

CARLA STETSON
KNOTS, WEBS, AND ENTANGLEMENTS

Knots, Webs, and Entanglements

I live and work in the countryside of New York state in an old barn that is home to a quite a few wild creatures besides its human occupants. My partner and I have a small apiary where we keep bees and harvest honey. The success of that endeavor depends upon human beekeepers adapting to what bee colonies want and need; we must learn to understand their complex language. I think the question of wildness versus domestication is not helpful; instead, understanding that human and natural realms are entangled in fascinating, marvelous, multiple and necessary ways is essential to survival. I explore in my work. My personal encounters and involvement with the more-than-human world, my sense that humans are dependent on creatures often seen as insignificant, totally 'other,' combines with global concerns such as extinction, and gives rise to the themes that I explore in my work.

Webs : Early morning walks reveal a profusion of orb spider webs in the tangle and chaos of weedy plants in the fields and ditches near my home. My photographs of webs shining in morning light that became raw material for montage. Cyanotypes, drawing, and sewn stitches, make connections to the spiders' radial patterns. The title of this series, 'Spider Weather' refers to the perfect combination of early morning light and fog that reveals the webs of these prolific weavers. When we pay attention, the tangle and chaos of the natural world coalesce into marvelous systems of organization.

Knots: Braiding rugs from used woolens and scraps of fabric used to be a necessary task for my female ancestors, a way in which valuable items were salvaged and put to new use. Nothing was wasted. It appears I have inherited this tendency towards saving scraps: talismans that evoke memories, photographs, old drawings, collected books- my flat files are full of such pieces, put to use in new collages based on a braided rug motif. Here, the braids have come undone. The strands alternate between becoming unwoven or entangled and knotted; animated.

Entanglements: Since 2017, I have worked with images of animals in drawings. Animals serve a multiplicity of functions for humans: pets, food, clothing, medicine, proxies, aides, symbols of power or industriousness, and more. Their role in relation to humans, who are, after all, animals themselves, is a murky and highly contested ground. These drawings reflect upon the natural, cultural, and political issues of the world we share. Narratives arise, psychoses are explored, and power struggles ensue in the border ecology of this imaginative dreamscape.

CARLA STETSON

BEST OF SHOW

SOUTHERN TIER BIENNIAL



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CARLA STETSON

Carla Stetson is a visual artist currently living and working in a barn built in 1840 that she converted into her studio and home on four acres near Ithaca, New York. It is also home to Sky Barn Apiaries. Her work explores the tangled interrelationships between the wild and human in mixed media drawings, sculptures and installations.

Stetson received a Bachelor in Fine Arts degree in sculpture from the Kansas City Art Institute and a Master of Fine Arts degree from Vermont College. She recently retired as an Associate Professor of Art at Ithaca College in New York and now works full time in her studio. Previously, she lived in Duluth, Minnesota, where she is best known for public sculpture, especially the Clayton Jackson McGhie Memorial, the first large scale memorial to victims of a lynching in the United States.

Stetson's residency awards include Draw International in France; McColl Center for the Arts in Charlotte, North Carolina; Saltonstall Foundation in New York; and the Jentel Foundation in Wyoming. She has received fellowships and grants from the Puffin Foundation, Intermedia Arts, Arrowhead Regional Arts Council, the Minnesota State Arts Board and Ithaca College. Her work is included in several collections, including the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, the Tweed Museum of Art in Duluth, Minnesota, the City of Duluth, and Carolinas Health Care in Charlotte, North Carolina, the University of Minnesota and the St. Louis County Historical Association.



BEST OF SHOW 2021 WINNING PIECE:

