***Artist Statement***

***Melinda diSessa***

I have not always been an artist. I have a PhD in philosophy and taught philosophy in Massachusetts before moving to Berkeley, California and working seriously in art.

Though I have been interested in art my entire life and have years of graphic design experience, printmaking initially became my very special and deep passion. Several years ago, I moved into painting, and oil sticks provided a wonderful transition medium. Many of the same techniques and tools I used in printing are adaptable to oil and cold wax—a fabulous medium for layering, creating interesting surfaces, and trying innovative techniques. I frequently use processed photographic images in my pieces to complement abstract forms or marks. Sometimes the image becomes a key element in a piece; sometimes it just functions to stimulate my eye and hands.

Artists must be opportunistic and observant. An unexpected mark happens on a canvas or a paper, and you have to see it and take advantage of it. I love the challenge of listening, truly listening, to what comes to you by chance as well as what comes to you by choice.

My art hovers, I think, between reality and imagination, between the everyday and the sublime. My years studying philosophy taught me to search for meaning, and art making is an inevitable, unavoidable impulse towards a meaning. It is important to me to try to be attentive, uncluttered, personal, and inventive in my art.

I have exhibited at O’Hanlon Center for the Arts, Mendocino Art Center, Berkeley Art Center, Pacific Art League, SFWA, Joyce Gordon Gallery, Artworks Downtown, and Arts Benicia among others. One of my pieces was selected for the inaugural 2020 deYoung Open Exhibition. I was an Artist in Residence at Mendocino Art Center in 2016-17.