Botanical Folktales

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Abstract

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This written document is the accompanying thesis for my Master of Fine Arts Exhibition, Botanical Folktales, shown in the Laura Mesaros Gallery at West Virginia University (displayed March 20-23, 2023). It documents the research, motivations, and processes presented in the artwork displayed throughout the gallery. Through prints and artist’s books this body of work represents my pursuit to connect, understand and share gratitude for native plants of Appalachia. Plants are my muse to reconnect and learn about the living environment. Not only do plants hold stories and signify different meanings in every culture, but also nourish our bodies and bring people together. This work strives to elevate the importance of specific native species by presenting different avenues for understanding. Nostalgic and sweet, I chose to focus on native wildflowers because of their aesthetic beauty, role in human culture, and the stories they carry. In the end, the work in this exhibition is intended to celebrate native plant species of Appalachia and educate about their stories.
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Introduction

“We can only be ethical in relation to something we can see, understand, feel, love, or otherwise have faith in.”¹

My deepest childhood memories are rooted in sensory experiences of being able to see, smell, touch, taste and hear the delights that accompany being outside in the garden. On our property my mom had a garden; the left side of our house was lined with cornfields and our backyard trailed into the woods behind the pasture. I remember sitting by the fence between the garden and the pasture picking buttercups and playing “do you like butter?” My siblings and I would hold them up to each other’s chins to see if the flower created a yellow glow, revealing that we do in fact like to butter our toast. While I don’t remember the origin of this folklore, I remember the pure bliss in picking a flower, feeling it in my hand and smelling its sweet aroma.

The initial formation of Botanical Folktales was triggered by my concern for Western culture’s dissonance with the natural world and the environmental concerns that fall prey to this incongruity. News sites and social media are filled with stories about the pollution in our environment, the ongoing loss of biodiversity, genetic modification, and more. I haven’t had a personal garden since leaving the home I grew up in. The absence of having a garden has done profound damage to my perceived sense of belonging and place in the environment. Go to any major grocery store in the United States and most food is indiscernible from the plant (or animal) it originated from. These realizations along with my childhood love of nature have contributed to my interest in researching regional plants and my increased environmental sensibilities. My research not only centered around locating and identifying native plants, but learning more about how we connect with them, and their role in the larger ecosystem. As this research continues, I look outside through a different lens and am yearning to learn more. Plants have become my muse; a passageway to reconnecting with my childhood spirit and the living world.

Art making is a form of research that allows me to share my findings with the viewer. The installation of *Botanical Folktales* puts the viewer at a balance between active learning and passive learning. I want the work to give the viewer an opportunity to consider their personal connection to plants and potentially think about their relationship to the environment as a whole. For example, the exhibition features nine artists' books. In these books, I share interesting facts, history and folklore about plants. The amount of meticulous personal touches and time put into each book begs the question, why are these connections to plants important? What are the connections between science and spirit? Why should anyone care? This work does not exemplify the lack of harmony between humans and plants, but elevates the connections throughout history and culture where humans honored the beauty, power and spirit of individual plants.
Pre-Thesis: New Processes and Problem-Based Approaches

As I started graduate school, my goal was to learn and experiment with new processes. I learned the process of lithography, screenprint, papermaking and even made time-based video work for the first time. Early on, I wanted to make art about the environment, but my imagery and concepts reflected a problem-based approach while never considering focusing on solutions.

For instance, a 2020 lithograph (fig. 1) depicted a man standing around looking at his phone with dead fish spread out around him. I was thinking about how, in the United States, many of us have become out of touch with the rest of the living world. The fish symbolized all animals, flora and fauna that have been negatively impacted from human intervention. Another early print of mine featured a girl grasping her neck for air, in place of her neck was a cut down tree stump. (fig. 2) This print represents the irony that we are destroying the environment we live in, even though we need plants and trees for survival.

As I made more work, I also considered my reliance on illustration. A more time-based work done in 2021 offered an opportunity to experiment with other image making strategies. (fig. 3) During a month’s time I collected the non recyclable packaging that came with my daily meals and wore them as a garment. Each day’s non recyclables were added to the previous day’s trash pile, attached to my body and photographed. This process was repeated every day for 28 days. I started off completely bare on day one, and by day 28 was engulfed in the packaging waste. On a personal level, this work was meant to inspire me to make daily decisions that were healthier for the environment and choose more whole foods rather than opt for meals and ingredients that come in non recyclable plastic packaging. This project was also intended to show how much food related packaging waste can be created in a matter of 28 days. The process of making this work had a profound impact on me. I was extremely guilt ridden, not wanting to eat anything and feeling embarrassed about how far removed many of us are from whole ingredients. In addition, I lived in the space
where I collected and photographed the packaging waste. It consumed my mind during the 28 days, making it impossible to move forward with other projects.

At this point, I noticed that a problem-focused and activist approach was the wrong direction for my work. Looking for new directions, I began hiking and drawing from life. I felt the need to spend more time outside to step away from the studio and contemplate where I could go moving forward. My first decision was to step away from making objective work until I found the right voice. The work became more about collecting, observing, and process. I began collecting dandelions to make paper and window installations and used recycled artwork to make paper and three dimensional paper works. (fig. 4-5) Researching, observing and collecting now became prominent steps in the way I began making work.

That summer I started working for WVU’s Organic Farm. I saw an opportunity to spend most of my day outside and to choose work over play. I wanted to learn how to grow plants from seed, what plants thrived in this environment, and what plants were considered weeds to farmers. I would regularly collect the weeds we would pull and use them to make paper or at least try to find a way to give this discarded natural material a new purpose. Most importantly, while at the farm, I learned from people who knew the soil and the plants they grew. I had access to a wealth of knowledge that was given to me through experience and conversation. It was a better education than any textbook could provide. After a long, sweaty summer on the farm, I was ready to be back in the studio and explore my work further.

With a wealth of information and new experience at hand, it was time to get back into the studio and play. At this time, mud became a part of my artistic practice. I wanted to create through play, intuition and joy. Looking back to my childhood, mud was just as good as a sandbox and I loved getting dirty. I noticed that a lack of play and physical connection to the natural world led me to focus on the problems with my relationship and sense of belonging in the environment. I dug my fingers into the ground on a muddy day and collected a bucket to take back to the studio. I sifted it; tried drawing with it on larger sheets of paper, screen printed with it, exposed it to Solarplates along the river, pushed it into a relief plate to print it intaglio style. I even made videos documenting the process and showcasing the experimental and playful aspects that I felt weren’t showing
through in the static work. (fig. 6-9) The language humans associate with mud also interested me, such as the term “soiled,” and how it’s not always valued as an essential resource for life on earth. (fig. 10-11)

Interestingly, I became so utterly obsessed with finding different ways of using mud as a medium that I no longer understood what the work even meant to me. Regardless, I further explored with forms of play by collecting materials like wood from burn piles, wood found along a lakeshore or natural pieces found in the woods. I found these specimens to be visually interesting and wondered about their stories. I tried pressing the burnt blocks like a woodblock/embossment through the lithography press to create ash prints. I began laser cutting blocks of wood and intentionally burning them. Additionally, I was exploring cyanotypes during this time; making traditional cyanotypes exposed with natural elements. These processes brought up thoughts of presence, absence, control and chance in the environment. These would become themes that continued in the summer that followed as I tried to process all the experimentation.

