

Shirley Scheier is a lifelong printmaker, painter, and environmentalist. Born in Kansas City, the terrain of Colorado, Kansas, and Missouri were her childhood love. During her young life, she was engaged in establishing one of the first local and organic foods cooperatives in the midwest. Her early artwork was landscape painting and organic abstraction. Deeply influenced by the feminist art of the 1970s, her direction shifted to narrative drawing, collage, and printmaking. University of Washington-Seattle Painting, Printmaking, and Drawing Division's national search brought Shirley from the mid-west for a tenure track faculty position in 1986. Shirley's printmaking and artist-hand-made books were the medium to express her narrative and figurative work. As her printmaking advanced into sequential progressive printmaking, it informed the organic abstract landscape work of the past twenty years. Today she lives with the love of her life and has her studio on the Olympic Peninsula. "Sharing my work is a connection with those searching for, avoiding, or ignoring a deeper belonging to our complex ecosystems" [www.shirleyscheierstudio.com](http://www.shirleyscheierstudio.com)

### *Netting the Wind*

The net is one of the oldest tools of the human species. It allows ease in gathering sustenance. I live by the water where nets are part of my day-to-day reality. The thin material and numerous sections of wide-open space surprisingly creates a strong structure. I have been painting and drawing nets for many years. I have made up visual narratives of nets, I have studied nets as if drawing their portrait, I have learned how to make a net. The recent shift in my work is dipping or soaking the cotton nets in paint. I then press the net by hand on paper or canvas, as well as use the net as a drawing tool. I'm casting it across the canvas, searching for and catching the energy, vitality, and the spirit I bring home from long sails and walks. The net as a mark-making tool gives shape to life energy in constant motion. The image develops from a dance of bodily gestures and intuition. I use this fabricated object to engage and welcome life affirming forces.

Observations and felt sensations encountered along river pathways, in the woods, walking the shoreline are primary influences in my life. I like my place there, knowing that I am just one of tens of thousands of species living in that space. I feel I am going home when I venture into the wilds. There is so much going on, crumbling nurse logs, water splashing over the rocks, earthy smells, bird calls, the endless shades of green, the tide sliding

up the beach and receding back into the vast sea body. I carry this somatic experience back to the studio.

My life long relationship with the natural environment has gone through many shifts and changes, as most relationships do. I am drawn to nature's organic life lessons of birth, growth, transformation, interconnectedness of species, and today especially, decay. Spiritual quest is the focus of the "Netting the Wind". I am not oblivious to the peril the environment is suffering. My curiosity follows the science. Marine biologist Rachael Carson's statement "It is not half so important to know as to feel" confirms my understanding of the arts as life-sustaining forces for humanity. Readings of many nature writers and poets is of great support. SScheier  
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