

Anthropocene Blues: Nature and the Social Imagination

Sandra Williams

Second Floor Gallery

October 16 - December 18, 2021

Closing Reception December 18, 2021 @ 2:00 - 4:30pm

Artist's Statement:

“Anthropocene Blues: Nature and the Social Imagination” investigates the boundaries between human and animal, realms perceived as entirely separate by the modern mind. The works in this exhibition posit that we can understand the interrelationship as an ecotone—an area where two communities meet and integrate. Traditionally, the term refers to a meeting of ecological communities where biodiversity often flourishes. Anthropocene Blues explores the ecotone of nature and culture, and the resulting tension. Human need for food, land, and resources tends to dominate and justify irreversible, often harmful changes to the ecosystem. My work challenges that narrative, using the lens of folklore and its reliance on nature for wonder as well as sustenance. Anthropocene Blues blends the scientific and totemic understanding of the natural world, urging the viewer to value and conserve spaces and species that cannot be replaced, and the resilience of species that survive and thrive despite a hostile challenges and changes to their environment. Anthropocene Blues tells an urgent, timely store that words alone cannot hold. The arts have long communicated issues, influenced and educated people, and challenged dominant paradigms by providing a throughway to share subtle narratives, hidden stories. Where words fail, visual arts provide a conducive atmosphere for receiving information, encouraging people to reflect on unpalatable topics through the lens of aesthetics.”

Bio:

Sandra Williams is a visual artist that works across a broad range of mediums including cut paper, Community Art, murals and painting. Her mixed media drawings have been exhibited at SOFA New York, Ann Nathan Gallery in Chicago, the Museum of Contemporary Art in St. Louis, Missouri and National Amazon University in Puerto Maldonado, Peru. Her work is included in the Howard Tullman Collection, The Museum of Contemporary Craft in Portland Oregon and several private collections. She has been an artist in residence at The Studios of Key West, Florida, Arquetopia, Puebla, Mexico, The Contemporary Crafts Museum in Portland, Oregon and with the Amazon Conservation Association in Madre de Dios, Peru. Recognition for her work in Community Arts includes a Mayor's Art Award, eleven Parents Association Awards for Contributions to Students, and two Hixson-Lied Awards for Outreach, Engagement and Service. Her most recent work

contains variations on the theme of ecotone, the area where two communities meet and integrate. Traditionally, the term refers to ecological communities, such as the zone where the plains and desert meet the rainforest and the biodiversity that occurs there. Yet it can also refer the zone where “nature” and “culture” intersect—where city meets the preexisting natural environment and the tension resulting from this intersection. It may also refer to a metaphorical overlapping of narrative and place.

Additional work includes social practice projects that range from working with incarcerated populations on the improvement and development of soft goals to large scale events engaging 800-1500 community members on activities that mainstream marginalized populations.