In the summer of 2022, I arrived at my first week-long artist residency, Artists in Action at Annmarie Sculpture Garden and Art Center in Maryland. I knew I wanted to focus my work on what lived in the gardens and continue thinking about themes of presence, absence, control and chance in the environment. I had two projects to work on that week. The first was a collection of cyanotypes created through natural specimens found on the ground, shadows casted in the gardens and natural elements like rain and wind. I coated about fifty 11x14” sheets of paper with cyanotype solution in preparation for the week. Every day I walked the gardens to expose about four sheets of paper at different locations on site: one when I first arrived in the morning around 9am, one in the late morning, one in the early afternoon and one right before I left around 5pm. I marked each one with a number and location so I could later create an installation of the prints coinciding with the map. (fig. 12) This work explored concepts of presence, absence, control and chance through the medium’s interaction with the environment and unpredictability of the outcome.

The second project was a series of woodcuts based on drawings of plants located in the gardens. (fig. 13) The naturalist on site informed me that the garden is focused on planting only native plants for their environmental benefits to the other
plants, insects, birds and other animals. The three plants I drew and carved into a woodblock include Ohio Spiderwort, Blue Iris and Blue False Indigo.

Following the residency my entire summer was devoted to learning about the plants that live around me through hiking, photography, and drawing. I became better acquainted with identifying plants and noticed that my hikes became more interesting due to the newly educated lens I found myself looking through with every trip. I even noticed my dear friends Ohio Spiderwort and Blue Iris in my mom’s garden when I visited her, which surprised me that I looked past them on previous trips to see her. Later in the summer I attended wildlife biologist Sue Olcott’s talk on *Healthy Backyards: Enticing Pollinators* at the West Virginia Botanic Gardens and on my drive home I had a revelation about where my thesis was going.

**Botanical Folktales**

**Title: Science vs. Spirit**

To emphasize my intentions to join the scientific with the poetic, I chose the title *Botanical Folktales* for my exhibition. Botany, which derived from the Greek words botanikos (botanical),\(^2\) is a branch of biology that studies the structure, properties and biochemical processes of plants.\(^3\) *Botanical* in the title is a reference to the scientific way of knowing plants. *Folktales* alludes to the history of stories and emotional connections humans have with these plants. Folktales are generally considered to be


fiction, but have roots in nonfiction as they tell us about the people of a particular region and their values.⁴

Taking inspiration from Robin Wall Kimmerer’s book *Braiding Sweetgrass⁵*, I find the connections she makes between Western science and traditional ecological knowledge interesting and inspiring. Kimmerer says,

Scientists use the intellect and the senses, usually enhanced by technology. They set spirit and emotion off to the side and bar them from participating. Often science dismisses indigenous knowledge as folklore — not objective or empirical, and thus not valid. But indigenous knowledge, too, is based on observation, on experiment. The difference is that it includes spiritual relationships and spiritual explanations. Traditional knowledge brings together the seen and the unseen, whereas Western science says that if we can’t measure something, it doesn’t exist.⁶

While folktales are not verifiable in Western culture in the way that scientific papers or historical events are; in the context of my work the term represents the spirit and emotion that is set aside by science. Not all the information presented in the exhibition is considered folklore. Throughout the exhibition, the viewer will find a variety of references to the history, culture and traditions connected to each plant. I believe the alliance between a scientific way of knowing and an emotional way of knowing can potentially bridge the gap between how society feels, interacts, and respects plants and our environment. If we begin to view plants like Kimmerer, not as objects but as companions, teachers, neighbors, friends, and living beings⁷, we can begin to heal our relationship with them and thus the broader environment. By sharing the many ways humans connect to plants, I am striving to honor them and highlight their importance in our lives.

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⁵ Kimmerer, Robin Wall. 2015. *Braiding Sweetgrass*. Minneapolis, MN: Milkweed Editions


**Vestibule: Questions & Clues**

There are three framed floral prints immediately seen in the vestibule when walking into the Laura Mesaros Gallery with the title, *Botanical Folktales*. Two prints are hung on the middle wall (fig. 14-15) and the third (fig. 16) is on the left wall. The look and presentation of these prints will be addressed later in this paper. With this installation, I wanted the viewer to enter the gallery and wonder about these plants. The title suggests stories will be told while these prints represent a quasi-scientific presentation of a plant's looks. The prints act as clues for what will be seen in the rest of the gallery. These specific plants were chosen to be displayed in the vestibule without books due to their lack of acknowledgment in human culture. I found little to no information on them beyond scientific knowledge; therefore I wanted the viewer to wonder about these plants' stories.

As you walk down the ramp into the gallery you're posed with another clue as to what you will find. A quote by Appalachian artist and poet, Seth Pitt, is on the wall:

> In the spring, small wildflowers that almost nobody knows the name of, bloom out there in the field. / After a few days of this it seems the flowers have always been and always will be there, but this isn't the case at all. / They die, some of them in a few days, without barely anyone ever knowing their names. / Nobody thinks this is a tragedy, it is just the way it is.\(^8\)

This quote sets the stage and directs the viewer to think about who these plants are, why they are important to me, and why I think they should be considered important to the viewer. As the viewer looks to the left they see fields of green, wildflowers in the distance and their stories tucked away in delicately hand-made field notebooks.

**Gallery: Installation & Education**

There are nine prints installed throughout the main gallery; three on the left wall, three on the back wall and three on the right wall. Each print (8x10 inches) is printed on tan Stonehenge paper (11x15 inches) dressed in a natural wood frame (16x20 inches) with a white mat. Underneath each framed print is a solid white floating shelf (11¼ x10

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¼x2 inches) that holds a solid dark green hard covered book (8x3 ½ inches). The wall behind each frame and shelf is painted in a rectilinear shape in tints of green. The painted area covers approximately 8¼ x 3½ feet of the wall with the frame and shelf centered within. (fig. 17) The top two corners of each of the rectangles are curved. This was an aesthetic decision to mimic the curved edge of the printed images. Originally, I planned for fifteen prints to be installed in the gallery, with five on each wall. I wanted the amount of work to be able to show a range of diversity in the native species of this region. Ultimately, the installation was scaled back to three prints per wall. This new arrangement still maintained a diverse set of species, filled the gallery space, while still making each plant's presence feel important and intentional.

