

Sally Jablonsky

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## Artist Statement

Through oil painting and self published magazines, I explore the experience of being a body and an animal on the Earth. As my experience has been shaped by growing up in wild places as well as having chronic illnesses, I use the body as a source of information to reveal human fantasies while at the same time creating a new framework to live within—one that shows the human experience in the greater context of the natural world; I am interested in looking to nature, not as a metaphor, but as a place to find commonality among the living beings of this planet. My work explores: the experience of time and being a body relating to disability, art making as tool use—an essential part of our humanity/animal-ness, aesthetics and care as resistance, mutualism as a thread throughout art and culture and inter-species relationships, and nature as the appropriate context for chronically ill people's (and maybe everyone's) experiences. The magazines are companion pieces to the paintings—including essays and interviews about themes in paintings—and are a way for me to research and present my ideas while also being a container for building community with otherly-abled artists.

I use art making and writing as a way to engage with the human fantasy in a productive and meaningful way—where I can help to refocus our lens on a reality that feels like a more true place to exist within (by being guided by my own aesthetic code that incorporates all of my corresponding mind/body's interests and limitations and visceral joys). Examining my aesthetic choices in painting is a way of remaking my relationship to pleasure, to work, to able-ness, and to my experience of my own mind/body. Imagery in paintings comes from experiences which give me a certain kind of awareness of my body—a new perception and relationship involving care and maintenance, physical feeling, and mental picture of who and what I am.

The theme 'being a body' extends to an exploration of what it means culturally to be diseased, and to an examination of the forces (colonialism, industrialism, capitalism, and certain ideas that separate the mind from the body) which reinforce separation between the land and our bodies, and which inform how we treat both. Additionally, I am exploring the epigenetic inheritance of being Jewish, which contains—at the same time—the history of persecution that has created this genetic predisposition for disease in my body as well as the resilience of the people who survived. My paintings are a witness to those experiences, a cautionary message showing the outcome of targeted persecution, and they are a call for peace. I invite viewers to see the shape of our fantasies so that we may change them; I invite viewers to unlearn that we are separate from nature, and to witness a journey through the kingdom of the sick.