

Statement

I'm a veteran Austin artist with decades of exhibition and art making experience. Primarily a painter in oil and also an illustrator and sometime mixed media artist, I make art about our natural world; sourcing inspiration from botanical imagery and local landscapes including both flora and fauna, and also the imagery of our human history and human interaction with our environment. My paintings are bold, detailed and often bend toward the surreal and magical. Rooted in a specific time and place, landscape and light, often complex and intricate, they describe a world of extreme beauty and vigor, sensitive vulnerability, and at times, impending catastrophe. I find value not only in nature's superficial beauty but also in what is unseeable (what goes on below the earth's surface, for instance). I'm humbled by nature's infinities - biology yet unstudied by humans. I exploit my own interaction with the natural world, my impressions and associations as I imply a personal story, aiming always at what is universal in the effort to communicate and inspire.

Bio

Valerie Fowler was raised in Houston, Texas. Her father was noted Houston sculptor, Bob Fowler (1931-2010). After graduating from the University of Texas (1985, with a B.A. in Art) she made Austin her home and has been actively involved in art making and art exhibition for over 40 years. Nature is her muse. Her past work includes murals for Whole Foods Market in Austin, Chicago and Ann Arbor, illustration and layout work for The Texas Observer, illustrations for CD jackets for local musicians, including a fully illustrated, 64 page book that accompanies the CD for "Ivy and the Wicker Suitcase", a musical project, written, recorded and produced by her husband Brian Beattie. She and Beattie produced the full stage production for Austin's Stateside at the Paramount Theater in 2014. In 2016, Fowler held *Nature and Other Stories* at Austin's Dougherty Arts Center, a solo exhibit and mid career retrospective, with artworks spanning 2 decades. In 2018 she was chosen by the Texas Book Festival as the official Festival artist. Also in 2018, she contracted with Pomegranate Communications licensing her artwork images for a 2020 calendar, puzzle and art cards. In 2021 she and Beattie completed work on another musical and "Crankie" project: El Camino Real de los Tejas Crankie Suite. A crankie is an illustration on scrolls, cranked along to musical accompaniment. In this case, it's a 100 foot long illustration, on paper scrolls which tells stories, dipping back and forth in time, about Texas's historic El Camino Real. These crankie performances have been performed throughout Austin, and on locations along the Camino itself. Both she and her husband maintain studios adjacent to their home. She paints, draws or gardens daily.