Green Walls & The Seasons

Painted tints of green on the walls behind the prints represent time and the ephemeral nature of flowers as the wall transitions from lighter to darker, or Spring to Fall. These blocks of color are also designed to be symbolic of the “meadow” mentioned in the Seth Pitt quote seen on the wall above the ramp into the gallery. The start of the installation on the left wall is painted with the lightest of the green tints, representing Spring and new life (fig. 18). The first two prints are backed with the light green and the third is backed by a darker tint. The back wall, representing summer, is painted from light green, to medium to dark (fig. 19). Summer is a transition between Spring and Fall and the seasons overlap so assigning one color to each wall wouldn’t have expressed that transition as well. The right wall represents Fall and is predominantly painted with the darkest shade of green (fig. 20). The first print is backed with medium green and the last two are dark green. The intaglio plant portrait prints also fall in this cyclical order by their bloom time. The Spring blooming flowers on the left wall are Wild Geranium, Wild Strawberry and Common Blue Violet (fig. 21-23). The Summer blooming flowers on the back wall are Ironweed, Echinacea and Milkweed (fig. 24-26) and the Fall blooming flowers on the right wall are Calico Aster, Goldenrod and Black Eyed Susan (fig. 27-29). While this aspect of the work and its installation isn’t immediately apparent to the
viewer, it can be determined through observation and clues through the installation and content within the books.

**Drawing: Botanical Illustration, Botanical Art & Plant Portraits**

The basis for each framed print is a detailed drawing of a specific regional plant and flower. Each drawing begins with research into a plant’s physical traits through both hands-on field investigation and scouring internet and library resources. Plants found during field research are photographed and marked with their location and time of day, on site sketches are made if time allows. Given the time frame to put this body of work together and the seasonally driven emphasis of my work, I could not take 100% of my own reference images as fall transitioned into winter. While I still learned a lot about these plants in the field time that I had, in the future I would like to make work slower and work with the seasons rather than against them.

This work is not just about the information gathered from books or the internet, but my real world experience of being able to identify these plants and experience them in person. My intentions are to actively embody myself into the work rather than translate it from a distant perspective. I want to reconnect with the childhood wonder of walking through the woods and spotting a single flower springing out of the ground at the end of a long winter or the delight of the smell of fresh rain in the morning the first week of spring. Creating this work is driven by my desire to reconnect with my childhood spirit and heal my relationship with the living world. Through prints and artist's books, I want to share bits of this endeavor with the viewer, to educate them and offer a chance for them to reflect on their own personal experiences with plants or the greater outdoors.

If there’s anything I’ve learned from drawing for the last ten years and teaching drawing for the last two years is that no reference image compares to still-life drawing. Being able to understand the physical traits of an object or being from every angle before getting started on a drawing allows the eye and mind to fully understand an object’s dimensionality. A single reference image, whether printed or on a screen, tells you how to simply replicate that image; there are no further investigations whether
you’re looking at a shadow or part of a leaf in the background. In order to have a varied and large amount of visual references, I spent a lot of time taking my own photos, searching for scientifically accurate drawings of the specimens, researching websites with credible photographs and visiting the WVU Herbarium to see the plants I could not see in the field. In the end, this amount of visual research gave me the confidence to represent each plant as accurately as I needed for the purpose of this exhibition.

Once the drawing is started, aesthetic decisions are made in conjunction with physical accuracy. Each drawing’s composition is based on formal elements of line, balance and shading. These aesthetic decisions combined with the emotional content is what separates my work from “botanical illustration” and “botanical art.” Botanical Illustration or plant illustration emphasizes scientific record and pristine botanical accuracy to identify plants for scientific purposes and requires extensive training with the right tools to achieve. Typically botanical illustrations are used in botanical text, like an article in an accredited journal, and are drawn through viewing live plants or dried herbarium specimens rather than from detailed photographs. Botanical art is very similar to botanical illustration, but the emphasis is heavier on a flower’s aesthetic while still maintaining scientifically correct information. The full scope of the plant does not need to be depicted to be considered botanical. Botanical art might show part of the plant’s physical traits but not all. “Flower painting” or “plant portraits” emphasize the flower’s beauty but are not accurate through the right training or tools to achieve exact proportions and identical color matching. To the common person’s eye a “plant portrait” may seem extremely accurate, but identifying a plant for fun versus for scientific purposes is the difference in emphasis in these works. My print works may be considered “plant portraits” that have aesthetic and symbolic value while also pulling inspiration from botanical illustrations for their reference to science and history.

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10 See note 7.
11 See note 7.
Paired with scientific research, the print, by nature a liminal artform constantly teetering between art and craft, multiple and unique imprint, fine art and commercial publication, may be the ideal format for mediating information about science and translating these complexities into a relatable and comprehensible experience.\textsuperscript{12}

Once a plant drawing is complete it is translated into an intaglio print using the photopolymer print method, or more specifically Solarplates. Solarplates are different from traditional intaglio plates that use zinc or copper as the matrix. Solarplates are light sensitive steel backed polymer plates. UV light is needed to expose an image on a Solarplate before printing. Once exposed, an artist can print the Solarplate using Intaglio printing methods. In order to generate an image using this process, first the thin photosensitive steel plate is exposed to an aquatint screen for about forty five seconds to harden the plate and allow more tonal range. Immediately after this exposure the plate is exposed to a transparency printed with one of my drawings. The transparency is directly placed directly on top of the plate and exposed to UV light. Exposure times vary depending on the details of the drawing being exposed to the plate, but are generally between twenty and forty seconds. Once the exposure is complete, the transparency film is removed from the plate and then gets etched with room temperature water and a soft bristle brush for about one minute. UV light hardens the light sensitive polymer side of the plate in the non image areas of the transparency. Drawn areas of the transparency block UV light, and those areas of the plate remain soft. When the water and bristles of the brush rub against the plate in a circular motion, polymer falls out from the positive areas of the image. After this wash out, the plate must then be exposed in UV light again for about thirty minutes. The plate is ready to print after post exposure. The plates are printed by taking a small soft squeegee and pushing the ink into the grooves that were formed during the etching process. The excess ink on the surface of the plate is then wiped away with stiffened cheesecloth called tarlatan. While the plate is being wiped, specialty printmaking paper is being soaked in a room temperature bath for about ten minutes. Soaking the paper opens the fibers of the paper and makes it

more receptive to the printing process. The paper is removed from the bath and excess water is wiped away with a towel or blotting sheet. The plate is then printed on an etching press tight enough to emboss the paper with edges of the plate and for the ink in the grooves to be transferred to the paper.

