

Melissa Fritsch
Artist Statement
John Paul Reardon Award

My work reflects my interest in the colors and forms around me, specifically the organic, such as plants and the body and their intricate structure. For me, representing texture, tactility, and detail of form is sensuous and seductive. Oil paint, in and of itself interests me in this way: its pigments are vibrant; it can be thick and creamy, glossy, opaque, translucent and sensual. Also, I like to investigate the idea of smoothness and roughness and the juxtaposition of them.

I have a detail-oriented style of working. In some cases I acknowledge as much detail as is perceptible to me, which reflects my inclination towards the study of form and the science of things. Other times, I work roughly and gesturally by dripping, pouring and smearing to express my interest in emotion and feelings.

Inspirational artists to me are painters Dorthea Tanning, Shanna Kaplow, and Amy Wynn Derry. Their work is distinct from one another and exemplifies my interest in both the abstract and the representational. In my work I am exploring the distinction, or lack of, between the representational and the abstract. I hope to create images that can be ethereal but grounded in earthly ideas and detail at the same time.