

Hollis Sigler (1948–2001)

“I decided that now I had to incorporate the cause, because as an artist I have an obligation to say something, to be responsible to my community.” –HOLLIS SIGLER, 1994

Hollis Sigler created paintings, prints, and drawings based on elements of her life and personal experience, often exploring the nature of human relationships. Early in her career she chose to work in a naïve, child-like style. She kept this drawing style and rich, bright colors in her later work as well, which helped make her difficult subject matter more accessible to viewers. Her imagery included written banners and colorful borders, and she often created decorative, painted frames with the title of the work handwritten around the edge.

The subject of much of her work focused on women's experiences of love, family, home, and illness. She often portrayed empty rooms and dream-like landscapes scattered with objects in the moments just following a dramatic event. Her scenes suggest the repercussions of the event, rather than the cause.

In 1985 Sigler was diagnosed with breast cancer; she had lost both her mother and great-grandmother to the disease. She underwent treatment, but the disease returned; from that point forward, living with cancer became the primary subject of her work. In 1992 she began the series *The Breast Cancer Journal*, which expressed her own journey as a breast cancer patient. The works incorporate personal diary entries and medical research written on the frames and borders of each piece, expressing her struggle, acceptance, and hope.

Sigler received numerous grants and awards during her life, including a National Endowment for the Arts grant for painting in 1987 and an Honorary Doctorate from Moore College of Art in 1994. She was a Professor of Art at Columbia College in Chicago for twenty years.

Selected Bibliography

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