All of my plates are printed on fawn Stonehenge paper to reference aged herbarium sheets. My prints are approximately 11 x 15 inches in size to mimic the standard herbarium sheet of 11.5 x 16.5 inches. Any larger, and images won’t fit into the herbarium sheet folders properly, making them prone to become damaged or cause damage to the other sheets in the folders.¹³ For me, the scale of my prints was both an aesthetic decision and a reference to the history of herbarium documentation.

The process of creating these Intaglio prints is a historical reference to the connection between printmaking and science. We can see this relationship develop as far back as 2,000 years ago. The illustrated book De Materia Medica (On Medical Material) traces back to 50 CE¹⁴. The book was created by the Greek botanist Pedanius Dioscorides¹⁵ for plant identification and to help determine medicinal purposes. This book was used by scientists and pharmacists for almost fifteen hundred years before Gutenberg invented the printing press¹⁶ in 1440. The earliest botanical illustration woodcuts appeared about forty years later¹⁷ as part of the German book Gart der Gesundheit. Agnes Arber makes the claim in her book Herbals, their origin and evolution; a chapter in the history of botany, 1470-1670 that the woodcuts in Gart der Gesundheit, “form the basis of nearly all botanical illustrations for the next half-century,”¹⁸ based on how much the book has been copied and recopied over the years. It wasn’t until 1530 that the German book was challenged by author Otto Brunfels and printmaker

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¹⁵ See note 11.


Hans Weiditz in *Herbarum vivae eicones*. Weiditz was extremely talented and favored scientific accuracy over artistic expression. This can be seen in works like Orphine (fig. 30), a woodcut from *Herbarum vivae eicones* page 214. Botanical Illustrators began employing printmaking techniques regularly for scientific publication from 1530 on. Woodcut was the first printmaking technique used for the purpose of botanical illustration. Eventually artists found processes that allowed them to include even more detail like copper etchings & engravings with the addition of hand coloring.

Not only was printmaking a great way to disseminate information before photographic and digital options emerged, but its variety of processes and visual intricacies have value in science and can even enhance complex communication. Heather Mcmordie and Peter Stempel both believe that if printmakers and scientists work alongside each other in the field they can introduce and engage with broader audiences about complex systems in science. I also believe it’s important to have different perspectives inside science to help make complex information more accessible to the public because when you’re in a field so complex it’s hard to determine how to translate effectively.

Paired with scientific research, the print, by nature a liminal artform constantly teetering between art and craft, multiple and unique imprint, fine art and commercial publication, may be the ideal format for mediating information about science (soil systems) and translating these complexities into a relatable and comprehensible experience.  

The printmaker becomes a liaison between scientists and the public by replacing complex jargon with engaging visual information. When artists enter scientific climate and environmental conversations, they can capture a broader audience and appeal to the emotional side of humans that science can lack. In my work, I hope to show value in merging the scientific way of knowing with the human experience, or in the least, raise questions about if they can fit together.

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https://omeka.warburg.sas.ac.uk/exhibits/show/the-art-of-botanical-illustrat

There are plenty of famous male artists mentioned in history that capture the essence and scientifically accurate aspects of plants like Albrecht Durer, Leonardo Da Vinci and of course Georg Dionysius Ehret who developed the Linnaean style of botanical illustration21 alongside the “Father of Taxonomy,” Carl Linnaeus. Ehret and Linnaeus worked together to include all of the plant parts from the roots to the stems, leaves, flowers and seed pods into illustrations for publication, which is where the term botanical illustration stemmed from.22 The Linnaean system and new criteria for botanical illustration was first applied and published in The Hortus Cliffortianus in 1737 by Ehret, Linnaseus and financier George Clifford. The text was accompanied by many detailed etchings by Ehret including Rauvolfia (fig. 31). While I created my prints with a more modern process, the work still maintains a traditional aesthetic and is still hand printed on a traditional etching press like that of the Ehret and Weiditz.

There are an incredible number of artists who contributed to botanical illustration, but as a female artist and for the purpose of this paper I would like to highlight some of the noteworthy female botanical illustrators who utilized printmaking to develop their revolutionary work, starting with Maria Sibylla Merian. Merian was born in Frankfurt, Germany in 1647 and died in Amsterdam in 171723. She was a naturalist, illustrator and printmaker who focused on insects and plants. Merian made important scientific discoveries about plants, insects, and their links to medicine in the late 1600s. She was the first to make connections between insects and the plants that hosted them while dispelling the false idea that insects spontaneously emerged from mud24. As a child she was interested in caterpillars and would collect them in order to study their maturation into butterflies. Her early interest in collecting for observation led her to create one of her most well known works, Metamorphosis of a Butterfly (1705) (fig. 32), which included the life cycle of a caterpillar on its host plant. From her childhood as a collector

24 See note 2.
of all things natural to her interest in botany as an adult, Merian has been an important and constant source of inspiration while working on this body of work.

Elizabeth Blackwell (1707 –1758) was not only a botanical illustrator, but an incredibly talented printmaker, devout lover and an extremely hard worker. While her husband was in prison for debt, Blackwell took on an ambitious project to raise the funds to bail him out.25 She produced five hundred intaglio plates of plant cuttings to be paired with her husband’s text and A Curious Herbal was born (between 1737 and 1739). Blackwell worked on at least four plates a week to stay on track to finish this book. It included information on each plant and their medicinal properties to be used by physicians. The first plate in the book was of a dandelion (fig. 33) with accompanying text pointing to the plant’s use as a diuretic while the leaves could be eaten in salads in the spring26.

Bobbi Angell is a contemporary scientific illustrator, horticulture illustrator and printmaker who discovered her love for plants in her first botany course in college. She works with scientists at institutions like The New York Botanical Garden by using herbarium specimens to illustrate floras and new species. Angell works mostly in ink drawing and copper etchings to depict her specimens. As a gardener herself, she enjoys illustrating plants she’s had a personal interaction with whether it be from her garden or found in the wild. Angell states that, “Observing, dissecting, and sketching plants leads to an enhanced ability to identify, understand, and appreciate them.” While I am not creating scientifically accurate drawings, like Angell, I also believe making the work created in Botanical Folktales enhanced my ability to identify, understand and appreciate plants through the lens of artmaking and research. I take inspiration from Angell’s precise detail and the quality of linework in her illustrations and copper etchings, such as Lagenaria siceraria (fig. 34). In my work, I strive to depict each species with attention and accuracy while also considering formal aesthetics like line


quality, composition and detail. I find looking at professional botanical illustrators helps me find a balance between beauty and scientifically identifiable plant species.

