

Melinda Hurst Frye

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www.jrinehartgallery.com / J. Rinehart Gallery



ARTIST STATEMENT

Analogous to scenes from a natural history museum, flora and fauna take center stage to illustrate that we are always tied to migration, evolution, and metamorphosis. The found fungal characters and laborers of the forest floor provide evidence of the soil's slow churning efforts that take the forest apart, so it may become again. The surface is not a border, but an entrance to habitats, systems, and regeneration.

Using a flatbed scanner as my camera, I seek to witness the defining ecology of the understory in the Pacific Northwest through found moments. I am gripped by the detail that the scanner reveals as well as how it quiets my frenzied mind, allowing space to observe the soil, the insects, and foliage, and connect with my living surroundings.

Turkey Tails was made from a series of scans along one fallen log discovered in the forest surrounding the Sitka Center for Art and Ecology in Otis, Oregon. Believed to be medicinal, Turkey Tail fungus is used as an adjunct in some cancer treatments. Three months after I held my mother's hand as she passed from cancer, I was in Otis, OR. I had wandered off of the trail to view moss sparkling in the sunlight and stumbled upon this log covered in Turkey Tail fungus.

With the goal of making work that provides visual evidence of ecological relationships and the cycles of the forest floor, I bring the activity of Cascadia's understory to the viewer. I hope that the work acts as a bridge between art and the biological sciences, and inspires interest in, and stewardship for, the ecology of the Pacific Northwest.



BIO

My work celebrates the ecology of the forest floor of the Pacific Northwest region, with the goals of bearing witness to the understory, and bridging the poetry of art with biological sciences. I am attracted to making work that provides visual evidence of the cycles of the forest floor. Working with a flatbed scanner as a camera intentionally slows down my own seeing allowing space to connect with the ecology of my surroundings, similar to an amateur biologist; observing, photographing, and scanning in order to share my discoveries with others.

Recent notable career highlights include working with King County and 4Culture on 'Picturing Trails' to photograph (scan) the regional trail system for the collection of their portable works, and a number of artist residencies including at Bloedel Reserve on Bainbridge Island. My work has been featured in publications, gallery spaces, traveling exhibits, and permanent collections. I hold an MFA from the Savannah College of Art and Design (Savannah, GA), a BFA from the Pacific Northwest College of Art (Portland, OR), and currently teach photography at several regional institutions. I live with my family adjacent to an urban forest in Kenmore, Washington, and am represented by J. Rinehart Gallery in Seattle, Washington.



SELECTED SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2022 *The Workers*, J Rinehart Gallery, Seattle, Washington
2019 *The Forest Floor* CORE Gallery, Seattle, Washington
2018 *Roots*, CORE Gallery, Seattle, Washington,
SPACE Gallery at Magnuson, Seattle, Washington
2017 *Habitants*, CORE Gallery, Seattle, Washington
Evergreen College, Olympia, Washington
2016 *Underneath*, CORE Gallery, Seattle, Washington

SELECTED GROUP & FEATURED WORK

- 2023 *Surge*, Museum of Northwest Art, La Conner, Washington
Spotlight, Bainbridge Island Museum of Art, Winslow, Washington
Zero Horizon, Descanso Gardens, Los Angeles California
Blue Sky Gallery Drawers, Portland, Oregon
Shades of Compassion, Photokunst, Itinerant Exhibit
Headley Whitney Museum, Lexington, Kentucky
2022 *Smart Objects/Flattened Images*, Well Well Projects, Portland, Oregon
Carbon, Vestibule Gallery, Seattle, Washington
Shutterhub Yearbook Publication, London, England
Reverberations, Photographic Center Northwest, Seattle, Washington
Blue Sky Gallery Drawers, Portland, Oregon
Wayfinder, Faculty & Staff Exhibition, Hedreen Gallery, Seattle University, Seattle, Washington
2021 *Off the Wall*, J Rinehart Gallery, Seattle, Washington
Sitka Invitational, World Forestry Center, Portland, Oregon
Chasing Shadows, Port Angeles Center for Fine Art, Port Angeles, Washington
2020 *Picturing Trails*, Gallery 4Culture, Seattle, Washington
2019 *What Lies Beneath*, Kenneth J. Minnaert Center for the Arts, Olympia, Washington
Harris Harvey Gallery, *Studies in Nature/Photographic Views*, Seattle, Washington
TraumHaus, Snohomish, Washington
Blue Sky Gallery Drawers, Portland, Oregon
2018 Spokane Chase Gallery, Spokane, Washington
Arousing Biophilia, San Jose, California
Blue Sky Gallery Drawers, Portland, Oregon
2017 *Notions of Home*, Benefit Auction Exhibition, Photographic Center Northwest
Blue Sky Gallery Drawers, Portland, Oregon
21st Annual Juried Exhibition, Juried by Sandra Phillips, Photographic Center Northwest, Seattle, Washington
Animalia, Juried by Arlette Kayafas, Center For Fine Art Photography, Fort Collins, Colorado
Landscape, Juried by Lisa Volpe, Center For Fine Art Photography, Fort Collins, Colorado
Lynnwood City Hall, Lynnwood, Washington

Permanent Collections & Publications

Summit Seattle Convention Center, Seattle, Washington
Microsoft Art Collection, Redmond, Washington
South Puget Sound Community College, Olympia, Washington
Portable Works Collection, King County, Washington
Reuters; Lenscratch; Lensculture; De Correspondant (Holland); WIRED Photo; Humble Arts Foundation;
Magnify Seattle; Blend Images; Super Interessante (Brazil); Woodland Park Zoo;
'*Photography: A 21st Century Practice*' (textbook), Mark Chen.

Education

Master of Fine Arts, Savannah College of Art and Design, 2006, Savannah, Georgia
Bachelor of Fine Arts, Pacific Northwest College of Art, 2000, Portland, Oregon