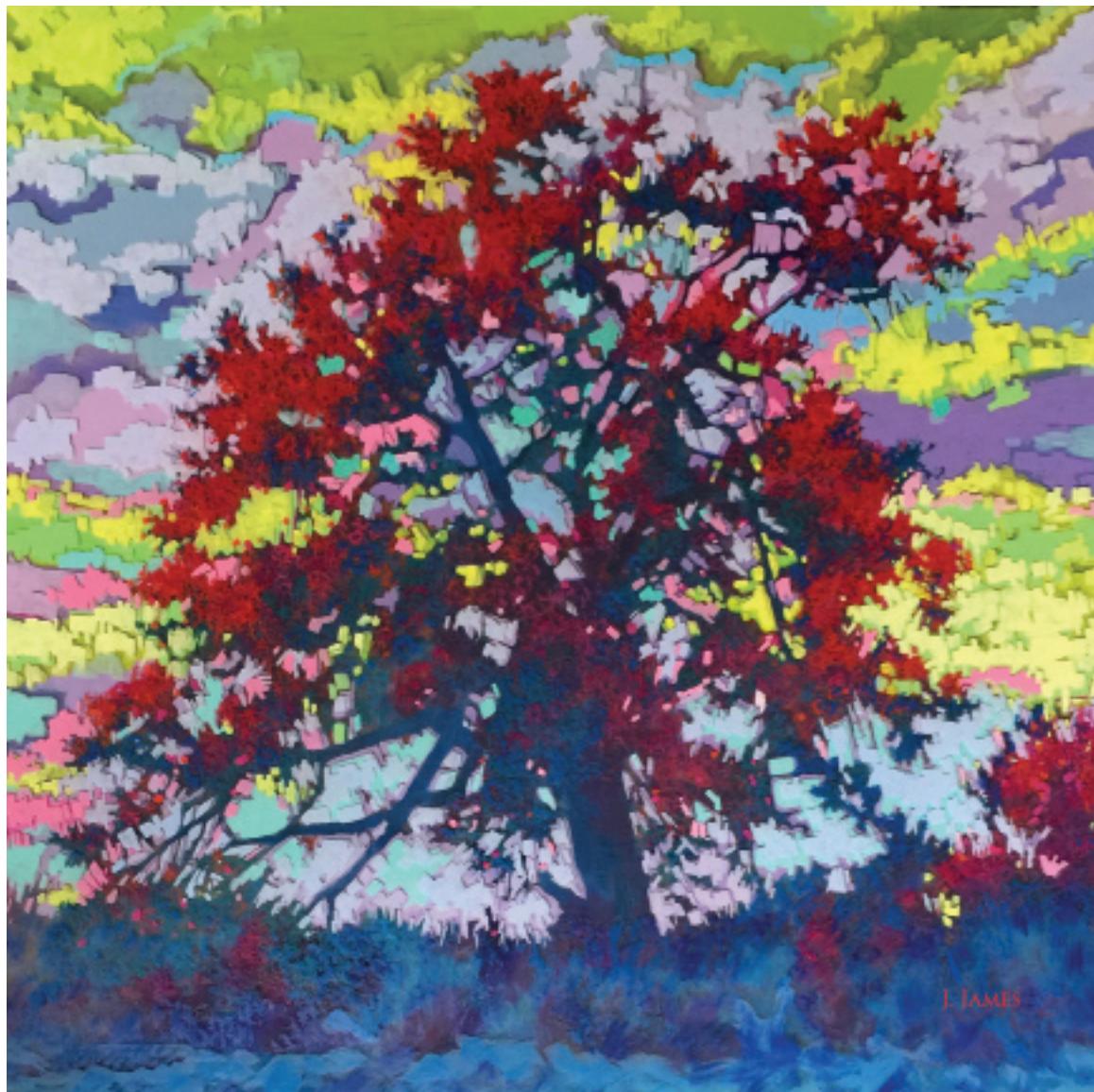
Janelle JAMES

Trees are a powerful species with a network of roots below the earth that reach out to all trees providing nutrients, aide, and protection, even if they are of different species. Trees provide community not only for each other but, for all living things. They are our shelter, our shade, our perch, our swing, providing our food, our oxygen. Trees know what they are meant to be from seedling. Without hesitation trees grow upward offering all of themselves fully toward the sun and necessary sustenance to all around them. This is why I paint trees, because trees are unhindered in their creative spirit. Trees know only the present and in this very moment trees give all they have to life.

