

Gwen Manfrin

ARTIST STATEMENT

In “Down the Rabbit Hole”, the imagery reflects those moments that disorient us and force new leaps of faith into the unknown. There is a regret, or pain, in the loss of the familiar, but also an understanding of the need to embrace the anticipation of the new, whether freely or under duress. Reality or illusion. Dream or delusion. Surrendering to the moment and letting go. Like a trip down the rabbit hole, fear and uncertainty can give way to curiosity and anxious expectation.

The first reaction to this vulnerability is often fear; a fear that is a visceral emotion that remains embedded in your heart and soul. Panic and claustrophobia go hand in hand and are not readily removed from one’s memory. The use of encaustic emboldens this theory by making it physical; thus freezing the moment.us.

The work is comprised of watercolor paintings on panel. The panel has been treated with an absorbent ground, making it receptive to watercolor paint. The paint is applied in thin washes, drying in between, until the layers build up to the finished level of contrast. The panels are then treated with either an archival varnish, or encaustic, sealing the watercolor.

The use of encaustic raises the level of hands on art making, as there is something profound about the bond that forms between the me and the work, almost as if it is a tangible thing. I find that this physical connection adds to the emotional connection, as the creation and the intent behind the work is personal.