

JANUARY 24 - JULY 25, 2025

Artist Statement

I have spent my life near the coast, and all my artwork has its roots in my love of the sea. 'Passage' follows my journey of grief and growth over the past four years, in coastal watercolor paintings and reclaimed fishing rope sculptures. 'Passage' is a gentle study of continuing movement, before and after the passing of both my grandparents from Covid in 2021: a voyage, a transition, a portal, and a part of the journey.

In these works, I consider the passage of time, movement through passageways, passages in our life stories, the passing on of loved ones, the passing on of knowledge, and the passage of ships, people, fish, and fishing gear across oceans. The earliest works celebrate the passage of tides, weather and sea life. More recent works focus on holding space, through studies of sea caves, portals, gates, and vessels.

The 'Passage' collection of paintings explores the Oregon coast, created on location "en plein air" or in my home studio. Our rocky coast offers passage through tidal sea caves, into the calm waters of hidden pools, and up to ancient lava headlands where lighthouses aided passage for generations. The infinite cycles of change in ocean waters and sea life have offered peace in my passage through loss and becoming. Salt air, sun and wind, fog and rain, storm waves and still waters connect me to my family and my heritage, east and west, across oceans.

The 'Passage' sculptures are stitched with reclaimed fishing rope I have gathered for the past nine years from Oregon and Washington, Down East Maine, and Kauai. These coasts have shaped my life and my art practice since childhood. Using my grandmother's vintage steel sewing machine, I first learned to stitch these baskets with bits of fishing rope I found tangled in the seaweed at the tideline of my grandparents' home on Deer Isle, Maine – an island that hosts one of the largest lobster fisheries in North America. Visiting my family's home on Kauai, I connected with Surfrider Kauai's beach cleanup crews to gather "ghost net" (lost or abandoned fishing rope) washed up from across the Pacific Ocean. Here in the Pacific Northwest, I partnered with commercial fisheries committed to responsibly recycling their gear. My work includes materials from all these sources, inspired by each unique story of its passage through human hands and across oceans.

Creating these works is a joyful and healing collaboration with the sea, from sitting on the sand painting a coastal scene on location, to exploring remote beaches and gathering washed-up fishing rope, or learning from commercial fisheries and beach cleanup crews. This work connects me to my heritage and honors the people and places that sustain me.

-Emily Jung Miller, 2025

About the Artist

Emily Jung Miller creates art from her love of the sea and natural cycles of change. She often includes natural and reclaimed materials in her interactive installations, mixed-media sculpture, paintings, and functional ceramics.

Miller is a mixed-race Chinese-American who relocated from Kauai to Oregon in 2014. She lives near the forested foothills of the Coast Range west of Portland Oregon, where she has maintained a full-time studio practice since 2016. Her work also sustains a four-generation connection to Down East Maine.

Miller's current practice is centered on Ghost Net Landscape, a series of collaborative community installations transforming reclaimed fishing gear into art, and 1000 Moons, an ongoing art installation and grief process in handmade paper. These process-centered, evolving works create space for positive transformation and healing through abundance, collaboration, conversation, creativity, and play.



Artist Website:
ejmillerfineart.com



Ghost Net Landscape:
ghostnetart.com



To learn more, please visit:
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