

Kate Alboreo - Your Body To Places

“When a cell is damaged, a tree cannot go back and fix or replace it. The trick is in sealing, not healing. The focus is on resisting the spread of damage... by isolating the wound and then growing beyond it.”

- *Woods Whys: How Do Trees Heal Wounds on Trunks and Branches?*, by Michael Snyder

Kate Alboreo's paintings are more than just pretty. Among other interests, Kate is fascinated with the parallels between survival tactics in plants and extreme displays of strength found in humanity... particularly in women's professional wrestling. For Alboreo, nature is an early inspiration and muse. For a number of years she worked directly from photographs of the forest taken while going on long hikes. Over time, she began to abstract the landscape, employing fantastical color and an imaginative use of line and symbology. While keeping nature as a formal reference point, her work has grown increasingly more personal. Her latest work represents poetic psychological musings on the authentic vs. fabricated, and the forbidden vs. vulnerable. In some works, figures taken directly from stills from women's wrestling have entered the ring. Bright flashes of neon color recall a bit of gaudiness of wrestling outfits. In other works vines, limbs (and in one painting, harpoons) crisscross in front of a void or entrance of some kind. These works beg the question, what do we wish to seal away in the darkness?

In nature, we witness a tree's resilience when it grows sideways after being blown over by a hurricane. We see the bulging knot formed around what was once a wound. Women's professional wrestling is also an overt display of strength, vigor and survivalism. Yet, not only are the stunts fake, it is a total invention of the patriarchy. Despite it being a fabrication of feminine power through the eyes of a handful of a few powerful businessmen, for Kate and many others, it still has the potential to awe and inspire.

Growing up, Kate learned survivalism through a patriarchal framework. She says she learned to deal with challenges in life like the architect of modern day wrestling, CEO of WWE Inc., Vince McMahon. He says,

“I have a facility to get rid of negatives very quickly. And if something hurts me, I get rid of it”

McMahon believes that wounds that are ignored can disappear. Somewhere along the line Kate discovered this mindset might work well in nature but it does not serve her anymore. Through personal discovery and coming into herself as a queer woman, she has found more useful coping strategies in life and in art. Kate's strength as an artist comes from her ability to present eclectic metaphors from her own personal experience. Right now, plants and wrestling intertwine under the umbrella of her creative practice, but over time, new connections and parallels will undoubtedly be uncovered.