Lou Cabeen is what I would consider to be a “plant portrait” artist. She is known for her interest and study in plants and how she uses art to educate herself, and others. Cabeen is a multi-media artist working with collage, textiles, botanical specimens and books to address personal and broader issues surrounding human relationships with nature. She has roots in Chicago, but is currently working in Seattle where she takes inspiration from her surroundings and questions her personal relationship to the living world. Cabeen addresses environmental issues from a hopeful perspective as she sees some of her projects as a way to renew her personal relationship to the natural world and contemplate how to respond to the changing climate. In the series Botanizing Hope, the work Herbarium Martyrium: 12 Plant Allies in the Geography of Hope (fig. 35), she references herbarium sheets by stitching the contour of each plant onto a sheet of paper, including an herbarium tag. The work is encased inside a portfolio similar to how specimens would be stored. Cabeen enjoys working in formats that invite or reference touch, imply use and initiate intimate interactions. I’m interested in the way Cabeen gives tribute to the plants that live in her surroundings and how she translates those interactions into various book formats, inviting the viewer to also take part in the exchange. Another work in Botanizing Hope, called The Herbarium of Useful Plants (fig. 36), Cabeen observes the plants she finds within a five block radius of her home. She collects the botanical specimen and creates herbarium sheets by drying and mounting in the traditional way, but then collages text and maps to each sheet. Cabeen states, “In a time of climate uncertainty, an archive of personal interaction with these plants has deepened my awareness of fellow life forms and serves as an antidote to despair.” Cabeen’s process of collecting and building knowledge of plants by physically interacting with them combined with traditional scientific research resonates with me. I spend time exploring and opening myself up to seeing what native plants are living around me. On walks and hikes I will photograph, draw from direct observation then conduct more traditional research into the plants I observed through books and the internet. I often look at the scientific way of knowing the plant first, if it’s native, what
benefits it has to the environment, what species neighbor well together, then explore how humans relate to the plant through pop culture and folklore.

During my time in graduate school I fell in love with the process of making art through exploring my curiosities about plants and the environment, while at the same time gaining a deeper connection to them. Collecting information, images, botanical specimens and memories all play a huge role in how this work comes together and my personal connection to it. As a kid I loved collecting things like rocks, crawfish, and lightning bugs, but I never felt the need to keep the things I collected. I would arrange them in an aesthetically pleasing format and observe them, sometimes even draw them. Collecting items became a way of processing, learning and understanding but would always be returned back to where it was found. In a 1996 study titled *Kids as Collectors: A Phenomenological Study of First and Fifth Graders*, found 5 different reasons children collect things. They:

(1) Enjoy the process of collecting as it allows them to escape boredom and sometimes reality, (2) Learn or satisfy curiosity about their collecting domain, (3) Satiate a passion for the objects which are desired, (4) Want to differentiate themselves from others, and (5) Desire to associate with others, especially family and friends.\(^{27}\)

Considering these motivations, I believe the collection of prints and books I’ve created have three main reasons that align with this study. First, to learn or satisfy my curiosity for these native plants. Second, to satiate my passion for them and third is to fulfill my desire to connect to them along with other like-minded people who share my appreciation or curiosity.

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\(^{27}\) Baker, Stacey Menzel, and James W. Gentry. 1996. “Kids as Collectors: A Phenomenological Study of First and Fifth Graders.” *ACR North American Advances* NA-23. [https://www.acrwebsite.org/volumes/7928/volumes/v23/](https://www.acrwebsite.org/volumes/7928/volumes/v23/).
Evidence now supports the vision of the poet and the philosopher that plants are living, breathing, communicating creatures, endowed with personality and the attributes of soul. It is only we, in our blindness, who have insisted on considering them automata.28

— Peter Tompkins and Christopher Bird, The Secret Life of Plants

Underneath each Solarplate print is an intricate handmade book, each displayed on a white floating shelf. The books are presented closed, there is no direct prompt to touch or pick up the books. The green books are faced toward the viewer so one can peak in to spark curiosity about what is inside. Books are meant to be picked up, touched, opened, and thoroughly examined. Books meant for display, and not to be read or touched are usually behind glass and set to a specific page the viewer is supposed to read. By placing these books on open shelves with a closed hardcover, the viewer is nudged with temptation.

Once a viewer picks up on these clues and opens a book, they will find an eight page spread that folds out like an accordion. I chose to make books to give the viewer an opportunity for a more intimate experience. These books are meant to educate the viewer while also bringing up questions about the relationship between humans and plants. Visual stimuli is important for learning, the addition of another sensory channel, like touch, can create more connections in your brain making it easier to retrieve memory.29 Therefore, the activation of touch in addition to sight as the viewer interacts with my books can leave a lasting impression on their memory as opposed to a more passive experience viewing something hung on the wall.

Each book has a title page including the scientific name of the plant with many of its vernacular names followed by hand drawn illustrations and text. I approached the making of these books like one approaches the making of field notes, reflected in each book’s title. The label Field Notes is accompanied by a plant’s vernacular name followed by the scientific name in parenthesis; Field Notes: Purple Coneflower (Echinacea purpurea) (fig. 37). This decision is intended to ask the viewer to consider the

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relationship between the scientific way of knowing a plant and the more poetic or familiar associations humans have with them.

These books explore different ways native plants are valued to both humans and pollinators, the emotional and spiritual impacts they have on our lives, and are filled with clues to direct the viewer to think more deeply about the connections between the chosen plants. The plants I chose to focus on throughout the exhibition all have medicinal value, so many of the books include recipes for things like teas, tinctures or other wellness related concoctions. The eight page spread of each book is visually packed with examples of the many ways humans historically have and can relate to each plant, including the history of the species, references in Western popular culture, medicinal uses, and folklore from various cultures. As previously noted, this visual format relates to field notes. This connection seemed appropriate because of their use in science, but also allows the books to have a very personal touch. While the compiling of research material and references was very systematic and intentional, the interior design of each book was done intuitively giving me another opportunity to reference authentic field notes. For the purpose of making the books visually appealing to the viewer, I kept in mind basic aesthetic elements of art like line weight, color and balance as I instinctively constructed the interior pages. As each book has a similar feel and layout, this improvisational process allows each book to have unique individual elements. For example, some of books have longer, harder to find stories like the story of Goldenrod and Aster included in Field Notes: Wrinkleleaf Goldenrod (Solidago rugosa) (fig. 38); others have more commonly known references like the famous song Sad Eyed Lady of the Lowlands by Bob Dylan\(^3^0\) in Field Notes: Cranesbill (Geranium maculatum) (fig. 39-40).

