

PHYLLIS GORSEN

ARTIST STATEMENT

The overarching idea encompassed within my work is that immersing oneself in the outside world infuses an unconditional sense of connection that lies outside of our internal boundaries. My intention is to illustrate the bond we have to nature and wildlife with intimate passages using fantasy and “magical zen” as a lens. They are playful depictions of humanity passively interacting within the folds of the wild landscape. The incorporation of animals and insects are both representational and symbolic. Human interaction with nature changes how we view ourselves within the context of our relationship to the earth. So much of our lives today are inside. With instant means available to us to connect anywhere in the world with a touch of a button, it becomes more of an effort to experience any sort of wilderness outside our walls. Yet, it is the untamed part of our world that sustains it and, in turn, sustains us. I explore the personal and unguarded states that occur within these enchanted interactions between humans and nature to highlight the innate symbiosis of all living things.

For these collage paintings, I have developed a specific technique that achieves a multi-dimensional surface. My process starts by painting the composition on a canvas. I then use a variety of materials: paint, charcoal, painted paper and canvas, and hand printed papers collected from all over the world. Applying hundreds, if not thousands of these mixed mediums generates surfaces that are imbued with uncertainty and surprise. It is an intricate process that culminates when a unified image appears from the multitude of pieces. I incorporate all these elements to force the eye to slow down, find figure and space, and feel the vibration of color that is woven throughout. My hope is that viewer is captivated by the visual allure of the surface and whimsical narrative, then to recognize the complex deep connection to the wildlife that nurtures us all.