Mesmerized

2021

ink, gouache, netting, on cut paper

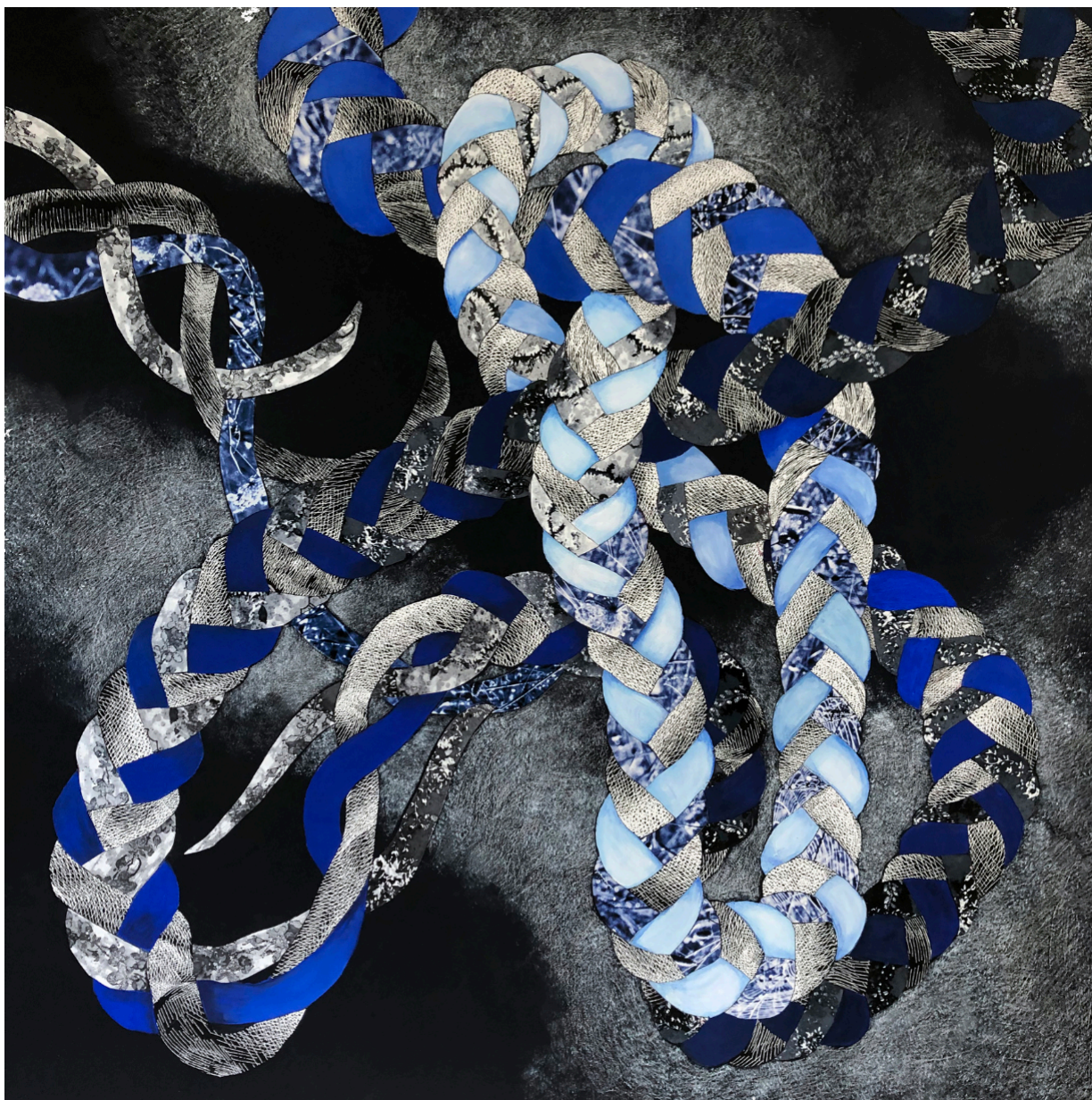
48" x 71"



2021 JURORS:

Mizin Shin - Born and raised in South Korea, Mizin Shin graduated from Hong-ik University with a B.F.A in Printmaking and received her M.F.A from SUNY at Buffalo. She is currently a Visiting Assistant Professor in the Department of Art & Art History at the University of Rochester. Shin's work has been shown regionally and nationally at institutions across the United States. Leading numerous printmaking workshops and giving talks with a number of art organizations, Shin focuses on both traditional and contemporary printmaking practices to promote a multidisciplinary approach to the medium. Mizin Shin is a co-founder of Mirabo Press in Buffalo, NY and vice president of the Print Club of Rochester.

