

FEATURE



photo by Angela Fama

# rosanne bennett

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**Favourite  
subject  
matter :  
landscapes,  
abstraction  
and the  
spaces  
in-between**

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## Rosanne Bennett

is an artist with a quiet and unique style, who draws on the beauty in the natural world around her.



photo by Angela Fama

CONNECT

### WEBSITE

[www.rosannebennett.com](http://www.rosannebennett.com)



[www.pinterest.com/winningstripes](http://www.pinterest.com/winningstripes)



photo by Angela Fama

## INTRODUCTION

**As a kid I'm pretty sure I always wanted to be an artist.** While I was growing up I had a lot of support and encouragement in that way from my family and friends, so I feel I was pretty lucky. You know, I think I just really love to work with my hands. I love to create, to draw and to form images. A lot of my career choices have hinged on that ability and nope, "no regrets...!!"

I am an artist, though that's often been a difficult title for me to accept. I have often found myself too shy to describe myself as an artist first, because I have balanced a number of different jobs while also working on my own artwork. At this moment I balance my art practice, while working with thoroughbred horses on my family's farm. It's a 50/50 commitment that thankfully has room for a lot of give and take and countless rewards. (If you've ever seen a newborn foal stand-up for the first time you'd know!).



From the series Land Marks, Clearcut, mixed media on board 2013





photo by Angela Fama

DO YOU HAVE FORMAL TRAINING, ARE YOU SELF- TAUGHT OR A COMBINATION?

Right out of high school I studied Fine Arts at the Okanagan College in Kelowna. I then moved to Vancouver to study painting and printmaking at Emily Carr College of Art & Design with a BFA in 1994. I returned to school for a Diploma in Art History from UBC in 2012.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE SUBJECT MATTER OR THEME AND WHY?

Many favourites!!...Landscapes, abstraction and the spaces in between that reference non-objective and sometimes geometric forms. This includes what surrounds me in my every day life so all of these themes have become present in my artwork. Sometimes I will explore these subjects individually and in-depth through a series, or more often they all just happen at once.



photos by Angela Fama

WHAT IS YOUR BACKGROUND, AS IN IS YOUR CREATIVE WORK YOU DO NOW YOUR LIFELONG CAREER OR HAVE YOU DONE DIFFERENT THINGS BEFORE THIS?

After art school I was keen on finding new and interesting non-commercial venues for emerging artists to show their work, and of course show my own artwork. In 1996 I started a small retail business with friends that allowed me access to the shop's informal wall space for a gallery. While the flowers and our designs paid the rent, it was perfect as a space for an off-the-mainstream gallery. I was able meet new artists and continue with making my own art by creating regular exhibition deadlines for all of us. Through both the floral retail business and an additional small-artist-run gallery, I spent twelve years coordinating local emerging artist exhibitions in Vancouver. I really enjoyed the whole process of presenting artists work - this gave me invaluable experiences and opportunities to continue meeting so many great artists and supporters of the arts.

The artist-run gallery:

