

MARCY HERMANSADER

Shall My Heart Become a Tree

March 10 - April 17, 2022

Mother is pleased to present *Shall My Heart Become a Tree*, Marcy Hermansader's first solo exhibition with the gallery, featuring early and recent works on paper. The show runs from 10 March through 17 April 2022. Mother | Manhattan is located on the fourth floor of 368 Broadway, suite 415, New York, NY.

"What is a spring dusk? [...] There is nothing to fear. Give me your hand, take another step: we are at the roots now, and at once everything becomes dark, spicy, and tangled like in the depth of a forest. There is a smell of turf and tree rot; roots wander about, entwined, full with juices that rise as if sucked up by pumps. We are on the nether side, at the lining of things, in gloom stitched with phosphorescence."¹

-Bruno Schulz, *Sanatorium Under the Sign of the Hourglass*

Marcy Hermansader's seven paintings in her solo exhibition, *Shall My Heart Become a Tree*, show us movements of braiding, protecting, reaching, absorbing, and pulsating against subterranean repose. During this time of the year, we may call it a spring dusk, the surface of the ground suggests transition. Transformation is in the air in telltale ways, but not all signals of waning darkness can be deciphered. Seeds are yet to be formed and dispersed in this overlap of dark with light, cross-stitching a tapestry that we have yet to step into. Renewal is upon us, but with no ignorance of loss. Engaging with such cycles of regeneration, and not shirking from darkness, Hermansader's work employs patterns of overlay, or imbrication, as found in nature and landscapes, suggesting both fecundity and protection. Hermansader's paintings involve an eclectic mix of materials and techniques. She reflects, "Fragments from postcards act as windows into other realities—specific moments of time and place that can serve as source and center. Leaves may appear jewel-like in colored pencil, painted thick or thin with gouache or acrylic, embossed with a hard pencil in tiny patterns, or dotted with fingertips dipped in paint."

Hermansader draws inspiration from the unseen as well, in the air and beneath the surface, metaphorical and more mysterious, as she interfaces with hidden patterns of unknowable cycles, tied to untold futures. Her renderings of synaptic membranes, taproots, chthonic seeds, and feathery energies suggest unmapped pathways, while tracing inner worlds and energies. She also pulls from the past for inspiration, in particular a time spent at an artist colony on Ossabaw Island, Georgia, in 1981. There she describes finding "a wild and unfamiliar world, forests of towering Live Oak trees draped with Spanish moss, salt marshes with winding streams, and abundant wildlife." Certain themes and imagery in Hermansader's drawings disappear and resurface over long periods of time. "Night of the Glow-worm"(1989) and "After"(1988) fit seamlessly with work made in 2019-21.

Overall, these paintings present to us "journeys to the roots," and this journey is inviting: "It is not quite as dark here as we thought. On the contrary, the interior is pulsating with light. It is, of course, the internal light of roots, a wandering phosphorescence, tiny veins of light marbling the darkness..."²

-Kari Adelaide

¹ Bruno Schulz, *Sanatorium Under the Sign of the Hourglass*, (New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1977), 46-48.

² Ibid., 47.

Marcy Hermansader (b. 1951 Glen Cove, NY) is a mixed media artist living and working in Vermont. Hermansader's unique style of painting involves using a variety of materials that evoke the natural world, including thread, collage, fabric, paint, and colored pencil. Her purposeful choice of materials grows out of the subjects of her work — often sylvan, otherworldly landscapes and renderings of flora and fauna — as subject and emotion preclude the means of expression Hermansader takes. Her work tends to alternate between inward focus and engagement with issues in the larger world, such as war, industrial accidents, and the experiences of people with disabilities. Regardless of her content, her pieces are deeply personal reflections on the world around her, whether that be relationships with nature or other people.

Hermansader earned a BFA from Philadelphia College of Art, where she studied with Cynthia Carlson, Ree Morton, and Rafael Ferrer. She has had solo shows across the United States, including those at Williams College Museum of Art (Williamstown, MA), The Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts (Philadelphia, PA), and the DeCordova Museum (Lincoln, MA), among others. Hermansader has participated in over fifty group exhibitions including *Interfaces: Outsider Art and the Mainstream* at the Philadelphia Museum of Art (Philadelphia, PA), *The Drawn Page* at the Aldrich Museum (Ridgefield, CT), and *Curator's Choice* at the Bronx Museum (Bronx, NY). Her work can be found in the permanent collections of various museums, including the Philadelphia Museum of Art, Bowdoin College Museum (Brunswick, ME), and The Minneapolis Institute of Art (Minneapolis, MN).