Brian Lee Whisenhunt - has worked in art education and museums for more than twenty years and more than anything enjoys connecting people with art. He served as director of education at the Wichita Art Museum in Kansas and was the inaugural manager of public programs for the Blanton Museum of Art when it opened in 2006. Brian then became director of the Swope Art Museum in Terre Haute, IN, where he oversaw their successful reaccreditation by AAM, and the Museum of the Southwest in Midland, TX, leading a \$5.4M renovation of the art museum and the celebration of its 50th anniversary. In January of 2017, Brian became executive director of The Rockwell Museum where he is building upon their stellar reputation as a leader in arts and museum education; diversifying the collection to reflect the new focus on art about the American experience; and working to increase overall attendance to the museum, its programs and events.



Muscle Memory
2021
mixed media
35" x 35"





A Beautiful Trap
2022
mixed media
34" x 34"

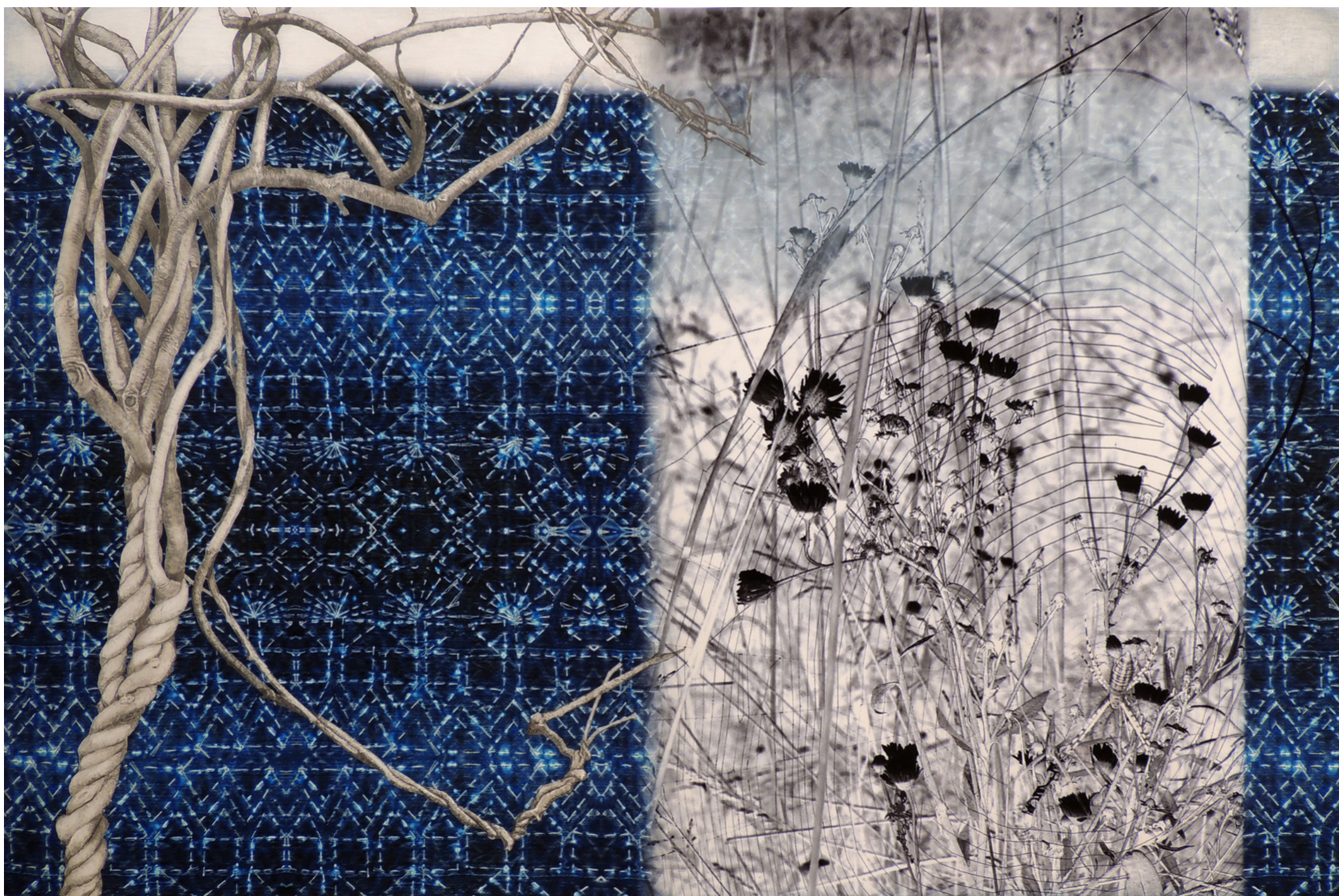


Navigating the Magnetic Fields
2022
mixed media
34.5" x 35"