There is no text in the books that overtly tells the viewer that these plants are native or why any of this is important to me as the artist. Instead, the books provide clues like maps, distorted text, or hidden messages for the viewer to investigate. The accumulation and presentation of these various kinds of information and research allows for contradictions to form. For example, weeds like Ironweed are generally unwanted to many property owners or HOA's in Western cultures. “Weed” is in the

vernacular name of the plant, giving people the clue to pass this plant off as invaluable, obstructive or unruly. But Ironweed is undoubtedly an attractive plant with showy purple flowers atop an impressive upright form. A weed by human definition is “any plant that grows in an unwanted place,”31 which is controversial due to the fact that every plant has value somewhere to someone or something. Another irony of many weeds is that they don’t grow in the “wild”, but have evolved to grow “in the ground that man has disturbed”, like gardens, lawns and the cracks of the sidewalk.32 Ironweed is a valuable winter food source for birds since it has such a strong stem to hold seeds in place like a bird feeder. Hummingbirds, butterflies and native bees fancy its nectar and it grows well among friends like Purple Coneflower, the New England Aster and Garden Phlox. Additionally, Ironweed’s name is a reflection of its tough stem and thus used as a symbol to describe someone or something strong and resilient. In Shannon Elizabeth Bell’s book, Our Roots Run Deep as Ironweed, she interviews twelve female environmental justice activists living in Appalachia including Judy Bonds, who states, “You know that tall purple flower that’s all over the mountains at the end of summer? Have you ever tried to pull it out of the ground? It’s called ironweed because its roots won’t budge. That’s like Appalachian women—their roots are deep and strong in these mountains, and they will fight to stay put.”33 Parallel to its symbolic value, Ironweed root has been historically used by indigenous tribes to alleviate women’s menstrual conditions like amenorrhoea, dysmenorrhoea, leucorrhoea and menorrhagia.34

When I first started researching about the plants that lived around my apartment and the surrounding area, I took lots of photographs and looked up what I was finding. It didn’t occur to me that some of the most beautiful plants I found had the potential to be invasive and a detriment to the native plants that live and thrive here. I never thought about how a plant has the potential to make a “negative” impact on an environment until I started doing more research into these plants, and also reading about artwork like Mark Dion’s Herbarium Perrine (Marine Algae). This discovery gave me a greater

appreciation for native plants and fueled the continuation of my research. As my notes and sketches began to resemble field notes, I allowed this work to take the books in that direction.

Mark Dion’s work comments on science, natural history, collections and, ironically, what is left out of those collections. In his work *Herbarium Perrine (Marine Algae)*, Dion presents a set of photogravure prints of marine algae specimens that were collected in the Florida Keys by Henry Perrine in the 1800’s. The backstory is long which is something that makes Dion’s work complex, but the basis is that Perrine planned on bringing these tropical plants to a non-native area. His home in Florida was attacked and he died before moving back. He planned on planting them into the ground of a fragile non-native ecosystem. The specimen went missing or got destroyed during the attack so when Dion labeled the herbarium species accordingly with Perrine’s name as their collector, he left the date out to nod to the disappearance or destruction of them. Overall this piece is as complex as the backstory and is about humans as invasive species, botany, colonization and the beauty of algae. I enjoy the subtle layers to this work. It appears beautiful on the surface, but has an underlying meaning that sheds light on problematic practices and how they affect the environment. Similarly, my work emphasizes the beauty of plants, while directing the viewer to think about how humans connect to plants, or potentially think about a lack of connection.

I have an appreciation for the way Dion sees “Art and science as natural allies,” as he explains,

I do not consider myself an activist, however I am entirely allied with environmental activism. I think to build a progressive culture of nature, participation from a wide variety of disciplines is needed. Science certainly is critical, but it does not have a monopoly on the culture of nature. To build a culture of nature that features regeneration over destruction, sustainability over depletion, nurturing over domination requires input from a diverse collation of thinkers, makers, and doers. Art is one of many areas which can be important to this constellation.  

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I agree with Dion that science does not have a monopoly on the culture of nature. The living world has many lenses to describe it and can be understood differently in every culture. I also resonate with this direct declaration that he is not playing an activist role, but presenting information for the viewer to make decisions and inject their own insight. While environmental concerns are always on my mind and fuel some of my work, it’s not my goal to take on an activist role simply because it’s not in my personality. I don’t believe advertising all the negative impacts humans make on the environment is an effective way to get my ideas across. Artists around the world are already doing this, and this information, including the threats and fears related to the climate crisis, are readily available and seem to not reach people in an impactful way. My work is more about presenting information to the viewer in a visually striking way to allow them the ability to dig deeper and question their own personal connections to the work. My work is driven by a desire to personally understand and heal; instead of focusing on the negative impact humans have on the environment.

Centerpiece: The Tea Exchange

The centerpiece in the gallery is a nine foot long and twenty inch wide white modern looking table that displays a piece titled, The Tea Exchange (fig. 41-41). The Tea Exchange consists of a handmade tray holding a blank handmade book, with a tray of tea bags. The table has instructions printed on a clear label that states, “Open the book, read the prompt and write your response with pencil. After you put the book back in the tray you may take a tea bag to enjoy at home. Each tea bag includes a limited edition wild strawberry screenprint and a bag of wild strawberry leaf tea with wild mulberry. Tea is sourced from a farm in Appalachia.”

Inside the book a prompt states, “Do you have a meaningful plant in your life? Perhaps it is the apple tree in the backyard of your childhood home, planted by a grandparent. Or is it the pothos that started off as a cutting given to you by a close friend? Plants enrich our lives in many ways and each one tells a story. The red rose is known to be the symbol of romance and the four-leaf clover is for good luck. When I was a kid I remembered playing with buttercup flowers to see if they make my chin glow. Take the pencil in the tray to write about a flower that’s made an impression on
your past, holds meaning in your family or culture, or one that just makes you happy. Don’t forget to take a bag of tea home with you in exchange for sharing with me. Thank you for participating.”

During the exhibition reception and throughout the run of the show, as visitors wrote in their stories and experiences in the book, tea bags began to disappear revealing more of the custom tray. As people crowded around the table in the center holding *The Tea Exchange* book they talked aloud about what plant they want to write about and why, creating a larger conversation that goes beyond the artist and the single viewer. This book was intended to inspire people to think about their personal connections to plants and join together with others alike in conversation and divulge in those memories.

The installation of this exhibition asks the viewer to engage in both passive learning and active learning. Thinking, discussing, challenging and analyzing information all fall under active learning while passive requires the viewer to absorb, consider and translate that information. By reading through the books the viewer is participating in passive learning or internal learning as they take in and memorize information provided to them by the books. When they go to interact with *The Tea Exchange*, they are learning by getting involved in the information and synthesizing it through hands-on experience.

As I make this work I am engaged in active learning and I wanted to bring a little bit of that aspect of learning into the gallery through *The Tea Exchange*. It’s the piece that ties everything together and connects to the viewer on a deeper level by not just allowing touch, but allowing marks to be made and words to be expressed inside the book by the viewer. A huge part of this work is not just about the plants themselves but about education, by first educating myself through collecting specimens and imagery, drawing, academic research, folklore research, direct interaction with the plants, and the five senses of touch, taste, smell, sight, and hearing. And secondly, educating the viewer with the product.

