Melissa Fabian
My love of nature was nurtured by my mother, Madeline of 94 years. She taught my brother and myself about growing veggies, berries and planting extra for the bunnies, deer, and chippies! We grew up in rural western Pennsylvania and vacation was always “going to the mountains,” to a cabin on 35 acres of woods in central Pennsylvania. No running water, no electricity, and my first painting was a mural on the outhouse! We visited local parks and state park—the idea of funds not being available for the parks to stay open and in good condition just isn’t acceptable. I hope my art will help connect people of all ages to plants and wildlife. The detail in my work may encourage a person to look closely at the structures of leaves, the textures of bark and the colors of fruits and berries. Showing seeds, pods, flowers, and pollinators may inspire further questions as to how we are all dependent on each other. I often think of the animated movie series, Ice Age, the squirrel-like character chasing the elusive acorn throughout several sequels. He obviously captured and hid it away underground, thus the mighty oak. Wildlife will do their part if allowed, we need to do our part!

Quote
“The world, we are told, was made especially for man—a presumption not supported by all the facts.” -John Muir, “Father of the National Parks,” 1838-1914.

“Any fool can destroy trees. They cannot run away; and if they could, they would still be destroyed. . . god has cared for these trees, saved them from drought, disease, avalanches, and a thousand straining, leveling tempests and floods, but he cannot save them from fools,—only Uncle Sam can do that.” -John Muir

Book
*Inspired by the National Parks: Their Landscapes and Wildlife in Fabric Perspectives*, by Donna Marcinkowski DeSoto
Anne Frederickson

It is always with a sense of trepidation that I undertake a new piece. I usually go in with a certain sense of what I think I know about my subject. I always finish realizing I knew so little! Nature constantly educates and surprises—if we observe carefully enough. I appreciate that my art has forced me to slow down and appreciate what is all around me.

Quote

“There is nothing in the caterpillar that tells you it’s going to be a butterfly.” - R. Buckminster Fuller

(I love this quote because it applies to both nature and teaching!)

Book Title and Author

The Big Thirst: The Secret Life and Turbulent Future of Water, by Charles Fishman

Maria Mangano

Much of my art depicts museum specimens, especially study skins, which are kept and maintained by natural history museums for research. As I’ve continued to study them through the eyes of an artist, they have become a way for me to process even more than the ecological and cultural impact of the institution of the museum; the endless drawers of small feathered bodies nurture meditations on multiplicity and individuality, the meaning and unpredictability of loss, and the ways we insert our own narratives in nature to figure out how to tell the story of our relationship with the earth.

Quote

“The natural world is far more dynamic, far more changeable, and far more entangled with human history than popular beliefs about the ‘balance of nature’ have typically acknowledged . . . The task is to find a human history that is within nature, rather than without it.” - Uncommon Ground: Rethinking the Human Place in Nature, by William Cronon

Book

Out of Eden: An Odyssey of Ecological Invasion, by Alan Burdick
Ann T. Rosenthal
Over the last three decades, I have sought answers to a fundamental question: Why are we destroying the life support systems on which all life depends? When I began this work, I felt compelled to sound the alarm and ask deeper questions using whatever means seemed effective, including collaboration, partnering with environmental and community organizations, and traditional and digital media. Now the alarms are ubiquitous, flooding our inboxes daily. Thus I am called to engage in a “slow art” that offers a counterbalance.

Over the last five years, I have been studying botanical art and the history of botany. These practices and histories reflect what is best and worst in us: our thirst for knowledge can lead to surprising solutions. However, our control and domination of nature and those associated with it now threatens our survival. I believe that we protect what we love and value. I hope my botanical work inspires a love and awe for the natural world, which is far more complex and wondrous than we can imagine.

Quote
"If we surrendered, to earth’s intelligence, we could rise up rooted, like trees." –Rainer Rilke, Book of Hours

Book
The Brother Gardeners: A Generation of Gentlemen Naturalists and the Birth of an Obsession, by Andrea Wulf

Terry A. Smith
Painting is an all-consuming passion, and the love and awe I have for my subject matter drives me even more. I strongly believe that the majority of the human race has forgotten the importance of wildlife and their connection to it. When we do get to see wildlife in its natural state, we only catch fleeting glimpses and not enough to really 'see.' One of my goals is to capture nature with my artwork to help facilitate that connection.

I started painting feathers as illustrations to my own private hiking journal. As I sat in a lean-to and painted a handful of feathers, I was filled with awe at the simplicity and the complicated beauty of a single feather. From that point, I began to have an even greater appreciation for the natural world. As a wildlife artist, it is these intricacies that I am able to capture and share with my viewers, allowing them more than a fleeting moment to appreciate the natural world. I hope that my work touches people in a way that increases both our respect and understanding of our part in nature.

Quote:
“If you can’t be a good example, then you’ll just have to be a horrible warning.” – Catherine Aird

Book:
The Tenderness of Wolves by Stef Penney