

Artist Statement

Anne Wedler

I am an observational painter interested in narrative and visual metaphor. I find figure painting to be a natural fit for story telling. The extreme can feel so real and unreal at the same time. I love the chaos and adventure of human interaction augmented by the process of growing and trying to make it through life. I place the people in my work at odds with each other or their environments and it comes out a mixture of complicated feelings. I like balancing the fun of chaos with the dual joy and torture of intimacy; solitude as a sanctuary and penance. The feeling of longing or the drive of curiosity is like the painting processes itself.

My work has meandered in several directions but has recently solidified around the theme of travel, relocation and explorations as transformative experiences with the ability to change our sense of identity and how identity can be tied to place and purpose. A sense of place is created through color palette, objects and environments. Warm greens for the Deep South, browns for the far flung prairie and cool blues for the arctic. Saturated palettes referencing the intensity and other worldly nature of memory. The objects in our lives can be security or burden, make us feel at home or clutter our lives. Objects become markers of our personalities, identities, time and place, and purpose. Wood panel as indexer, color pallets as signifiers, red coats for safety.

The figures navigate extreme places with the help of a group, or go it alone, take their homes on their backs or leave it all behind. Power dynamics become integral to success or key to disaster. In the series Group Dynamic the figures wear bright red garments to protect themselves from the harsh environments they explore. One wrong choice separates them from danger. Their safety gear highlights how precarious their position is while also making them a matching set. Some groups work together. Some groups divide, stragglers left behind, others going alone. The lessons of cooperation have never been more important than now. What will our group dynamic be?