

(Image Courtesy of Emily Andrews)

Dana Sherwood is an American artist whose diverse practice explores the relationship between humans and the natural world in order to understand culture and behavior in a changing environment. Employing video, painting and sculpture in her work, nature, often in the form of non-human animals, plays a complex role as both subject and collaborator, asserting its presence and subverting the artists' perceived control. Sherwood relies upon her own style of magical-realism to portray contact between human and non-human animals as a tool to expand our concept of communication and knowledge, and more importantly to recognize the interconnectedness of our ecosystem and what we can learn from plants and animals when we shift our human-centric hierarchies to be more inclusive and open to other intelligences. Her paintings, videos, and sculptures depict ritualized feedings created for animals who live on the frontiers of human civilization such as raccoons, possums, and foxes as well as for our close companion species like horses and dogs. The animals assert their presence and desires as the work reflects on the Anthropocene, and our place in the natural world. Set in a magical, wonderland-esque universe, the work weaves together visually beautiful and occasionally humorous imagery while conveying important messages related to ecology, mythology and eco-feminism.

Sherwood's projects investigate alternate ways of communicating with the more than human world around us, with the goal of re-connecting with and learning from the intelligence of the earth. Her paintings, videos and sculptures, rely upon intuitive, magical and ancestral practices that aim to shift the dominant binary, patriarchal culture into one that is more balanced, peaceful and harmonious with the Earth and all of its inhabitants. A firm belief that creating conversation and connection with the wider, more than human world will increase environmental responsibility and care lies at the core of her practice.

Since graduating from the University of Maine in 2004 Sherwood has exhibited throughout The Americas, Europe and Australia including solo exhibitions at Nagle-Draxler Reiseburogalerie (Cologne), Denny Gallery (New York) and Kepler Art-Conseil (Paris). Her work has also been shown at Storm King (New York), The Jack Shainman School, The Fellbach Sculpture Triennial (Germany), Pink Summer Gallery (Italy), Kunsthal Aarhus, The Palais des Beaux Arts Paris, Marian Boesky Gallery, Socrates Sculpture Park, Flux Factory, The Biennial of Western New York, Prospect 2: New Orleans, Scotia Bank Nuit Blanche (Toronto), DOCUMENTA 13, and many other venues worldwide. Her solo exhibition, "Dana Sherwood: Animal Appetites and Other Encounters in Wildness" opened at the Florence Griswold Museum in 2022 with accompanying monograph. She is currently working on a new body of work to be presented in 2025 at The Fondazione Morra Greco in Naples, Italy and The Hartnett Gallery at the University of Rochester.

"My work consists of two practices: the fieldwork where I am waiting, watching, filming and responding to the animals, and the studio where I edit the videos and make paintings and sculptures. I have found that over the years making this work that as much as I have learned about the animals I am watching, these reflections on nature have also affected the way that I approach art making and life in general.

A consistent theme in my work is control. Specifically, the control of nature by humankind and our desire to tame it for our own purposes. But

nature is unpredictable and our ingrained tendency to superimpose human traits on non human animals underscores this point. Wittgenstein once said, "If a lion could talk we would not understand him." My goal is to change that. We are capable of broadening our conception of language and intelligence to understand that all life has its own subjectivity and perception that colors the way they communicate and interact with the world. We love nature and we want it to flourish and be accessible in our daily lives. It is time to ask the more than human world how we can help it thrive.