Through this work you can see each layer, a complicated puzzle revealed from back to front as if you were looking through the glass of an antique kaleidoscope. Each layer a painting in itself yet, not complete without the others. Metaphorically these multi-layered paintings represent the many layers within community, the ways we all come together for the benefit of the greater good, providing a means for success and the ability to thrive. A supportive 'nest' for growth, rooted in the wonder of the creative spirit.



Lorax
Layed Acrylic on Plexiglass
15" x 15"



Scattered Light
Layered Acrylic on Plexiglass
36" x 36"

30

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Alkali

Oil on Panel

36" x 36"

Anne KAFERLE

These paintings were created in orbit around my new baby daughter. In plein air painting sessions and my daily hikes with her, I realize that I now view the landscape that inspires me as a sort of nest: a place that, with its beauty, wildness, and vast openness, will help form the foundation of my child's own sense of self.



Veil

Oil on Panel

12" x 12"



32

33

Kate KILPATRICK-MILLER

Storytelling is an integral part of the artist's journey. Each painting is an event, something the individual viewer can interpret and complete. My focus is communicating the start of a story, whatever it may be, and having the viewer approach, absorb and engage the piece.

I use various artifacts viewers can relate to and personalize based on their life experiences, which makes the connection between canvas and people. Common themes appear in my art – all relating to the human condition from unique perspectives. Loss, time spent, joy, memories are part of that human experience. I approach each canvas as an expression of those experiences.

My technique varies depending on subject matter - sometimes it is loose splashing paint across the piece or it can be tight when constructing a moment in time. Both techniques derive their content from a deep psychological perspective and my objective is for each piece to resonant with the viewer as it does with me.



Time To Fly
Oil on Canvas
24" x 36"



Transformation
Oil on Canvas
52" x 60"

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Marilou KUNDMUELLER

As a fine artist, I explore textiles and hardware as both decorative and utilitarian make for logical, accidental, and aesthetic juxtapositions of tools and linens... utensils and towels, hardware and rags, paints and paper towels, everyone and their laundry.

The pattern and random flow of fabric contrasts with hardness of tools. It is about the putting the timeless beauty of the well used or skillfully used object on stage. The fabric, posed like models or serendipitously observed and painted with both airiness and solidity, creates endless opportunities to play with color. I use composition and light to make them take on a personality of their own.

My images are personal and with sentiment , but I subdue the sentiment by emphasizing formal aspects if painting such as shape color edge, and composition. My goal as a painter is to have each painting be momentum for the next as a continuum for growth, to continue a growth of vocabulary with paint.

I have lived in Helper since 1994 where I can focus on painting and walking the dogs in a rural landscape. I work primarily with oil on canvas and monotype.

High Castle

Oil on Canvas

12" x 14"



