

ARTIST STATEMENT

Heather Hutchison - Artist Statement

I was born into a long line of visual artists. As a child my family followed my father, an itinerant caricaturist, throughout the expansive land, sea, and sky-scapes of California, Oregon, and Arizona. We settled in Bisbee AZ, a town six miles north of the Mexican border. The endless skies were the color of the "Bisbee Blue" turquoise that had been pulled from Bisbee's copper mines. The cultural shift at the end of the 60's attracted many other visionaries to Bisbee: visual artists, writers, musicians, and film people converged in this authentic place of creative refuge. I feel fortunate to have had profound and inspiring relationships with many of these artists. As a very young person I was given the independence, freedom, and studio space to mimic my older friends, and begin my own artistic practice. These experiences of my formative years were so rich, I feel they have profoundly shaped my ideas about color, space, light, and artistic practice. I continue to address questions in my work that had their genesis in these experiences over forty years ago.

During the years when most artists were in art school I continued my studio practice across the Golden Gate Bridge from San Francisco, among working artists. I found studios in various unconventional spaces that were sited in breathtaking environs near and literally on the water, and my education continued in the cafes of North Beach and Sausalito. Once again, I had been captivated by the light. Studying its dance upon the water and its diffusion by the fog, bearing witness to the creation of atmospheric space and a constantly changing vista. I then followed the light I discovered in the paintings of Edward Hopper and Guy Pene DuBois, bringing me to New York City to study (briefly) at The Art Students League. Once in New York I continued to find studios that offered access to observe the flowing water and blocks of light and sky as they changed throughout the day. This began the inquiry in which I have been involved for the past three decades; the use of natural light, captured and inflected, as my primary material. In that time, these works have gone gradually from being somewhat translucent and heavily constructed, to being nearly completely transparent, and appearing to float upon the wall.

In these constructions that are as much light sculpture as painting, the viewer is presented with the opportunity to directly experience the scientific truism that the only constant is change. Striving to maximize my medium's literal transparency in order to attain the greatest self-illumination, natural light is as essential to me as any other material I employ; it literally animates my work with its ever-changing nature.