



## SPORE PRINTS AS ART *Artwork & Essay by Marlana Stoddard-Hayes*

**M**y background growing up in rural Iowa shaped me to develop a heightened awareness of the natural world, especially the diverse world of living forms, clustered in communities. Now as a mature painter, I still seek to embody these early ideas. Primarily, my work is concerned with following the organic process and is not forced into being. I prefer the method of inviting chance and growth to occur over time and to follow its own path. The pieces are grown over a period of months, and I hope to convey a depth of atmospheric space that causes a sensation of peace in the viewer. Hopefully, they embody my belief

in the transferred touch of the human hand to lend beauty and warmth.

Since moving to the Pacific Northwest over a decade ago, my current work has evolved to include the use of spore prints from the mushrooms that appear like clockwork on our land with the onset of fall rains. After harvesting the caps and trimming off the stems, the spores are allowed to drop over a period of minutes or hours and are then encased in a resin layer that slowly dries. Further working over the top of this layer allows the imagery to develop into a dense network of information...which requires a meditative process to create, as well as to decipher.

It is my hope that the paintings create a world or picture space that is joyful to inhabit. By engaging the mushrooms and recognizing their unique design and pigmentation qualities, I feel I am calling the muse to co-create in a partnership that transcends time.

Currently I am represented by Butters Gallery in Portland, Oregon ([www.buttersgallery.com](http://www.buttersgallery.com)). In the fall, I will launch my new website, designed by bluemousemonkey design group ([www.bluemousemonkey.com](http://www.bluemousemonkey.com)). Once a year I give painting workshops on the Oregon Coast at the Sitka Center for Art and Ecology, where the relationships between nature and the creation of art are examined in detail ([www.Sitkacenter.org](http://www.Sitkacenter.org)). ☞