Columbia St. Studio, Vancouver, BC, Canada

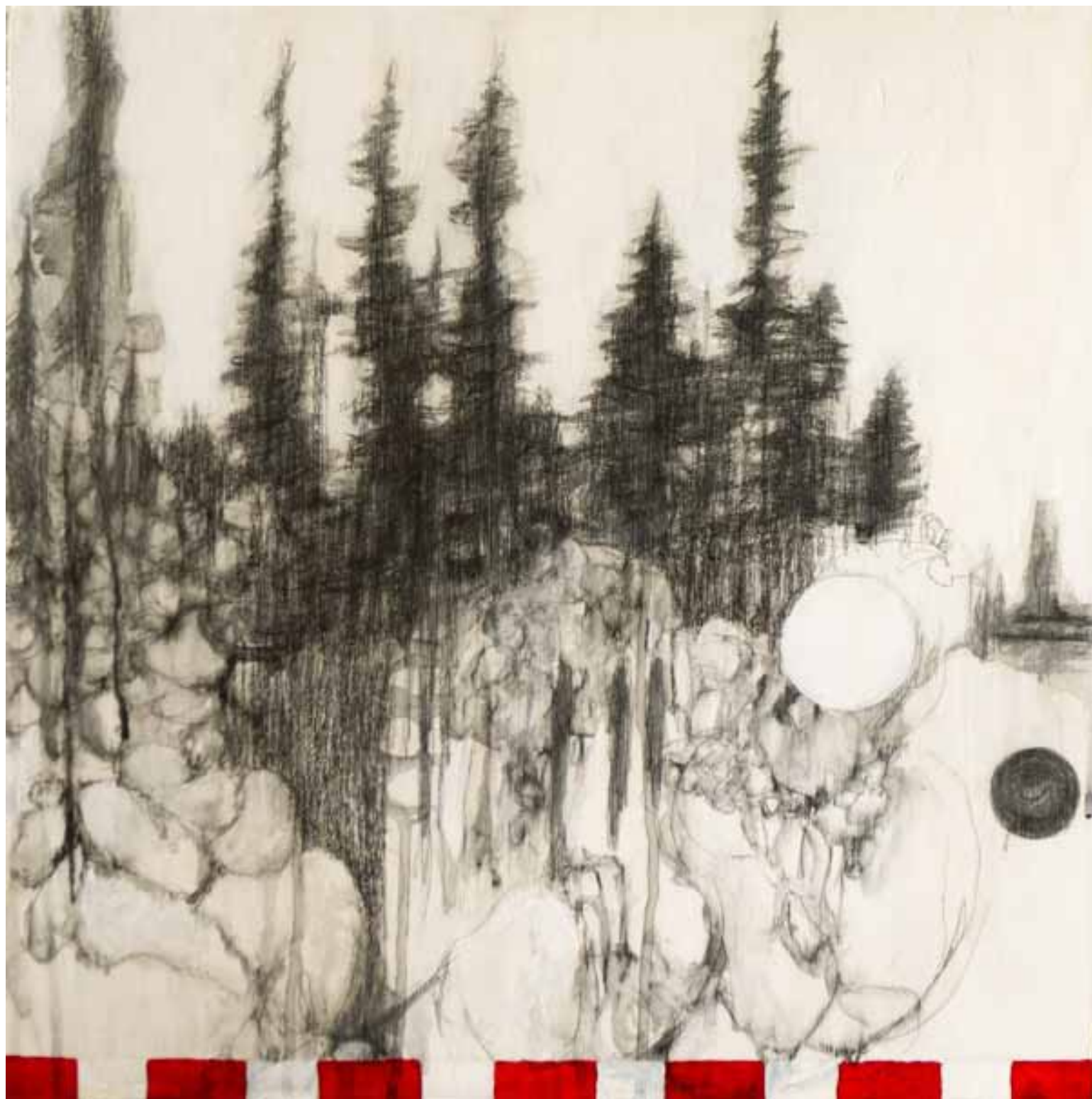
The flower shop with gallery:

