

## Melonie Steffes Artist's Statement

Most of my current work draws deeply from the natural world. Within all its beauty and terror, I find bridges between the “real world” and my strange internal landscapes. It is a way of carrying on the ancient human tradition of telling stories to explain what is simultaneously bigger than us and within us and through that process making intuitive agreements that keep a sort of peace. Humans spend a lot of time dividing up, outlining, categorizing and labeling everything we see, deciding what is real and what sets us apart from all else. I am very interested in preserving the wilderness of the mind. When I create, those imaginary lines break down, become unclear once more and merge with primal voices that I may not consciously understand. I welcome this, reach for it, spending a lot of time alone, outside, listening. I feel that silence and solitude are extremely important components of my process, especially now in an age of endless distraction, drama and noise. I want my work to encourage others to feel deeply, connect to their source and let their minds roam free.

