

Blue & Green | Artist Statement | Julia March Crocetto

Waterways have been the principle focus of my study for several years. I have lived near flowing water most of my life. While living in Talkeetna, my awareness of my connectivity to rivers deepened, as well as my awareness of our tendency to take them for granted. We tend to look only at the surface of things, missing out on the delicious complexity of the world around us. Streams connect us, with their dendritic tendrils, literally and symbolically.

This body of work was conceived eight years ago, when I moved to New Mexico to attend college. “Lament” became a common theme in my art, a term that I use to reflect the composite emotions I experience related to loss, homesickness, and the damage humans have inflicted on their own home. Professor Glenn A. Albrecht named this sense of loss “solastalgia.” I look at “place” from multiple perspectives, from the figurative to the literal. I commune with rivers, listen to the wind, and dream of fireweed in mid-winter. I study aerial photography, maps, and satellite images. Using cloth and stitch, I bring these elements into a more intimate sphere.

As an artist, I describe myself as process- and research-based. My sphere of interest is the Greater West, once known as “frontier lands.” We now live in what I call the Post-Frontier period, where the idea of wilderness persists but the actual article has disappeared. The actions I take in the process of “making” imbues the work with meaning. The data I gather is interpreted poetically. Stitch is my primary mechanism; it is both tool and action for various methods of bringing things together and mark-making. It is typically the first action and the last action performed among many layers of actions. Cloth is a cooperative participant, yielding easily to manipulations – 2D to 3D to 2D, sometimes back to 3D. Textiles have a history of carrying narratives; the quilt is the iconic storyteller of the West. I embrace the quilt for its oscillation between image and object, and fiber as a medium because of its intimate relationship with humans.