The Flower Factory, Vancouver, BC, Canada

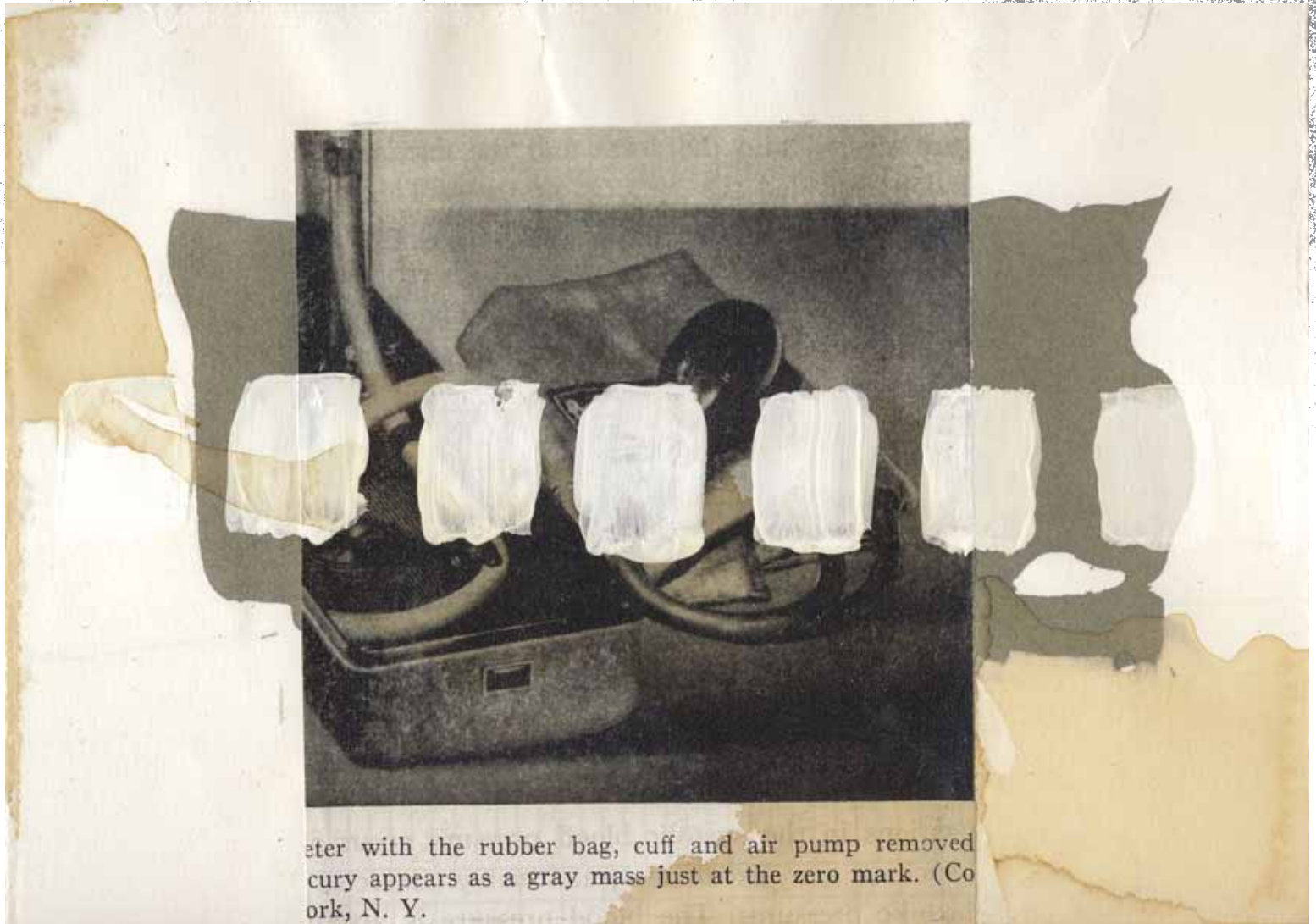
## my favorite tools

My favourite materials have always been graphite or charcoal with a nice new Staedtler eraser.





From the series Land Marks, Alpine Rocks, mixed media on board 2013



From the series Nursing Manual II, Rubber Bag, collage 2013

## favorite career achievement...

I would have to admit that as far as creative achievements it would be through helping to build the retail flower business The Flower Factory. Though I stepped away from the business after 12 years, I am still very happy and proud for its successes.





photo by Angela Fama

WHERE DO YOU WORK FROM, TELL US ABOUT YOUR WORKSPACES AND PLACES...

More and more I've come to work from my home. I make use of the attic in this old house we (husband, geriatric cat and I) are renting - its quite charming and a gem of an old home, but realllllly cold in the winter - the space heater has become my best friend. Basically, as long as I have a wall to work on and a good ventilating window nearby - I'm happy. This one comes with a view = bonus!

# **inspiration**

**I'm inspired by seeing in new ways - for example, noticing how the sun casts a particular shadow in the winter, framing a photo a different way, all discoveries of what I've never noticed before - often something that's always been there, up close and right in front of me.**





