

JACKIE BATTENFIELD

Weather dominates landscape in the most seductive manner. For me, it is to experience nature at its most abstract moment - most violent, most serene, and most mysterious. This aspect of nature provides a place to begin each work of art. My painting practice is to work with watery pigments, I pour sweep, brush, drip, and fling layers of paint like clouds scudding across the sky. I coax pools of paint into translucent veils of color. Anchoring these ephemeral elements are gestural tree limbs, horizontal water marks, stripes, and blocks of color.

For the last decade, in my paintings and prints, I have focused on the fluidity of water and the natural gestural action of tree branches along side abstract brush strokes and poured layers of paint. Within this process I find a meditative place from which to reflect on the concept of time. Each image captures a single moment, while reflecting all moments.

In the prints, I have been working with handmade papers from Asia for eighteen years. I relate my mark making to the array of expressive materials and textures imbedded in the paper, such as bamboo leaves, horsehair, and gold leaf, or the rippled edge of a handmade paper. Working with these materials, my experience is one of collaboration with an unknown paper maker on the other side of the world. Buddhist practice and the study of Zenga painting are also important influences on my work. A meditative state arises from giving attention to a single aspect of nature, in this case, water movement or the gestural action of a tree limb. The woodcut prints reflect this contemplation and the laborious process of carving the wood becomes a labor of love as it reenacts the original intimacy of experience. Likewise, the woodcuts explore similarities of the wood grain to the subtle gesture and geometry of water ripples. The images capture an arrested moment, and the resonating effects of a stone dropped into still water. As a series, they mark the daily passage of time and the changing light over a steady stream of activity.