

# Wild Gardens and the Birds That Love Them

*Paintings and Collages by Julie Zahn*

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**MARCH 2ND - APRIL 28TH**  
at Awbury Arboretum



**Opening & Artists' Reception: March 13th, 4PM - 6PM**  
*This event is FREE - please join us*

*Proof of Vaccination Required*



One Awbury Road • Philadelphia, PA 19138

## ***About the Artist***



Painter and printmaker Julie Zahn was raised in Bethesda, Maryland. Her mother, artist Ann Zahn, operated a very active printmaking workshop in their house where Julie learned to do monoprints and etchings as a teenager. After college, Julie spent several years in a countryside town in Japan, where she was hired to teach English but spent her free time painting landscapes and still-lives. Upon returning to the States, she enrolled in the 4-year Certificate program at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts. After graduating, she was awarded a travel scholarship to fund a trip to Kyoto where she

spent a year working with an antique screen restorer. Toward the end of her stay there, she discovered katazome or Japanese stencil dyeing, a paste-resist technique traditionally used for textiles. Attracted by its painterly quality, she adapted it to paper using acrylics and pigments with gojiru, a soybean binder, creating paintings with a printmaking element. She uses katazome, woodcut and painting to create her distinct, recognizable work. Her studio is in East Mt. Airy just five minutes from Awbury Arboretum, and she exhibits regularly in Philadelphia and Washington, DC.

## ***Artist's Statement***

I have been working to create a natural oasis on my urban spot of land for many years. My surroundings permeate my work and I use images from what I see or imagine might be there. I have also painted landscapes for many years, working in Maine or Maryland, always with a view of water. But the garden, which I walk through to get to my studio, is my most constant and immediate source of inspiration: the way the pathways meet the rocks, plants finding their way through the metal gates, the ever-changing light, these impressions all feed my visual compositions.

There are many artists that I particularly love, such as Manet, Matisse, Diebenkorn, and Munakata. But paramount has been the influence of a Japanese aesthetic, perhaps because I learned to draw and paint sitting beside rice fields in the Japan countryside and on tatami mats in my apartment in Utsunomiya. This influence has permeated my work and I have spent my whole life reinterpreting it in my own way.

Birds entered my work unexpectedly a few years ago. I needed a wedding gift for my ornithologist brother. With their arresting poses, their energy and charm, birds provide everything I want in my work: drama, design, beauty. They also gave me a much-needed diversion during Covid and I named this body of work the "Covid Bird Series."

### **Winter 2022 Cope House Gallery Hours:**

**Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday, 10:00 AM – 4:00 PM,  
and by special appointment.**

*Please visit [www.awbury.org](http://www.awbury.org) for more information*