From the series Land Marks, Diamond Mine, mixed media on board 2013





From the series *Nursing Manual II, The Pulse*, collage 2013

#### WHAT IS YOUR WORK SCHEDULE LIKE?

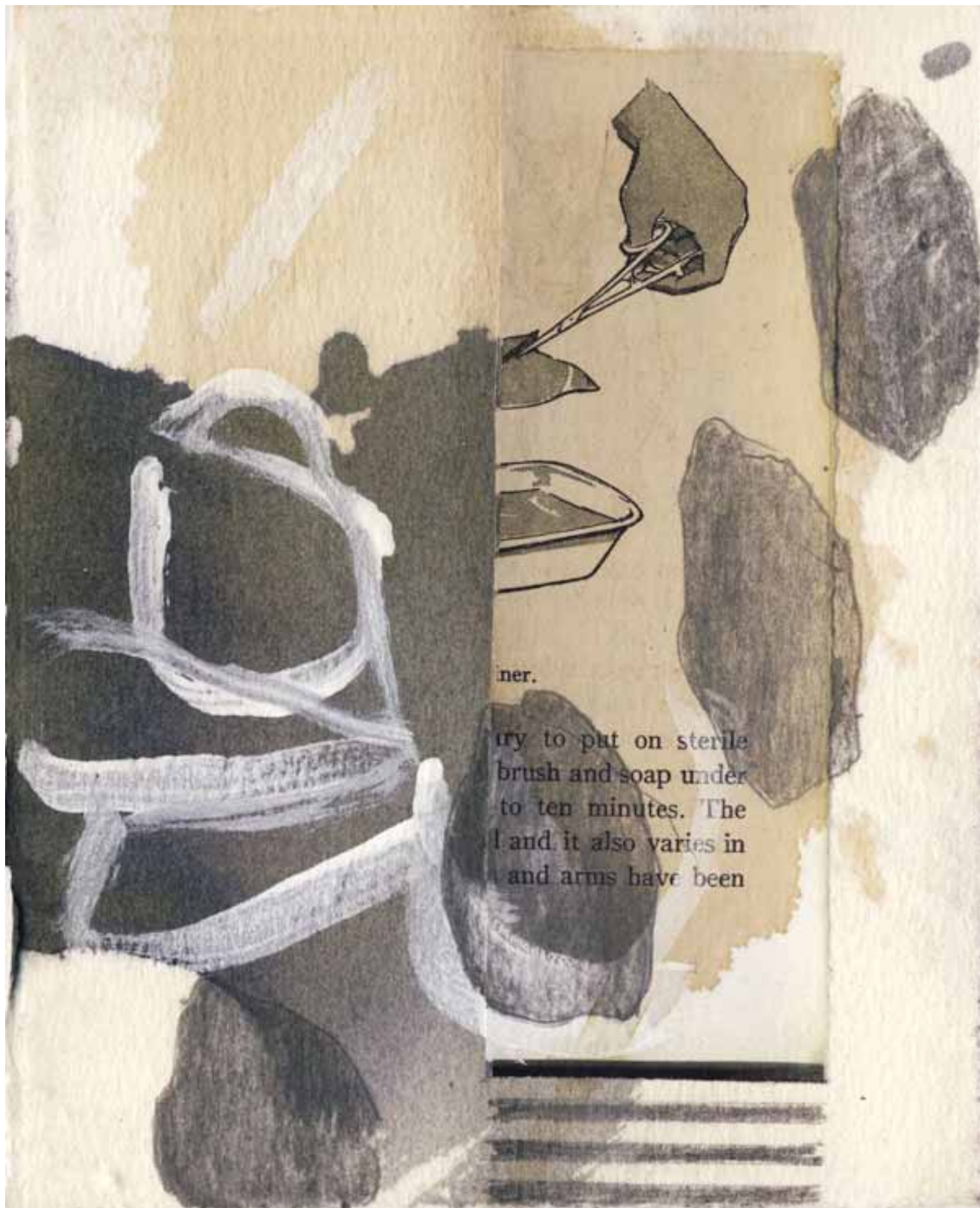
When I have a deadline I can set out a plan of so many hours per day to desired completion. (In the early years I would be left freaking out finishing my projects in the wee hours - haha, who am I kidding? this still happens....). Otherwise I just enjoy bursts of creative activity and inspiration whenever they occur.

#### IF YOU'RE HAVING A BAD DAY, A PROJECT ISN'T GOING YOUR WAY, OR EVERYTHING JUST SUCKS, WHAT DO YOU DO TO TURN THINGS AROUND?

If its cold (like now) I'll throw myself into super-cleaning...maybe even the whole house - once all these simple yet tedious tasks are complete I am thankful to be back to my project at hand. Really good music can help too.....

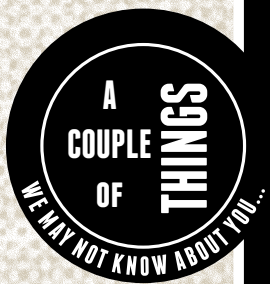
#### DO YOU DONATE TO CHARITY OR WORK WITH ANY CHARITIES OR COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS THROUGH YOUR CREATIVE WORK?

