

Emily Talley



Artist's Statement

I love to work with a combination of mediums that intuitively do not go together, and in fact, that repel each other – oil-based and water-based mediums. We all know that water and oil don't mix. Yet, I find ways to combine them so that they work together beautifully, and this brings me joy. Finding more and more ways to do this will be a lifelong process for me and a never ending journey of curiosity and exploration.

In regards to brushes, truth be told, I don't like them. I absolutely must have the experience of moving one hard surface against another and feeling the inherent resistance and struggle of that, as well as a deep sense of satisfaction. It is a passionate, visceral experience, as I apply colors, scrape them off, and reapply, over and over again, in effect dyeing the paper substrate, creating multiple layers of color and texture, as well as transparencies and visual mix. When I do add water, it is by dipping the water-soluble pencil tip or wax pastel tip into water before touching it to the page. I enjoy using everyday items in creating my artwork, for example, a dinner spoon or a credit card instead of a palette knife, or a frozen blueberry or a flower petal or melted wax in addition to the pastels and pencils.

I work in the abstract and begin each piece with a blank sheet of smooth (hot press) watercolor paper in square format. Truth be told, I don't like using easels, so I work only in the horizontal plane, and that feels the most comfortable to me. I don't plan in advance what I'm going to create, nor do I plan my palette in advance. I simply begin. However, I do not begin until a desire wells up in me, similar to the desire of satisfying one's most basic needs: to be fed when hungry, to be sheltered and clothed, to sleep when tired, and to love and be loved.

My artwork comes from a place deep within me and it gives me a sense of "interbeing" – of being part of something greater than my individual self. At the beginning of a piece, I have a sense of leading the process, and then a shift begins and I find myself following and witnessing what unfolds. I am very grateful for this. It is both an amazing and spiritual experience for me.

I know that a piece is done when I feel a sense of contentment with it and it seems "alive" and "it breathes." I will continually strive to deepen my connection to my artwork and to be authentic and true to myself with each piece that I create. I also hope to connect in a powerful way with others through my art.