Lexis Beesley

Artist Statement

My work reflects my fascination with tiny natural things in the world, from small critters and bugs to plants in the garden. I often integrate small characters or figures of my friends and family into my pieces, interacting in some way with nature; the process of illustrating them allows me to connect more with my environment, the people closest to me, and myself.

I am drawn to scribbly gestural lines with movements and life, as well as bright colors. I work primarily with watercolor, pen, and colored pencils, but I also love exploring other modes of storytelling through combinations of different painting and drawing mediums, textiles, and digital art. I love utilizing different textures created through certain painting or drawing processes in my work. I often play with scale to bring different emotions to my narratives, oftentimes a sense of comfort, adventure, or playfulness. I like creating this feeling that the characters in my illustrations exist in this little world around them.

Storytelling is one of the most fundamental aspects of my work, as I typically strive to capture a childlike wonder with day-to-day things, usually in nature. My sweetest memories from growing up were days spent searching for sharks’ teeth in the pasture behind our house, catching carp one rainy afternoon on the river, or picking flowers and produce from my grandma’s garden. I strive to recreate the same feelings of warmth and peace those moments brought to me growing up but in a more fantastical way. I am drawn to simple stories that could potentially resonate with any viewer, such as what it would be like to hold a giant rollie pollie or swim in the lake with a large, friendly catfish. I draw inspiration from my childhood and the media I interacted with as I grew up. I have always loved to read, so I often find inspiration in books; *My Garden* by Kevin Henkes, *Skip* by Molly Mendoza, and *Junkwraith* by Ellinor Richey are all illustrated stories that appeal to me for their styles and approaches to narrative storytelling.

Painting and drawing have always been ways to regulate and make sense of my emotions and the world around me; they allow me to create my own worlds with giant critters and plants and draw tiny figures searching for cozy, safe places to rest. I find comfort in creating work and being able to share it with others. I want to create illustrations that inspire kids and adults to explore the world and find adventure and warmth all around them, no matter how small.