There are so many charities that are worth the effort - I find that donating my time can be more rewarding than donating artwork - but every fundraising situation is different, as I've also donated a painting for an artist that lost her work in a studio fire, to an animal rescue organization and to not-for-profit gallery fundraisers.



From the series Nursing Manual II, Sterile Brush, collage 2013





1

When I was 9, my mom encouraged me into taking an oil painting class with a 'famed and local' western-theme painter.

2

My fingernails grow at an alarming rate.



## my favorites...

DO YOU LISTEN TO MUSIC WHILE YOU WORK? WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE MUSIC TO WORK TO? WHAT'S ON YOUR IPOD/IPHONE?

Yes - music while I work! I have a constant selection of albums that I'm nearly exhausting by over-playing... Dark Side, Simian Mobile Disco, Major Lazer, Daft Punk and when I'm feeling sombre a little Feist or James Blake.

I've enjoyed following certain writers, namely Doris Lessing, Timothy Findlay, Haruki Mirakami, Margaret Atwood and David Sedaris. More recently I'm beginning to follow Lisa Moore and Joan Didion.

I really love movies - some of my favourite movies that have stood out (or I have seen several times) include:

Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?

All About Eve

The Princess Bride

Young Frankenstein

Blade Runner

The Diving Bell and the Butterfly

Upstream Colour

Okay, food that I find the tastiest but that I sooo cannot cook properly: Thai Food.

Some favourite artists (this is just a short-list):

Louise Bourgeois, Daniel Buren, Dana Claxton, Marcel Dzama, Betty Goodwin, Angela Grossman, Mona Hatoum, Ryan Heshka, Eva Hesse, Hannah Höch, Brian Jungen, Robert Motherwell, Mark Rothko, Jean-Paul Riopelle, Tom Thompson, Cy Twombly....





From the series Land Marks, Tree Grove and Buren Stripes, mixed media on board 2013

DO YOU DO YOUR CREATIVE WORK FULL TIME, PART TIME, OR AS A HOBBY?

Right now I balance working in the studio and researching my art projects on a part time schedule.

DO YOU HAVE ANY HOBBIES THAT ARE REALLY DIFFERENT FROM YOUR CREATIVE WORK?

My biggest hobby is getting out with my horse - it keeps us both active and outdoors - love it! I have replaced bike riding in the city with horse riding in the country. Its great because we've been learning together, I'm feeling pretty lucky.

WHERE DO YOU FIND INSPIRATION?

Outdoor settings, vistas, and lighting - it can surprise and overwhelm me - I've documented parts of the highway drive between Vancouver and the Okanagan, which helped fuel research for my recent series Land Marks. I can find inspiration in objects that surround me - like working with images from my mother's nursing manuals from the 50s I found I thought a lot about her while making the collages (guess I could tell her that?). I also have discovered that just hanging out with the horses on the family farm has been a new place to chill with them, to meditate on ideas, share some good nose-pets...

WHEN YOU BEGIN A PROJECT WHAT IS GENERALLY YOUR CREATIVE PROCESS?

