

NATURALLY CURIOUS: An exploration of nature, death, and sustainability

Kelly Meyer



March 25 - May 17, 2025

**Benedict and Dorothy Gorecki Gallery Lounge
Benedicta Arts Center**

Naturally Curious is a journey through past and current works that is led by the artist's own curious nature. Part found object, part textile, this exhibit explores efforts of sustainability in artwork, the beauty of death, and the quiet resurrection inherent in acts of preservation. Crafted from repurposed, hand-dyed textiles, found objects, gifted remnants, and delicate touches of embroidery and beadwork, these pieces rise beyond their destiny as mere refuse and decay.

CONNECT

TOPICS AND THEMES THIS EXHIBITION ENGAGES WITH:

- Sustainability/Preservation
- Decay/Decomposition
- Resurrection
- Necrophobia
- Solitude
- Fashion/Beauty
- Permanence
- Pollution

ONLINE RESOURCES

<https://www.csbsju.edu/fine-arts/visual-arts/>
<https://kellymeyerart.com/>

ENGAGE

Deeply committed to sustainability, Kelly forages natural dyes from her garden and local surroundings, weaving the natural world into her creative process. Beneath her approachable demeanor lies a fascination with the macabre; drawn to cicada shells, animal bones, and snake sheds, she finds beauty and meaning in life's delicate remnants.

- What role does textile art play into the broader art world, and how does it challenge traditional boundaries between fine art and craft?
- How does the use of discarded materials in art challenge traditional notions of value and aesthetics?
- Can upcycled art be considered "high art" if it is made from discarded materials?
- Necrophobia -- the fear of dead organisms and death-related objects -- raises intriguing questions: Why does something once beautiful become repulsive in death? Is this reaction innate or shaped by culture?

As a female educator, artist, and mother, Meyer uses her work to explore the overarching stereotypes that the medium of fiber has historically held, while sharing her curiosity and playful spirit, with viewers and her students.

- What were your experiences with art in school? What do you wish were different?
- What stereotypes do you still see in the art world, how does this influence the way you view gender in art?
- How does engaging in creating art enrich people's lives?
- How can artists use intersectionality to challenge societal norms and raise awareness?