Braided
2021
mixed media
14" x 14"





Bound Together

2020

archival digital print, graphite

22.5" x 34.5"



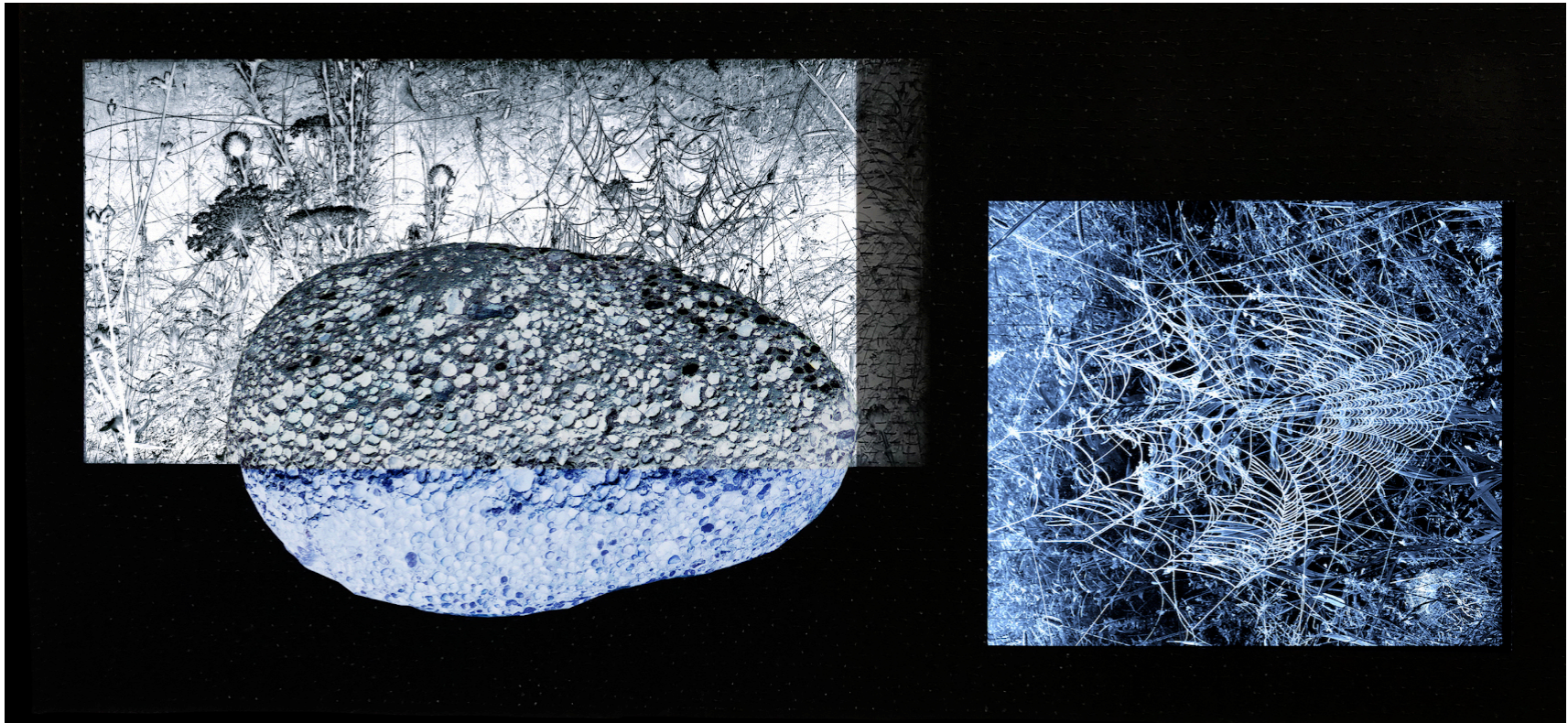


Blue Hour

2021

archival digital print, liquid graphite, colored pencil

24" x 41"



