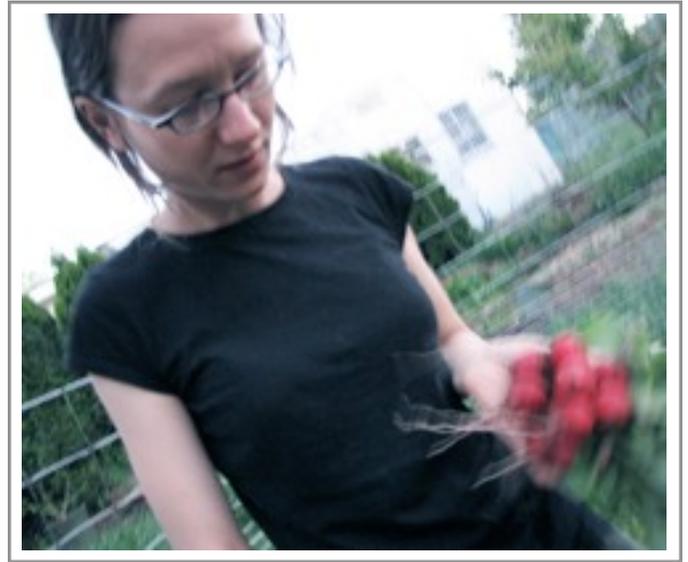


Artist Statement and Bio

Mulysa Melco

Mulysa Melco is a painter and landscape designer in Portland, Oregon. She has a BFA from the Minneapolis College of Art and Design and a graduate degree in landscape design and garden history from the University of Minnesota. She studied at the Istituto d'Arte in Florence, Italy and interned at the Royal Botanic Gardens Kew.



“The themes I work with are universal: finding balance, the search for a true home, the yearning for belonging and wholeness. The garden is a symbol of the internal theater where this journey takes place as well as a physical manifestation of experiences and dreams.

My life-long passion for plants and gardens drives my art-making. My paintings are meditations on relationships with plants and spaces that deeply influence me.

The recent series of larger works narrate the creation and destruction of a garden, followed by the dream of an idyllic landscape (shown here, ‘*Sampler*’). The play between the scale of the work and the concentration of detail relates to the structure of a garden or ecosystem and more generally to the theme of macrocosm/microcosm.

The small works isolate and magnify details from the garden—clusters of seeds, sprouts and roots. They are meant to hold up small, everyday things for closer inspection.

My use of detailed pencil drawing and spare oil color is a style developed from training in botanical illustration. My imagery is derived from turn-of-the-century botany textbooks, antique floral charts, scientific diagrams and fragments of my dreams. I am inspired by the work of Egon Schiele and Gustav Klimt, Persian miniaturists, especially scenes of walled ‘Paradise’ gardens, and the lower third of Medieval paintings that show a ‘flowery mead’ at the saints’ feet.

I realize again and again that I make these paintings for the same affirming reasons people make gardens—in the words of landscape architect Julie Moir Messervy ‘to interact with nature; to share; to find sanctuary, to heal, to honor the earth, to leave a mark.’ When people look at my paintings I hope they are inspired to look more carefully and slowly at the world, and love it every day.”