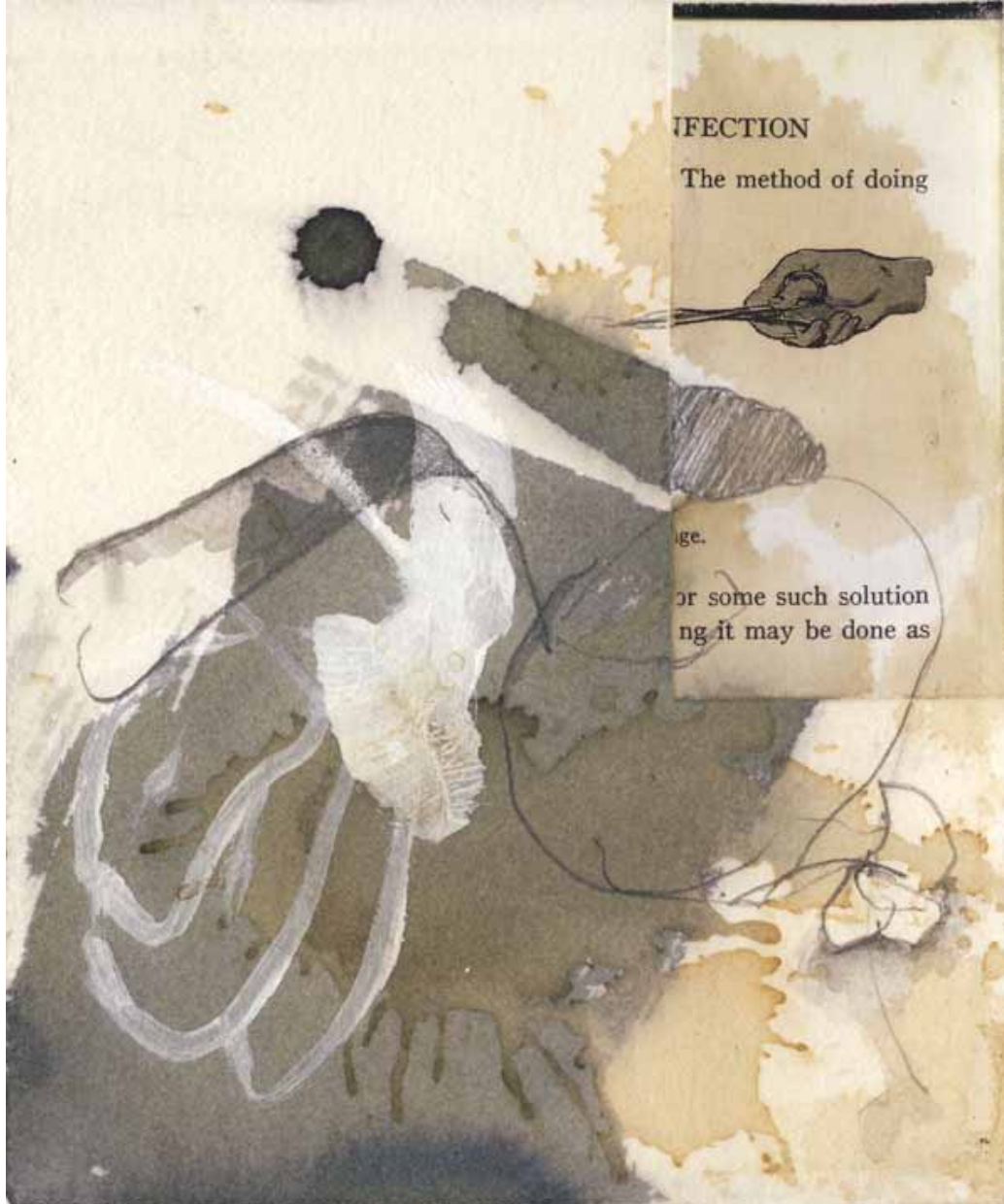
I try to start with some of the 'prep stuff' - ie: measuring, priming, sizing, cutting, sanding...and anything technical like stripes I will then measure and sketch that out first. I get used to the pencil or paintbrush back in my hand and then everything seems to flow from there. I also work on loosening control and have poured ink or coffee on the surface to break up the surface.

HOW DO YOU KNOW WHEN A PROJECT IS FINISHED?

When I feel I'm close to complete, I usually make myself take a break from the work and come back to it after a few days ...or weeks before making any final decisions. Experienced the hard way, I have learned the art of patience and the benefits of not over working a surface.

**etc...**

As I've mentioned, I currently work with thoroughbreds from my parent's farm - many of which move onto different athletic careers after retiring from racing. My family has a website that lists these amazing horses: <http://flyinghorsefarm.ca>



From the series *Nursing Manual II, Infection*, collage 2013

WHAT DOES THE FUTURE HOLD FOR YOU AND YOUR WORK- WHERE DO YOU SEE YOURSELF IN A FEW YEARS?

Ahhh...my Dad started saying the phrase "what's your five year plan?" when I graduated from art school...I think he actually tried it on the whole family ...and without success (haha). I still don't really know how to answer that type of question without feeling a bit of a youthful panic....

Okay, I know I will be happy...

DO YOU HAVE ANY CURRENT PROJECTS OR FUTURE PLANS YOU'D LIKE TO SHARE?

My husband Larry and I are working with a handfull of artists/friends who we both have invited to the farmhouse where we currently rent. It is working out to be a form of a casual residency. The artists usually only have a short amount of time - a weekend to a week with a space for their work to begin or to be completed - or both! At the end of our stay these creations, writings, ideas will be available digitally (stay tuned for fall 2014 - posted on [rosannebennett.com](http://rosannebennett.com)) 