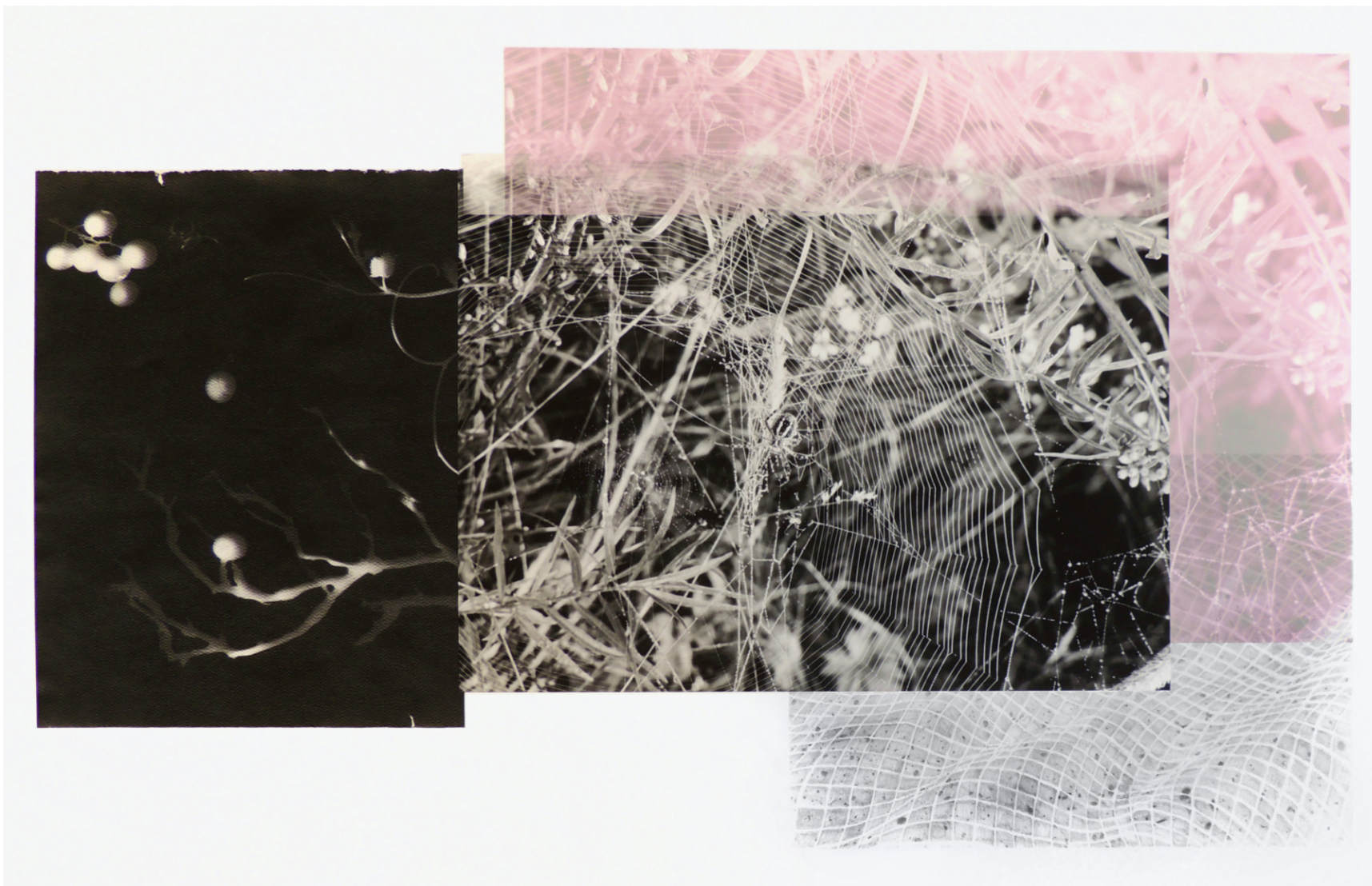
Useful Topological Disorder

2021

archival digital print, thread

24" x 40"





Space/Time

2017

archival digital print, graphite

20" x 32"



On Edge
2022

graphite, ink on paper mounted on panel
38" x 35"





Opus Mellifera

2022

ink, acrylic, on paper, mounted on panel
35" x 49"