36

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Phyllis Anne LASCHÉ

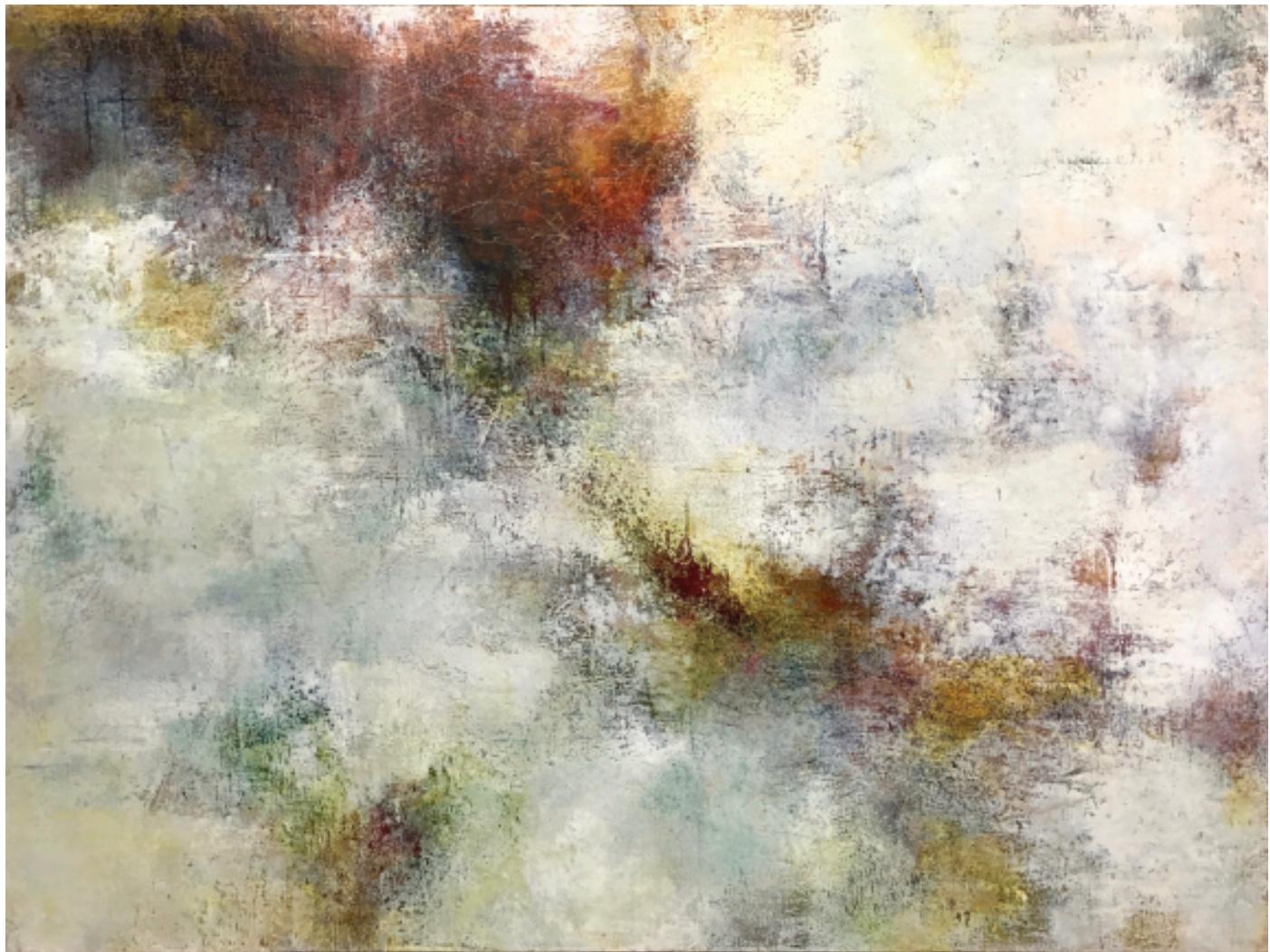
Precipice
Oil & Wax on Panel
36" x 48"



The nest from which my passion for visual expression was born was an early childhood traumatic near-death experience, a point where my short life seemed complete - free from past, present, or future - in a sort of direct ego-less knowing. As if in another dimension of time and space, everything was wordlessly but deeply experienced at once: joy and fear, aloneness and connectedness, mystery and wisdom.

I attempt to convey this experience in my paintings. I use oil pigment and beeswax, building layers slowly over time, each layer referencing some aspect of the experience: dark or light, transparent or opaque, sharply etched or veiled, but consistently referencing the colors and textures of wounding and healing.

As an intensive care nurse for many years, I was directly involved with others' wounding and healing, both physical and psychic. It was a privilege to be able to offer help and comfort in moments of crisis. When I retired, my family and I settled onto a ranch in the high hills of Northern California. From my window on the hill, the cycles of life and death I witnessed in the flora and fauna offer a vague but persistent recognition of another dimension of space and time.



Riding the Lost Horse
Oil & Beeswax on Panel
36" x 48"

38

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"Anthology II"
Oil on Canvas
12" x 16"

Kathryn MARTINEZ

Anthology of the Nest

Anthologia: from 'anthos' meaning 'flower' and 'logia' meaning 'collection'

I have always drawn parallels between the flower and the nest, both through their organic structures and representation of life and growth. There is a season of creation and vitality for each that recurs without thought or end. The anatomy of the flower and nest depend on the interweaving of gathered nature as they work to support life alongside them. Through these connections, my own nest took the form of a collection of flowers. Each painting is a study of the organic form and movement of a single grouping of daisies. I focus on the moment when light amplifies the form of the petals and creates a depth of space.



"Anthology I"
Oil on Canvas
10" x 11"



Anne MORGAN-JESPERSEN

I approached the “Nest” project, inspired by the elegance of the architecture of birds. Birds have the ability of taking advantage of found local materials and uncannily organizing chaos into a safe protective environment of their own. The form of a bird’s “Nest” follows function and the natural beauty is a result of refined technique, attention to detail and the highest artistic sensibility. Through simple observation I began connecting the process of a bird building a nest to my own creative work both as an architect and an artist.

