Invasive Attempts

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Inspired by the parasitic, yet symbiotic relationship between oak apple wasps and oak trees, the artwork *Invasive Attempts* considers potential reciprocal relationships with and within landscape.

Gall wasps rely on oak trees, their host plant, for survival. By inducing galls on the branches of oak trees, gall wasps lay eggs and support growth through early stages of life. While the gall wasp uses the oak tree for its own gain, it is believed that very little harm occurs to the tree. What is left after the wasps have matured and taken flight are oak galls: round, porous balls that dry and fall to the ground after the wasps no longer need them.

Dipesh Chakrabarty's *One Planet, Many Worlds* inspired me to further think about how our recent pandemic changed our collective sense of time as well as our role as the host of the virus and the various factors involved in its causality. As he writes, “In the pandemic, the future arrives as nostalgia.”

In my art practice, I consider the impending nostalgia and loss I feel for places I still live with and know. I collect fallen oak galls to use as a natural dye source, as well as a form for inspiration. Oak galls, plant growths produced by wasps, are both native to our landscape and a result of a parasitic reaction. Using silk dyed by neighboring plants, both local and invasive, I repeatedly wrap oak galls. Wrapping becomes a ritualistic act that quells anxiety while suffocating the gall in a protective hug. The process of enveloping the oak galls with each fabric strip slows my present time and encourages space for observation of our present moment and shared future.

The collective slowing caused by the pandemic presents an opportunity to look more cautiously at the world around us, for better or worse. Perhaps positively our slowing can open our eyes to the interconnectedness of our human interior world and the world beyond us.
Image 1:
*Invasive Attempt, #12 (Bound)* in the Petaluma landscape
2023
Oak galls wrapped in cotton and silk dyed with sunflowers, lavender, eucalyptus and iron
21.5” x 2”
Image 2: 
*Invasive Attempt, #12 (Bound)* and *Invasive Attempt, #11* in the Petaluma landscape 2023
Oak galls wrapped in cotton and silk dyed with plants
Image 3:
Invasive Attempt, #12 (Bound)
2023
Oak galls wrapped in cotton and silk dyed with sunflowers, lavender, eucalyptus and iron
21.5” x 2”