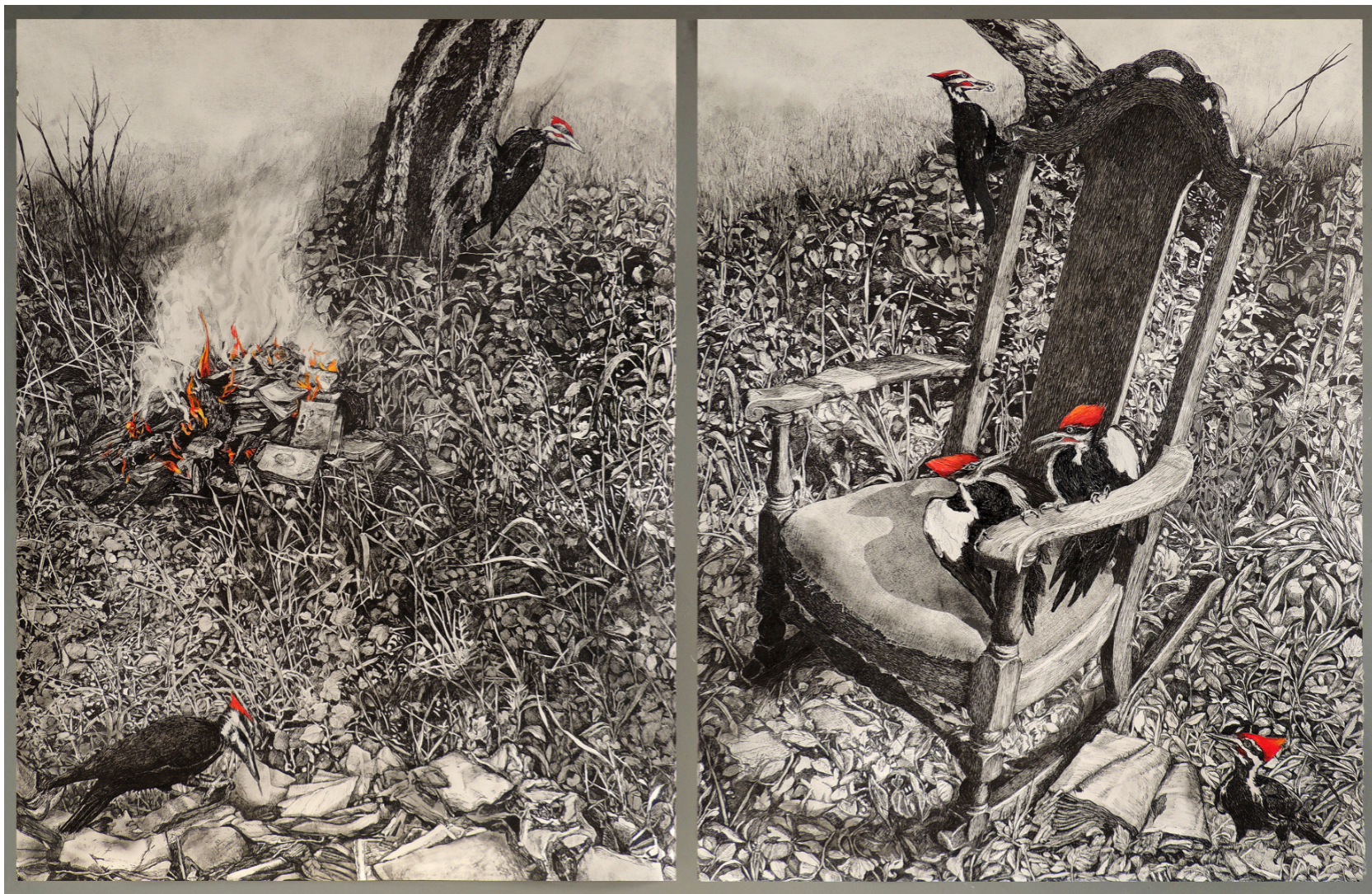


The Imposter

2019

ink, liquid graphite on paper, diptych
40" x 61"

