

Deb Mell's art is a haunting experience in every sense. She alerts and attunes us to mystery, dreams, and play in a world of beings who are nameless and unforgettable, and who will remain in your mind's eye long after you have left their company. She captures our eyes with her saturated, illuminating colors, her sparkling materials, and her figures who inhabit a borderland of human, animal, chimera and monsters.

Dwell among them and her creations will find a home in your memory. Mell claims her place as an artist who is a shaman as well as a collector. She works with what she finds as well as what she seeks. She works from her history as a woman who knows the female body and its potential for transformation, as well as from her heritage as a Native American—two cultural formations that insist on birth, death and regeneration.

Revisit them, and whether you are contemplating one of her totems or one of her paintings, you will wonder, and want to know the sources of her inspiration, because they resonate with the mysteries, dreams and play we all know well from the time of childhood. Deb Mell shows us that if we are wise and alert, we will never leave our imagination behind, and her art nourishes us with what we need as shelter and surprise when the world is too much with us.

- Fran Bartkowski