

NANCY TOOMEY *Fine Art*

CLAIRE BURBRIDGE

ARTIST STATEMENT

"In 2010 I went back to drawing after many years of sculptural enquiry. Drawing was my primary medium in the Ruskin School of Fine Art, Oxford University in the UK. Starting with observational sketches that evolved in to larger scale works, I select the natural world as my subject as I live surrounded by nature in Southern Oregon. Observed at close range it contains many strange, fascinating and abstract forms. My works aim to draw attention to the mysteries of the physical world.

Wishing to convey my understanding of the underlying balance and cycles of undisturbed natural ecosystems, I have employed the pictorial device of interlocking circles drawn beneath the forms. This conveys a sense of cohesion, and alludes to the invisible intelligent matrix that enables the seeming chaos of nature to be held in perfect balance; birth, death and rebirth all occurring at the same time. This also imparts a formal quality to the drawings.

I choose to mainly work in pen and ink, as this forces a decisive approach and commitment to problem solving once the ink is down on the paper, although the last two works are in pencil. The marks are made up of primarily lines and pointillism, this seems fitting as our physical world is made up of waves and particles, whether animate in inanimate.

Each drawing is a natural evolution from the last. I work for about a year, immersed in a particular subject, watching it evolve through the seasons. Although I learn a lot about the subjects of my drawings, the facts are not a dominant feature. These are not strictly botanical illustrations. Through the handling and observing of the forms, information reveals itself to me in wordless fashion. My studio is now home to many dried fungi, lichens, dead insects and bits of trees. These all fascinate me as they continue to change through the process of decay. I am particularly interested in small forms, like mushrooms, because they exemplify the multiplicity and complexity of nature; hidden, as they are, beneath the earth for most of the year. I strive to depict a vibrant universe, one that speaks of forms decaying, from which new organisms emerge."

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BIO

Claire Burbridge is one of twins born in London in 1971. She grew up on the west coast of Scotland and in rural Somerset where she attended Wells Cathedral School. On leaving she studied for a BA in Fine Art and history of Art at Magdalen College, Oxford before returning to her birthplace to study printmaking at Camberwell College of Art where she gained a Masters Degree. She lives in Oregon with her husband the artist Matthew Picton and son Maurice. Burbridge's work has been exhibited nationally and internationally, and is in various corporate and private collections.