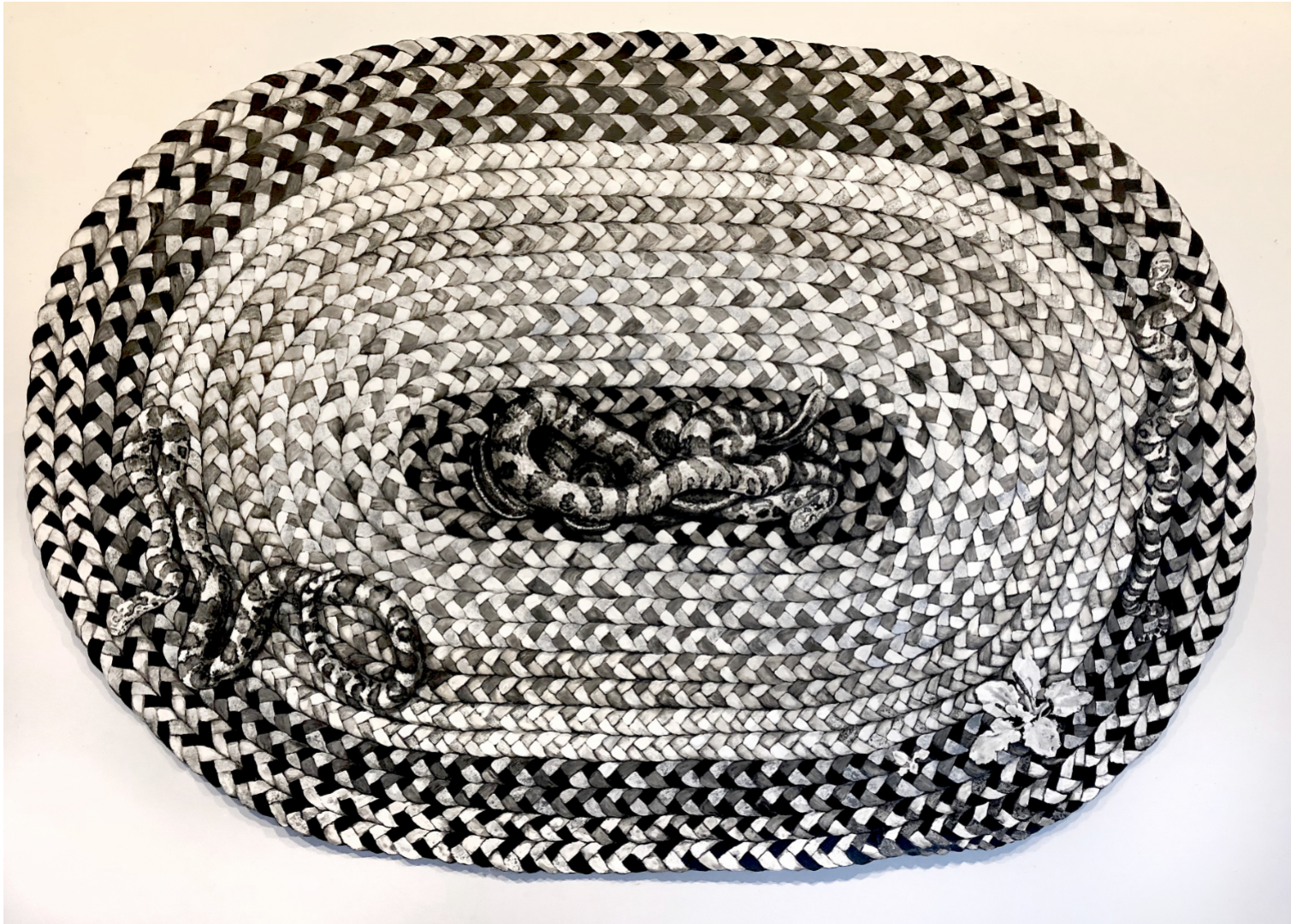




The Revisionists

2021

ink, liquid graphite, acrylic on paper mounted on panels, diptych
40" x 61"



