



WAVERLY BERGWIN

JULY 1 - SEPTEMBER 30, 2023

NEMETH ART CENTER

WAVERLY BERGWIN

Waverly Bergwin is a non binary sculptor and writer who uses wire and organic plant matter to create legendary artifacts from other worlds. They have a deep interest in fairytales and fantasy stories, where they find the essence of the human will and the desire to escape the mundane.

Based in New York City, Waverly received their BFA from Pace University, and has worked as assistant and apprentice to Brad Kahlhamer since 2014, honing their craft under his supervision.

“All that is dark and tempting in the world is to be found again in the enchanted forest, where it springs from our deepest wishes and the souls most ancient dreams.”

Once upon a time, there was a child sat at a little wooden table trying to make a magic potion out of glitter and glue. Mixing and concocting my nefarious and iridescent elixirs, it occurred to me that none of what I had put into the potion would or could lead to my desired outcome. It occurred to me that the book of dragon lore I had propped open was bullshit, and even if it had contained any truths, they would not be applicable to my quest. It occurred to me then and there that all of my dreams, hopes, and fancies could only thrive in my head, in my imagination.

Clawing at my innards to gestate something poignant and purposeful, desperate to pull from my body a tangible trace of what is hiding there. To bring to life what I felt, to know that it is true. Reality and imagination always in conflict.

I have contrived to create a phallus in my conceited hysteria. And I hate myself desperately for my passion, and I am terrified of what it will become. This might be folly, but such is love and life and death. And love cannot be folly. (Did Mary Shelley feel such fear when she birthed her monster? Her doctor?) I love my sword as if it were a child born from my body. My flesh and pain and blood. A feeling so visceral that I fear its power.

And the pattern persists. It follows and flows, it alters and evolves, but it never truly changes. Repeat, twist, destroy, cover up, mutate, break, repeat. And now I see it, and now I know. But I have known. I've seen it before and known it was the pattern asserting itself, challenging me for control over our shared fate. But forgetting is part of the pattern. The pattern is made from the dust of destiny, and so I am doomed to trace the maze knowing I am trapped, and rejoicing in frazzled ecstasy over the same repetitions again and again.

Heartsease, The Liliths Rib is not a weapon, but an omen. After all these millennia her rib was spun from the air, the way a god once spun humanity out of mud.

First Adam and Lilith shaped together in Gods image. Adam sought dominance over Lilith, but

Lilith would not head Adams commands. Why should she? And so Adam complained to God, their father, for her lack of obedience. Lilith showed no remorse, enraging God, and was banished from Eden. She was cursed to haunt our most tempting dreams, to birth demons born of misspent seed.

God lay Adam in a gentle sleep, and took a rib from his body to form for him a companion: Eve. But Eve never learned to obey either, did she?

All this lore twisting about in my head, I wonder what would be made if we took a rib from Lilith. Eve born to be the mother of mothers, Lilith's rib taken to be the Protector of the others.

And so I have forged Heartsease, The Lilith's Rib. A sword made in her love, to be her wrath set upon the world. A weapon for giants and golems, not fit for the hands of measly mortal men. At her feet I learn her shapes, her complexities. I sniff her smell, her lusts, come to know her textures, rusts, and creakings.

Heartsease is not a weapon. She was not made for sport or war. She was a birth, a mutation, an aberration of momentum. A fixation and concentration. A vestigial organ with no function, but so content and snug inside. She is a relic, newborn but old, a thing to love even when it grows overlarge and bursts from my belly to be born again in pain rather than salvation.

When I began the sword, I was stubbornly clinging to womanhood. Now to even write 'woman' in reference to myself feels so wrong because it is not what I am. I am something other.

Building a proper sword requires balance, "the tang is nearly the full width of the blade."

I saw, in the creation of this work, that to truly actualize myself, I must wield the masculine and feminine in balance and grace.

Descended neither from Adam nor Eve. I stand in the middle, and such descriptors are long trailing silk sleeves I can swirl and dart about in to reach what is needed.

And this is what the sword is to me: an artifact of my death and subsequent rebirth, a figure of protection and life. Beautiful and fearsome to behold. A dance of death and survival, unachievable without balance. Introverted in its creation, and extroverted in its utility. Delicate and Dangerous. Heartsease, The Lilith's Rib. For in the beginning God made man and woman. But Lilith can be called neither, for she is something other. A creature which predates the creation of man and woman. A demon banished to save the naughty children from an unforgiving world.

"Mutation is a law of Evolution" and this is how the sword was born. Spools of wire twisted and knotted and braided, rusted and rubbed clean, oil slicked for the sheen. Then woven again and again, growing larger, taking shape. Beads threaded, smaller wire spun, the variation forming patterns like mold eating away at an orange an onion a block of cheese. Moss clawing its way across a stone. Cobwebs encroaching on a room from the furthest corner. Color sprouting like mushrooms in a rain to be buried beneath dead leaves. All a deep inhale. But what then?



Waverly Bergwin
Heartsease; The Liliths Rib
Wire, semi-precious stones
47.5 x 13 x 4 inches
NFS



Waverly Bergwin
Solanum the Sacrifice, 2022
Wire, semi-precious stones
40 x 14 inches
\$8,000.00



Waverly Bergwin
Willow the Unwound, 2022
Wire, dried flowers
33 x 7.5 x 4 inches
\$3,000.00



Waverly Bergwin
Yael, 2019
Wire
12 x 3 inches
\$1,800.00



Waverly Bergwin

Enoch

Wire, nylon, pearl, acrylic, razor-blades

19 x 15 inches

\$2,800.00



Waverly Bergwin

Genesis, 2023

Wire, nylon, amethyst, acrylic, razor-blades

26 x 7 inches

\$3,800.00



Waverly Bergwin
Riverbed Blade, 2023
Wire, stones, dried flowers
14 x 4 inches
\$1,800.00



Waverly Bergwin
Saltstone Blade, 2022
Wire, glass beads, stones
13 x 3 inches
\$1,800.00



Waverly Bergwin
Swindler Blade, 2022
Wire, hair, dried oranges & flowers
21 x 5 inches
\$2,400.00



Waverly Bergwin
Ephedra, 2023
Wire, beetles, glass beads
19 x 3 inches
\$2,000.00