Beginning with black and white ink studies I began my work for the “Nest” exhibition. Initially studying form and defining the basic architecture of a nest was a primary concern. Each mark on the paper represented a twig, a limb or a found object. The marks were additive and every stroke became part of the structure of the “Nest”. I gathered twigs and dipped them in ink and placed their imprint on the paper enjoying the creation of form. The physical and psychological experience of building a “Nest” on paper was the beginning of my process.



A Bird's Perspective 2
Ink and Graphite on Paper
40" x 44"

Exploring further, I learned that the color sensibility of birds far exceeds our own and I asked myself how a bird might view a nest in its natural habitat? Clearly it is very different than the way a human being sees a nest. The next step for me was to build a nest through painting, in color, more in keeping with a bird's perspective. I started by selecting materials that celebrated the use of color, enhanced spontaneity, opened possibilities of mark making and encouraged structured chaos. House paint had the perfect viscosity and a vast array of colors and it became my medium of choice. It dries very quickly and applied to board allowed for similar techniques explored earlier on paper.

Much of this process has forced me to embrace different materials and techniques, allowed me to explore greater abandonment of state of mind and has taken me out of my comfort zone on many occasions.



A Bird's Perspective 3
Benjamin Moore House Paint on Panel
15" x 16 1/2"

Melanie PRICE STEELE

Much like a nest, my work is an accumulation of words, symbols and iconography that weave together to form a cohesive whole. Our visual world is flooded with constant commercial marketing and branding, so much so that I believe subconsciously it becomes a subtle part of our identity. My process seeks to abstract those familiar visuals into a more serene, subdued noise. I combine hand-cut, gessoed canvas in multiple layers with thin washes of enamel, acrylic and oil paint to both lose and find information that's hidden just beneath the surface of our daily lives.



Labels
Oil and Acrylic on
Gessoed Canvas
36" x 36"



Silver Screen

Oil and Acrylic on
Gessoed Canvas
36" x 60"

44

45

Cedar Breaks Overlook

Oil on Masonite

20" x 16"

Hadley RAMPTON

Vivace

Oil on Canvas

36" x 48"

Some tell me I'm crazy for painting in the mountains in the dead of winter, or for battling swarms of biting flies in summer. And yet, there I stand for hours, working, feeling there is nowhere else I would rather be. I'm energized by the challenges and beauty of nature, by the dynamics of light, atmosphere and temperature in the Rocky Mountains and in the deserts of the southwest. The changes in weather that occur while I'm painting do not bother but thrill me. A storm welling on the horizon, gaining momentum, and catching me in its fury is exhilarating. Even the same location can time and again leave me with a sense of awe. Some days I work with great energy, slapping paint with a palette knife, dripping turpentine and then pushing around the thinned paint or letting the drips create patterns of their own. Other days, I'm quieter, and my use of the palette knife is more controlled, as I attempt to honor the integrity of each stroke. I work on instinct more than thought, for instinct holds greater honesty and clarity.

I begin by painting the actual scene before me, but as the work progresses I delve into the personality of the piece. A three way dialogue forms between the natural scene, the painting, and me. Which one speaks loudest changes from moment to moment, and, if any one becomes dominant for too long, the work can fail. It is the balance between the three that keeps me engaged. My paintings are a direct response to the environment and to my existence in it.





46

47

Kathleen ROYSTER

I am drawn to the quietness of simplicity;
find beauty in repetition and the intention of mark making.
I make pots to take pleasure in daily rituals and celebration
that provides nourishment in body and soul
and adds beauty and unexpected pleasures to our lives.



Serving Dishes
Porcelain
Colored Clay Inlay



48

49

Karen JOBE TEMPLETON

Nest is the people and the passions with which I surround myself. Faces have always been my greatest fascination.



Tony Regis
Oil on Board
11" x 14"



Joann Falletta
Principal Conductor,
Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra
Oil on Canvas
34" x 48"

50

51

County Cow
Oil on Board
24" x 24"

Anne WOLFER

When I'm thinking about something to paint, whether it's a still life or a landscape, I wait for that moment when I feel a jolt or some sort of visual impact. It's then that I know, I can actually make a painting.

These days, I'm less interested in recreating what is in front of me, but rather trying to get at the emotional under pinning of a scene and explore the initial visual impact that I was originally drawn to. I'm always enticed by light and color.



Pear with Jar
Oil on Board
16" x 16"



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We are extremely grateful to our sponsors for their generous contributions, to the artists for their participation, and our special thanks to Kathleen Royster for her professionalism and commitment to the exhibition.

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