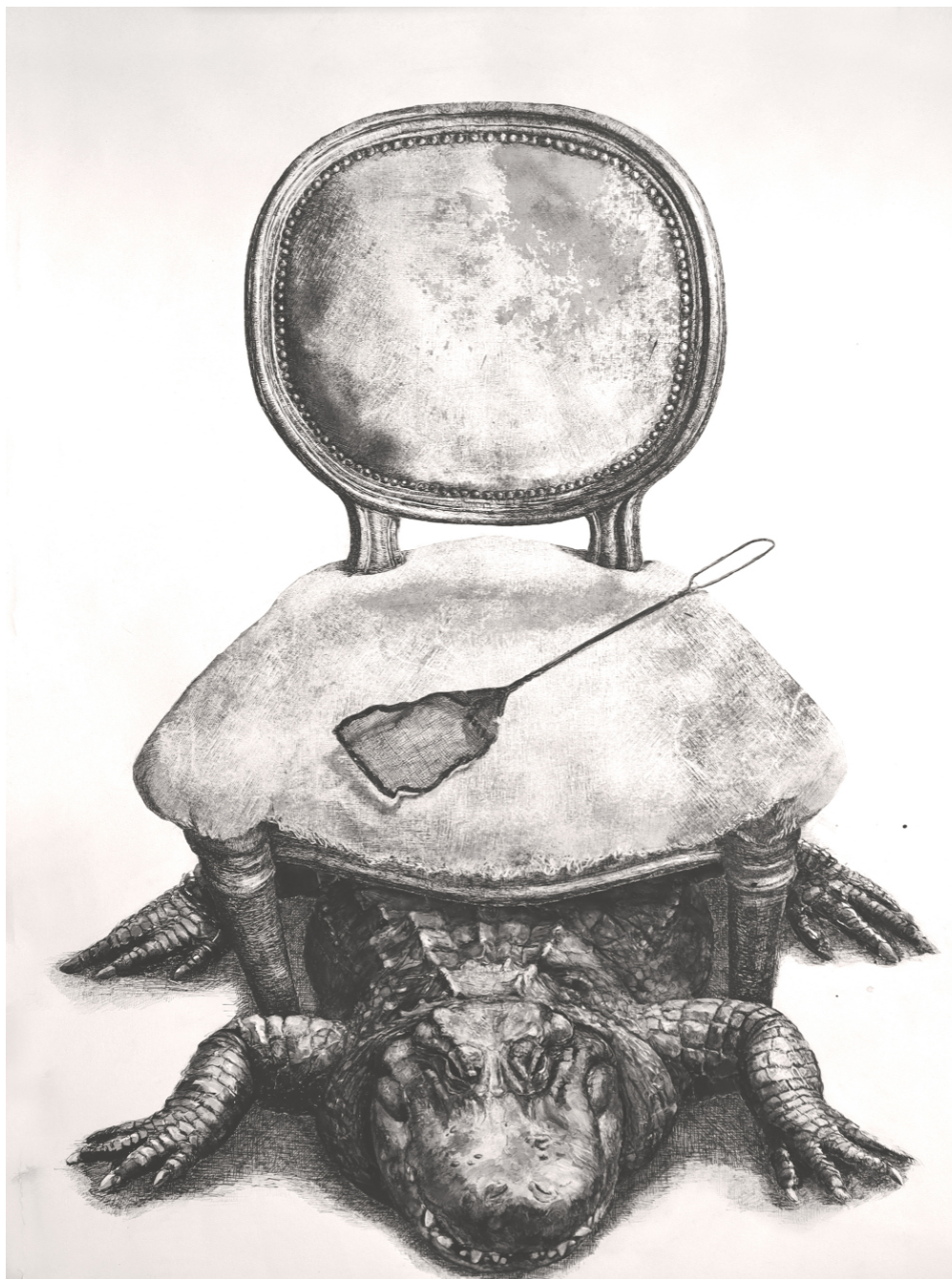
Best to Be Coiled and Alert

2019

ink, gouache on cut paper

48" x 60" irregular





Swatting Flies

2019

ink and liquid graphite on paper

38" x 30"



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The Southern Tier Biennial (STB) is produced by the Tri-County Arts Council and is a collaboration among the Tri-County Arts Council, and the Cattaraugus Region Community Foundation through the generous sponsorship of the F. Donald Kenney Foundation.

The STB has been a part of the cultural landscape in Western New York for 16 years now, and its positive effects are being felt in a multitude of ways. One of the most significant changes has been the access rural artists have had to a professional juried exhibition experience with significant cash prizes and opportunities, both intended to further professional careers. The STB solo show, offered to our Best of Show winners, is perhaps the most significant element of importance to the artists. Opportunities for solo shows, especially one with a catalog and monies for supplies and professional development are almost unheard of, and we laud the founders of the STB for their foresight in including it as an artist prize.

Looking forward, the 2023 Biennial will be reviewed by new jurors and, therefore, the show they create will be as different in tone and scope as its predecessors, yet equally and beautifully true to the definition of a "regional survey of contemporary art."

Tri-County Arts Council

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