

For the past thirty years I have made paintings depicting images from nature that speak to the interconnectedness of all things. I am interested in the natural world and in our complex and shifting relationship with it. Intrigued by images of nature across time; still life paintings; drawings; museum specimens; taxidermy – these are a record of our shifting relationship to the natural world. I am drawn to and collect imagery of the natural world from a wide range of sources. I collage these images to create both imagined and familiar ecosystems, where I am extracting and extending layers of meaning. In my work, I look at how we exist in nature, and also at our intrinsic connection with it.

My paintings conjure enigmatic spaces in which a tension between the beauty and the fragility of the hyper real yet impossible, wrestle in a dialogue of perfection, looming extinction and the dream-like bordering on nightmare.

In 2018, I began a series of paintings exploring the underwater gardens that are threatened by climate change. These jewel-like life forms describe a lush tropical reef in a waterless world. Secret gardens pay tribute to the beauty of nature and bring our focus to the critical degradation they face due to human kind. Working intuitively, I embroider time and history into the work, a slow process that in this series reveals feminine shapes, sensuality and an intensity of focus on the intimate details of the flora and fauna that make up the sea gardens.

Judith van Heeren