

Jill Sebastian

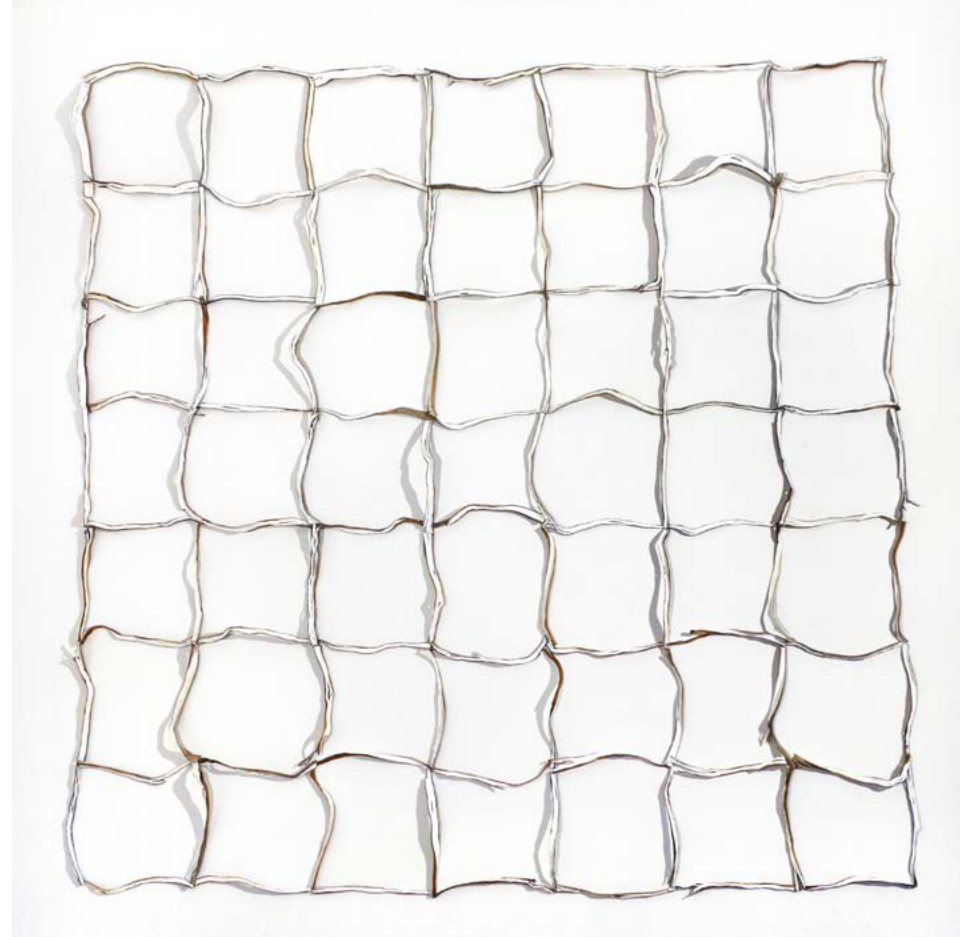
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Beyond the symphony of wind punctuated by occasional bird song, the only sounds I heard at the Montello residency were sounds I made. I arrived with essentially no materials, some hand tools, a couple vague notions and thought I'd press myself to do only what I can do in only two weeks. I didn't fully understand, though it crossed my mind – that being immersed is the real deal, “quieting my mind”. I can always work but I can't always have the time to connect and be so minutely observant.

I am committed to exploring the relationship between nature and culture, material and language, environmental science and art as expressed through cycles of regeneration, transition, and transformation. Responding to a given environment,

Desert Diary - Midday, bookboard, paper, 14 1/2 x 12 x 3 in,
and *Desert Diary - Sunset*, bookboard, paper, 14 x 9 1/2 x 2 1/2 in, 2022



Gimme Land, Lotsa Land, sagebrush bark, paint, 7 ft x 7 ft x 3 in, 2022



I forage. Scavenging natural materials and working them by hand connects me with the most ancient of human activities.

In this “sagebrush ocean”, I collected only the dead layers of bark cast completely off. Embracing the silence, I used only a Swiss army knife to peel the outer and inner bark apart to reveal how wind has stressed these tough plants, the twists in their trunks sculpted as they recover, drought separating outer unsupportable layers. Like imposing an artificial grid upon land, I forced these shards into an unnatural geometry in *Gimme Land, Lotsa Land*.

The constantly changing color of the basin surprised me. I captured single moments of the ever-changing palette in a series of 8 wall reliefs. Viewed frontally, they appear as simple color studies, but they are terraced to reveal spatial aspects of the landscape. On the risers are a diary of the waste materials recycled from what I ate, read, or consumed during my stay.

Relaxing into a natural rhythm at Montello has reconnected me with the honest impulses that motivate my work.