

fire project

David Liss



detail of fire wall, 1999

Fire is a universal symbol of transformation.
Art is the transformation of human experience into visual form.
Open hearths... .. open fires... ..

Dana Velan is drawn to fire... drawn to the creative process and drawn to the inevitability and possibilities of transformation. Universal impulses, perhaps, yet Velan's vision resists aspirations to utopia and intimations of immortality.

Based on observation of nature and her own emotional connection to the world, she is in awe of the force of fire, mesmerized by its visual splendor and well aware of its dualistic potential as an agent of destruction and renewal.

Velan employs the handicraft of drawing for its direct relationship to physical aspects of being. These drawings are about proximity—proximity to the source of emotion, the source of heat, the source of fire and the site of transformation.

In this current phase of history the human relationship to nature is an increasingly mediated one. Like most members of our species Velan is fascinated by the cyclical regeneration of nature as evidenced in our remaining forests. As an urban dweller, however, she remains on the outside looking in, drawn in. Drawn in towards the heat, towards the fire, towards death even—that essential aspect of the life cycle, that most feared transformation.

Velan's mode of representation is relatively straightforward. These images—these artworks—must be perceived in the same way one views nature: as sublime and beautiful surfaces concealing mysteries which lie just beyond the full grasp of human comprehension.