

Jennifer Wildermuth

Blue Series; Artist Statement

Originally my concept stems from Shakespeare's unfortunate figure of Ophelia in his play *Hamlet*. However, instead of focusing on the tragedy of Ophelia's tale I wanted to explore the struggle and then eventual calm within her. In the painting she is a living Ophelia refusing to be consumed by the thoughts of her father's death or her lover's ruinous ways. There is blue light that swims with the colors of naked splendor at once released from a life enclosed. In the modernizing, the stream in which she drowns becomes instead a swimming pool with bright blue colors that contrasts with and enhances the figure's red hair and pale skin tones. Enlivening for me is this image of cool, blue water and red hair, the whole world of my thoughts triggered by the bottom of a swimming pool.

The concept for this series had a big influence on how I decided to develop the paintings visually. I was drawn to this subject matter because I wanted to explore the force of a strong primary color juxtaposed with the human figure. The effect of the swimming pool blue is very powerful and has a great influence on the flesh of the figure surrounded and emerged by it. The emergence of the figure in the water distorts and charges the flesh until almost doesn't look like a figure at all. The figure above the water is primarily realistic and then the part below is warped and abstracted. I was therefore able to combined two different painting styles and make them compliment each other in one painting. The combination of two different painting types is a metaphor for the other combinations taking place on the canvas; the combination of resistance and calmness, of failure and triumph, and of life and death.