



KENISE BARNES FINE ART
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STATEMENT

I am in awe of that which makes me wonder. What is that thing? How was a thing made, how is something done? By how refined something is—a smooth and rounded acorn, a leaf turned into lace by mold, a sheet of paper so thin and masterfully made you can nearly see through it, the flight of a hawk soaring by effortlessly. And often it is those things or acts that are beautiful, mysterious, well-crafted or executed—the things that defy easy explanation, that arouse your curiosity about the world, about yourself, that lift your heart. The world can be a difficult and heavy place to navigate. While I admire and respect artwork of all kinds, beauty and joy have a very important place and allow us to have a moment of peace and levity.

The process for creating the flora and fauna existing in my imaginary ecosystems can be likened to jazz—I'm riffing on nature, taking colors, structures, etc. from a variety of species and places, and reconfiguring them in a new way. Many of these react to viewer proximity, or the airflow within an exhibition space, making the pieces seem to come to life when approached. Upon closer inspection, the viewer is often rewarded with remarkably detailed patterns, or with the discovery of another smaller and more delicate "species" hidden beneath the first layer of an installation. Other works are displayed in vitrines to appear more specimen-like. Materials such as translucent tissue weight papers and glass inform these fantastic and ephemeral species. The resulting drawings, prints and sculptures have also been starting points for my unique designs for fabrication in various other durable materials.

My most recent body of sculptural works expresses my intense love for color, detail, nature and the fanciful. Allure, beauty and the surreal all play together here with handmade paper and fly-tying materials. As a young artist, the imagery in my prints and drawings were organic and sometimes fetish-like in nature, and this bubbles up again and shines through in these pieces. These new sculptural elements are a tip of the hat to Mother Nature and my early reverence for Meret Oppenheim's *Object*.