



DONNA SHARRETT

STATEMENT

*A Tailored Herbaria of At-Risk Forest Denizens*

I work under the influence of that which I am by inheritance: artist, environmentalist, gardener, seamstress and activist.

After a three-decade exploration of the objects, techniques and traditions used to remember human loved ones, I have shifted my focus to memorialize leaves of beloved tree species threatened by climate change, invasive plants, disease and insect introductions, harmful landscaping trends, and commercial interests.

I was raised to love and steward nature, am a Master Gardener Volunteer with Cornell Cooperative Extension, and an advocate for responsible policy changes (and their enforcement) to strengthen protections of natural resources; all of which influenced the creation of the Tailored Herbaria series.

I consider the works in this series both portraits and evidence of place within a specific time. Leaves serve to represent trees, the ancestors of ancient inhabitants of the places we now occupy and with whom we co-exist; their presence often underappreciated or unseen. The Tailored Herbaria series responds to the accelerating loss of the naturally occurring biodiversity which defines the places we inhabit (our parks, our parkways, and our home landscapes). Human existence depends on plants – for stormwater management, climate control, and biodiversity. Much of the previous loss could have been prevented. Much could be done to prevent further loss. Awareness can produce action. Action is imperative.

Botanical nomenclature and watershed location of the tree(s) which produced the leaf (leaves) title the works.

Materials and processes developed for my “Memento” and Arrangement” series are used in honor of my mother for whom handmade stitches were love notes held in homemade clothing, for my brother with the use of guitar-strings, and for my father who fostered my love of trees.