

Panel Presentation, KU School of Medicine Artists Open House, September 15, 2018

In these paintings for the installation "Seasons" I wish to offer the students who attend the KU School of Medicine in Salina, a place of visual meditation on the processes of living and dying. Here is a world of plant and insect, which like a human body is found within a context of constant flux.

The garden as a deeply interrelated environment, one affected by cycles of life both inside and out, works like a body. Every living part depends upon and responds to another. This precarious balance of diversity builds a place of fragility, beauty and wonder, where the cycles of life turn microcosmically and macrocosmically.

The individual who tends the garden... the gardener, learns to observe, nurture, propagate, heal, sow, prune, and replant, all in the face of the inevitabilities of birth, life and death.

The art of painting mimics those of gardening and medicine. All three require the deep focus of paying very close attention, of submitting one self to responding to the knowledge, questions and observations that arise from listening and observing, and recording closely. Without the application of knowledge found through the art of seeing there is no accumulation of understanding.

Because the temporal human body is the central location of study for all students here, I chose a garden to reflect a movement through time, so it could become a metaphor for the seasons of the body. Seasons are not straightforward or uniform, sometimes there is an abnormal abundance, an early death, a late blossoming, an interruption to the ability to thrive, a plague, a flood, a fruiting, a drought.

And as for all who travel through a life; there is the inevitability of death, an acceptance of that which allows for rebirth and replenishment. The process the painter takes to build a painting; reflects these bodily processes.

There is no tight plan showing me how a painting will eventually develop or appear. It is through the physical and visceral experiences of painting itself. being wholly present to the application of materials; that allows characters, place and subject arise. This unfolding of process unlocks unforeseen ideas and imaginative riffs, events that are unimaginable away from the painting process.

These natural occupants of the land that you see in these paintings have become the players and character I use metaphorically when painting to talk of being human; to being a part of a larger process of cycles in nature; and, to remind myself of my transitory existence.