

ARTISTS' STATEMENT

Angelica Walton

REBIRTH, Mixed media: paper, natural fibers, moss, feathers, rock, glass, leaves, yarn, and flowers, 2024

Artist: Angelica Walton

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Abstract

Artist's Statement for the cover art of the *Interdisciplinary Journal of Partnership Studies*, Volume 11, Issue 2: REBIRTH. Mixed Media

Keywords: Partnership, Emergence, Regeneration

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REBIRTH is a mixed media curation of life's possibilities when hope is collectively embodied into action. As the *Interdisciplinary Journal of Partnership Studies (IJPS)* celebrates 10 years of global voice and vision for a partnership world, we asked our community to share what they felt most significant in this future that we hope for. Quickly, pictures of earth's most vital sources of energy in their whole forms such as water, trees, rocks, plants, and wildlife arrived in an email exchange.

Next, photographs of woven tapestries, patterns, quilts, and nature's biodiverse systems were shared, making clear the power of art and earth's natural expressions to provoke awe and connection. Emerging new pathways designed to nurture and foster systems of growth and regeneration are symbolically bound together by the forces that transcend our differences.

Spiral Bound

The spiral is one of nature's most prevalent pattern formations, from its microscopic geometry and structure found in flora and fauna to its macroscopic complex system of galaxies, auroras, and nebulas (Kang et al., 2019). The spiral is found in both inanimate and animate forms of life's stories. The ancient symbol can be traced back to various cultures across the world, from carvings and paintings in the caves of Mayans and walls

of Malta and Buddhist and Japanese temples, to architectural designs of Egyptian pyramids, Celtic and Nordic stone etchings, and Renaissance art (Tsuji & Müller, 2019).

The structure tells the stories of history while simultaneously creating a continuous process of change, unlike circles that continuously repeat in the same cycles, but infinitely extending into new depths and dimensions by the gravitational forces of law, mathematics, and physics. Sometimes spirals come from the world's strongest and most powerful natural forces, such as hurricanes, cyclones, and tornadoes while other times they are physical manifestations of life's most subtle energetic interactions (Tsuji & Müller, 2019). As nanostructures of movement and sound, spirals kinetically shape the purest formations of life's systems, seen in snails, corals, ferns, ammonites, and other sea creatures, each demonstrating themselves as harborers of connection and growth. In art, the spiral reconnects us to our innate entanglement and bond as one unified and cohesive system that has regenerative capacity for the process of emerging anew.

REBIRTH

Like the spiral as it bends and creates, Riane Eisler's book *The Chalice and the Blade: Our History, Our Future* (1988), propelled us forward into a deeper social movement toward partnership evolution. Partnership invites a prolific possibility of liberation and adaptation into something new. Today we face obstacles of turbulence, chaos, and discord, with rising violence, war, and systems of oligarchy burdening the sustainability of our earth's future, but as Eisler has highlighted, if we are to reorder our internal institutions of inconsistency from ideologies of polarization into more expansive possibilities of transcendence, we must organize beyond left versus right, religious versus secular, gender hierarchies, and binary thinking.

Vision and Stories

The inspiration for the central eye of the spiral which began the process of this co-created piece started with Angelica Walton's personal story growing up in southern Louisiana, where I have found myself in seasons of rebirth, at the eye of many

hurricanes. Over the years, having weathered a number of dominative and destructive storms, I have continued to learn that the power for creating anew lives most significantly in our own inner stillness. There is an unbreakable power that sits at the center of the eye. In that stillness, we learn to see clearly and to have foresight amid life's continuous process of change.

Contributions from other IJPS board members include global partnership through photographs of doors from around the world, quilts, flowers, and frosted windows resembling the creative capacity of water to generate new patterns. Others capture the essence of family and the love of music. Some shared words like justice, freedom, love, and leadership. Symbols of transformation are seen in butterflies, birds, sea creatures, stones, flowers, wheat pods, and grasses. In a collection of adaptive systems, vibrant colors bring wholeness and threads of cohesive possibility into our shared vision for a partnership future inclusive of all.

Hope

Art is life, and its value is central not only to our progress, growth, and development of hope, but our capacity for interconnection on the spiraling journeys of being. The Rebirth process becomes more possible when we center in stillness and relationship. We face unknown days ahead as the concern for our earth's systems rise with anticipated setbacks to planetary progress under ongoing fracking and drilling expansion plans, and global climate action rollbacks. Now, more than ever, we need to find each other in community and prepare for the rebuilding process with vision, clarity, and foresight.

The diverse media of this artwork is a representation of the process for building new pathways that partnership offers us. The *IJPS* community shares this issue's cover art with the invitation to each and every one of our readers across the world to continue using your voices and creative expressions as a conduit for change as we collectively design structures for a new, loving world. With consistency, innovation, and healthy, dynamic, biodiverse systems, we seed the possibilities of rebirth. Together, we will

continue putting hope into action and we will work to build systems for new life to emerge from.

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Dr. Angelica Walton is a Clinical Assistant Professor in the Population and Systems Health Cooperative unit at the University of Minnesota School of Nursing where she teaches about global perspectives on health and healing, innovation, and leadership. Her scholarship focuses on the restoration of ecosocial relationships, and embodied actions for building healthy communities to support planetary wellness.

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