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Additional Inspirations

*That space, that garden* was a 2022 exhibition curated by Madeline Cass, which included the lens-based artists, Leah Koransky, Madeline Cass, Meganelizabeth Diamond, Emily Margarit Mason and Meg Roussos. This group of femme and queer artists were asked to offer their perspective and investigations into the tactility and emotionality of “landscape” and the current climate crisis. In response to the exhibition, Delaney Hoffman wrote an essay in which she introduced the work,

Gardens, traditionally, have been spaces for invention. Though some are publicly accessible and others are ticketed, most are in private backyards, front yards, side yards and windowsills; their curation is driven by the same impetus that leads us to collect and display seashells from our trips to the beach or to pick up strange and delicate figurines at the thrift store. Though gardens are literally rooted in topsoil, their emotional origin springs from sentiment, from the desire to be moved; I think about the ornamental blooms that my grandmother and my mother so lovingly attended with the goal of bringing forth something living but also fleeting."

As I look at artists who discuss the delicate relationship between humans and the natural world, this particular exhibition, with its accompanying essay, struck excitement in me. As Hoffman mentions, the emotional origin of gardens stems from our attitudes and experiences and the desire to be moved. It’s no surprise that plants and flowers are tied to human emotion. Studies prove our intuition that plants and flowers have the power to improve relationships by increasing feelings of compassion and empathy for others. While the exhibition is filled with stunning work, it was the exhibition publication that struck me the most. Poetic in the language of plants and gardens and thoughtfully crafted in design, I took inspiration from the exhibition publication as a work of art in itself. This was one of the first zines I saw before deciding how I wanted to merge the history and folklore of each plant with their botanical illustration inspired counterpart.

*Braiding Sweetgrass* by Robin Wall Kimmerer also had a profound impact on *Botanical Folktales*. Kimmerer opened my eyes about how I, as an individual and as an

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artist, can renew my relationship with the living world. The way she spoke about plants being our neighbors, companions, and friends, inspired me to further my research and dig deeper into what it was I wanted to say artistically. I realized I didn’t just want to learn about the plants and share that information, but I began asking myself what I could learn from plants. They became my muse and teacher at once. Kimmerer talked about symbiotic relationships and how plants work in unison with other species to benefit one another. This is a lesson not only on those relationships, but of the relationship between plants and humans that are just as important. In this book, Kimmerer merges her indigenous wisdom with her scientific knowledge. She states,

As a scientist, I have been trained to refer to our relatives, the plants and the animals … the water and the Earth herself as 'it'. What I came to understand was that in Potawatomi languages, we characterize the world into those who are alive and the things which are not. So we speak the grammar of animacy, and that's because in the beautiful verb-based language, a language based on being and changing and agency … the whole world is alive.”38

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Conclusion

*Botanical Folktales* was created with the intention of educating and posing questions about humanity’s relationship with plants. My work is for the plant enthusiast, gardener, or novice who has an interest in learning more about plants. By viewing my work, I aspire for people to consider their personal relationship to plants and thus consider the broader environment as well. We could all spend a little more time outside appreciating the beauty, power and spirit of plants. For myself, creating this work has transformed the way I see the natural world, educated me on how to be a better neighbor to plants and inspired me to keep drinking the ecological medicine.
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MAY 2021 - AUGUST 2021 MORGANTOWN, WV
Garden maintenance, sheep chores, electric fence building

Graduate Service Assistant / West Virginia University
AUGUST 2020 - 2021 MORGANTOWN, WV
Art History Digital Slide Database in the School of Art & Design
Research, data entry, photo editing (Adobe)

Production Artist / Mac Operator / Creps United Publications
JULY 2017 - OCTOBER 2017, INDIANA, PA
Edited and prepped ads and print media using Adobe
Student Graphic Designer / Slippery Rock University  
SEPTEMBER 2015 - MAY 2017, SLIPPERY ROCK, PA  
Designed print media such as posters, flyers and banners using Adobe

Marketing Intern / View Arts Center  
MAY 2015 - AUGUST 2015, OLD FORGE, NY  
Designed print and digital media such as postcards, flyers, banners and newsletters using Adobe. Assisted Events team

MEMBERSHIPS

Los Angeles Printmaking Society, 2022
Mid America Print Council (MAPC), 2021-2022
Southern Graphics Council International (SGCI), 2020-2022

SCHOLARSHIPS

Graduate Teaching Assistantship / School of Art and Design, West Virginia University  
2020 - 2023, MORGANTOWN, WV

Outstanding Graduate Application Award / School of Art and Design, West Virginia University  
2020, MORGANTOWN, WV

Martha Gault Art Scholarship / Slippery Rock University  
2016 - SLIPPERY ROCK, PA

Board of Governors Tuition Scholarship / Slippery Rock University  
2013-2017 - SLIPPERY ROCK, PA

Indiana Art Association Art Scholarship / Indiana Art Association  
2013 - INDIANA, PA

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

MAPC Conference & Open Portfolio  
2022 - KENT, OHIO

Artist-In-Action Residency / Annmarie Sculpture Garden & Arts Center  
2022 - SOLOMONS, MD

SGCI Conference & Open Portfolio  
2022 - MADISON, WI

Intro to Printmaking Workshop / West Virginia University  
2021-2023 - MORGANTOWN, WV  
3 workshops total

Artist Talk / Adv. Printmaking Class, Slippery Rock University
Symposium for Student Research, Scholarship and Creative Achievement / Slippery Rock University
2017 - SLIPPERY ROCK, PA
Presentation of work and demonstration of relief printing

EXHIBITIONS

2023

Field Notes & Folklore / Solo Exhibition
UPCOMING IN MAY, INVISIBLE GALLERY, THOMAS, WV

Botanical Folktales / Solo MFA Exhibition
2023 - LAURA MESAROS GALLERY, MORGANTOWN, WV

Smorgasbord / Group Exhibition
2023 - ARTIST IMAGE RESOURCE, PITTSBURGH, PA

Heavy Water / Group Exhibition
2022-2023 - THE CO-OP, MORGANTOWN, WV

2022

Emerging Printmakers / Group Exhibition
2022 - STOPWATCH GALLERY, GREENSBURG, PA

No Return / National Juried Exhibition
2022 - MANIFEST GALLERY, CINCINNATI, OH

LAPS 22nd / National Juried Printmaking Exhibition
2022 - LOS ANGELES PRINTMAKING SOCIETY
MIXOGRAFIA, LOS ANGELES, CA

Artist-In-Action / Residency Exhibition
2022 - ANNMARIE SCULPTURE GARDEN & ARTS CENTER

