

Myths, Maps and Legends II

“The most beautiful thing we can experience is the mysterious. It is the source of all art and science.”

Albert Einstein

(From *Living Philosophies*, Simon and Schuster, New York, 1931)

Centuries before Google Maps, old world cartographers created maps based on the stories and recollections of travelers- sometimes including dragons. Like a map, explaining the unknown in a memorable way is what a storyteller does best.

This summer, the Gallery at Tempe Center for the Arts is hosting two exhibitions, one at the Post Office on Mill Avenue and one at the TCA, showcasing artists that use visual narratives to tell of their own journeys to find answers and make sense of the world around us, following in the footsteps of those ancient map makers and storytellers

To learn more about the *Myths, Maps and Legends* exhibitions, workshops and outreach programs go to: www.tempecenterforthearts.com/TCAgallery

Corinne Geertsen, Mesa

A Montana native, Geertsen was fascinated by art and science from a young age. Before becoming a fulltime artist, Geertsen worked in genetic mapping research, and this interest in exploration and the unknown can be seen in her work. She has a Master of Fine Arts from Brigham Young University in painting and drawing, but when she discovered photoshop she “felt like I had discovered the other half of the map.”

Geertsen produces digital work by combining images from family albums, photos she’s taken and photo archives. She also paints details she needs, and this combination helps give the work it’s quirky surrealist feel- a world where anything can happen.

These humorous and fantastic worlds create maps of possibility for answering our own issues and questions. She says *“My images are quirky visual narratives about psychological predicaments. I especially like a good plight. My work content mirrors personal, political and global situations – in a sly way.”*

<https://corinnegeertsen.com/>

Lena Klett, Phoenix

Klett grew up in Tempe. Over the years, she's spent a lot of time exploring and experiencing the beauty of the Sonoran landscape with friends and family. She earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in fiber and art history from Kansas City Art Institute and a Master of Fine Arts degree in fiber from Arizona State University. She's studied internationally in places like Italy, Japan, Vietnam, Laos and Thailand. She's also participated in art and the environment workshops and residencies at Anderson Ranch Art Center in Snowmass Village, Colorado and Signal Fire in Portland, Oregon.

Klett's work explores the idea of topography (the arrangement of natural and artificial features in an area) and how people interact with and connect to those spaces. She works in a variety of media including drawing, collage, sculpture and video. Klett also uses tools like digital mapping applications and onsite collecting of objects to study and recall a location like a rocky outcrop in the Superstition Mountains or memories of living in Japan. Her works are like story maps that reflect and document personal memories and connections to a specific place.

Klett says about her art practice, *“I am curious about how knowledge is formed - through intuition, interaction and observation. Using the notions that perspective, scale and time are all relative, how might our relationship within different ecologies shift? How might our evaluations of ‘useful’ and ‘useless’ change if we learn to see the world a little differently? I use drawing, sculpture and video as an ongoing process of tracing, transcribing, dissecting, re-assembling and transforming information.”*

lena-klett.squarespace.com

Yuko Yabuki, Tempe

Yabuki was born and raised in Fukushima, Japan. After graduating from Women's Art College in Tokyo, she began her career as a graphic designer. She moved to the United States in the mid-1990s and has spent more than two decades working in the Phoenix art scene. She has shown her work in various venues including coffee shops, salons, tattoo parlors, tattoo conventions and galleries. Today, she lives in Tempe and maintains a full-time studio space in the Grand Avenue arts district in Phoenix.

Yabuki's influences include traditional and contemporary Japanese imagery, European art history, fashion and American popular culture and fine art. Her background in graphic design and tattooing also inspire the overall look and storytelling quality of her works.

The Converse shoes on display were designed by Yabuki who was selected to be a part of the company's 2008 called 1HUND(RED) that raised money for RED, a global fund to help fight AIDS in Africa. Notable artists from around the world included the graffiti artist Dondi White, designers Precious McBane and guitarist, The Edge from the band U2.

Yabuki hopes that her work will "move the viewer on a journey to imaginary lands with intriguing characters embellished with symbolic ornamentation... [I hope] viewers will find it within their hearts to focus on creating the reality of a better, brighter and somehow, gentler future."

yukoyabuki.com