

ARTIST'S STATEMENT

Annie Hejny

Don't Need It to Be Stable, acrylic and collected Lake Superior water on canvas, 2025

Artist: Annie Hejny

Abstract

Artist's Statement for the cover art of the *Interdisciplinary Journal of Partnership Studies*, Volume 12, Issue 2: *Don't Need It to Be Stable*, acrylic painting.

Copyright: ©2025 Hejny. This is an open access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Noncommercial Attribution license (CC BY -NC 4.0), which allows for unrestricted noncommercial use, distribution, and adaptation, provided that the original author and source are credited.

Working with insistence and intention amid societal and ecological collapse, I create artwork that invites my community to remember our kinship with the natural world through our most vital and fragile resource—water. As familiar systems undergo profound transitions, I turn to water as both material and metaphor: a reminder of our interconnection, constant change, and need for adaptability.

Through a multidisciplinary approach that weaves material science, ecological research, community collaboration, and site-responsive making, I resituate substances gathered from the environment—fresh water, sediment, snow, tree bark—within my paintings, sculptures, installations, and videos. By carrying these materials from their original contexts into new artistic forms, I enact a process of transformation that mirrors the larger shifts our world is undergoing. Water becomes the constant

throughline, guiding both my creative decisions and my inquiry into how we might transition toward more reciprocal, life-sustaining systems.

Don't Need It to Be Stable was created after my solo circumnavigation of Lake Superior. Ancient Precambrian boulders along the shoreline offered moments of stillness after maneuvering in and around the water—shelter from the wind, a shield from the spray, and a solid surface to rest upon. As sources for my paintings, their immense shapes are transformed through whirling lines and urgent gestures into looming abstracted masses that reflect both the natural landscape and my inner reckoning with a world in crisis. Each imposing form—real and imagined—confronts the enormity of serious climate threats to Lake Superior. I wrestle with the weight of these massive issues, the tension and tenderness of life unsettled.

Annie Irene Hejny (American, b. 1988) is a voice for the earth. She has exhibited nationally including at the Minnesota Marine Art Museum, Minnesota Museum of American Art, Wausau Museum of Contemporary Art, DeVos Art Museum, and Sioux City Art Center. Her artwork is held in private collections in 30 states and internationally including at the Mayo Clinic, Minnesota Vikings Art Collection, Minnesota Marine Art Museum, Minnesota Museum of American Art, Target Corporation, University of Minnesota Physicians Clinics, and University of St. Thomas. She has been awarded two Minnesota State Arts Board Grants, and the Kolman & Reeb Gallery Project Space Grant. Artist residencies include: Lanesboro Arts with the Jerome Foundation, Science Museum of Minnesota Artist at Pine Needles, Grand Marais Art Colony, and Anderson Center at Tower View. As a certified Nature and Forest Therapy Guide and a Minnesota Water Steward, her artwork reflects our human connection with nature through freshwater protection. Hejny lives and works between Minneapolis, MN and Brooklyn, NY.

Hejny: Don't Need It to Be Stable



Don't Need It to Be Stable; acrylic and collected Lake Superior water on canvas; 53 x 53 in.; 2025