TRIFECTA: WVU Ceramics, Sculpture & Printmaking / Group Exhibition
2022 - LOVE HOPE ART CENTER, FAYETTEVILLE, WV

WILD LIFE / National Juried Exhibition
2022 - LOS ANGELES PRINTMAKING SOCIETY
CENTER FOR THE ARTS EAGLE ROCK, LOS ANGELES, CA

Annual Alumni Exhibition / Group Exhibition
2022 - MARTHA GAULT ART GALLERY, SLIPPERY ROCK, PA

Smorgasbord / Group Exhibition
2022 - ARTIST IMAGE RESOURCE, PITTSBURGH, PA

Winter Magic / International Juried Exhibition
2022 - CULTURAL CENTER OF CAPE COD
SOUTH YARMOUTH, MA

Paper & Clay / National Juried Exhibition
2022 - TIPPETTS AND ECCLES GALLERIES
UTAH STATE UNIVERSITY, LOGAN, UT

GraficaRi / International Exhibition of Graphics and Artists’ Books
2022 - JANUARY - JUNE
UNIVERSITY OF RIJEKA, ACADEMY OF APPLIED ARTS RIJEKA, CROATIA
2022 - JUNE
VASKO LIPOVAC, RUDERA BOSKOVICA 31, 21000, SPLIT, CROATIA

2021

Annual Juried Art Student Exhibition
2021 - LAURA MESAROS GALLERY, WEST VIRGINIA UNIVERSITY,
MORGANTOWN, WV
The Gary Schubert Award for Printmaking

Windows of SRU, Art from our Community / Juried Exhibition
2021 - SLIPPERY ROCK UNIVERSITY, SLIPPERY ROCK, PA

Smorgasbord / Group Exhibition
2021 - ARTIST IMAGE RESOURCE, PITTSBURGH, PA

2020

Annual Juried Art Student Exhibition
2020 - LAURA MESAROS GALLERY, WEST VIRGINIA UNIVERSITY,
MORGANTOWN, WV

October Group Art Show / National Juried Exhibition
2020 - JONES GALLERY, KANSAS CITY, MO

And The Band Played On: Failure, Catastrophe & Absurdity / International Juried Exhibition
2020 - IN TOTO VIRTUAL GALLERY

Juried Online Exhibition
2020 - ANTON ART CENTER, MT. CLEMENS, MI
Director’s Pick

2019

37th North Charleston Arts Festival Juried Exhibition
2019 - N. CHARLESTON COLISEUM, N. CHARLESTON, SC
Best of Printmaking Award

Similitude / National Juried Exhibition
2019 - MANIFEST GALLERY, CINCINNATI, OH

2017

Impressions in Red / International Juried Exhibition
2017 - OLD STONE HOUSE, SLIPPERY ROCK, PA
2017 - MARY HULTON PHILLIPS GALLERY, BUTLER COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE, BUTLER, PA
2016 - ACADEMY OF FINE ARTS, GDANSK, POLAND
2016 - DIXON UNIVERSITY, HARRISBURG, PA

Disclosure / Bachelor of Fine Arts Senior Exhibition
2017 - SLIPPERY ROCK UNIVERSITY, SLIPPERY ROCK, PA

Student Exhibition / Honors Convocation
2017 - SLIPPERY ROCK UNIVERSITY, SLIPPERY ROCK, PA
Annual Juried Art Student Exhibition  
2017 - MARTHA GAULT ART GALLERY, SLIPPERY ROCK, PA

*Kaleidoscope* / Student Exhibition  
2017 - BOTTLEBRUSH GALLERY, HARMONY, PA

Student Exhibition / Honors Convocation  
2017 - SLIPPERY ROCK UNIVERSITY, SLIPPERY ROCK, PA

*20/20 A Visual Dialogue*  
2016 - BUTLER ART CENTER, BUTLER, PA

Annual Juried Art Student Exhibition  
2016 - MARTHA GAULT ART GALLERY, SLIPPERY ROCK, PA

*Garbage Day* / Group Show  
2016 - VIEW ARTS CENTER, OLD FORGE, NY

Annual Juried Art Student Exhibition  
2015 - MARTHA GAULT ART GALLERY, SLIPPERY ROCK, PA

*Art Association's 73rd Annual Juried Show*  
2014 - ARTIST'S HAND, INDIANA, PA  
*1st Place, Non-Professional*

*Art Association's 72nd Annual Juried Show*  
2013 - ARTIST'S HAND, INDIANA, PA  
*Best of Show*

**PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

*Members Exchange* / Portfolio Exchange at SGCI Conference  
2022 - SOUTHERN GRAPHICS COUNCIL INTERNATIONAL, MADISON, WI

*The Natural Environment* / International Portfolio Exchange  
2021 - WEST VIRGINIA UNIVERSITY, EDINBORO UNIVERSITY, PONTIFICAL CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF PUERTO RICO AND UNIVERSITY OF PUERTO RICO MAYAGUEZ  
2021 - ON DISPLAY AT ARTIST IMAGE RESOURCE, PITTSBURGH, PA  
2021 - 2022 ON DISPLAY AT WVU COLLEGE OF CREATIVE ARTS BUILDING, FL 5

*Pain That Brings Pleasure* / Portfolio Exchange  
2021 - WEST VIRGINIA UNIVERSITY, MORGANTOWN, WV

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Electronic Thesis and Dissertation
Committee Signature Form

Student Name: Mulac
(Last) Jamie (First) Frances (Middle)

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Degree: MFA
X Master’s ☐ Doctorate

Document Type:
☐ Thesis ☐ Dissertation
☐ Project/Problem Report

Document Title: Botanical Folktales

Student Agreement:
I hereby certify that, if appropriate, I have obtained and attached hereto a written permission statement from the owners of each third party copyrighted matter to be included in my thesis, dissertation, project report, or other research material, allowing distribution as specified upon deposit.

I hereby grant to West Virginia University and its agents the non-exclusive license to archive and make accessible, under the conditions selected upon deposit, my above mentioned document in whole or in part in all forms of media, now or hereafter known. I retain ownership rights as specified in the WVU copyright policy to the copyright of the abovementioned document. I also retain the right to use in future works (such as articles or books) all or part of this abovementioned document.

Review and Acceptance:
The abovementioned document has been reviewed and accepted by the student’s advisory committee. The undersigned agree to abide by the statements above, and agree that this Signature Form updates any and all previous Signature Forms submitted heretofore.

Signed: ____________________________ 4/25/23
(Student)

Committee:
______________ 4/25/23
(Committee Chair)

______________ 4/25/23
(Committee Co-Chair or Committee Member)

______________ 4/25/23
(Committee Member)

______________ 4/25/23
(Committee Member)

______________ 4/25/23
(Committee Member)

______________ 4/25/23
(Committee Member)