

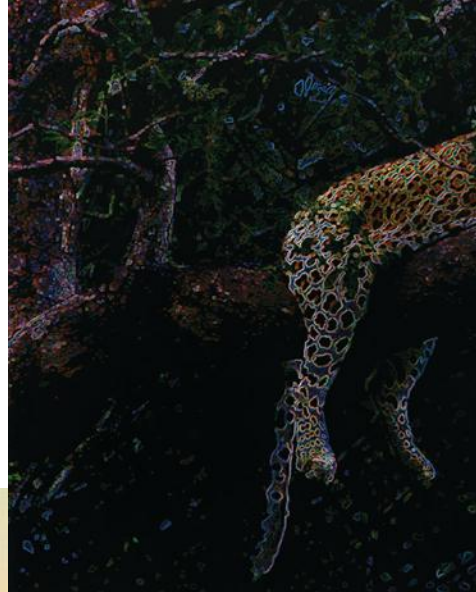
Showcasing International Artists and Writers • A Loft to Get Lost in • Liz Ruest

ArtAscent

Art & Literature Journal 21 October 2016



FEATURE:
Wild



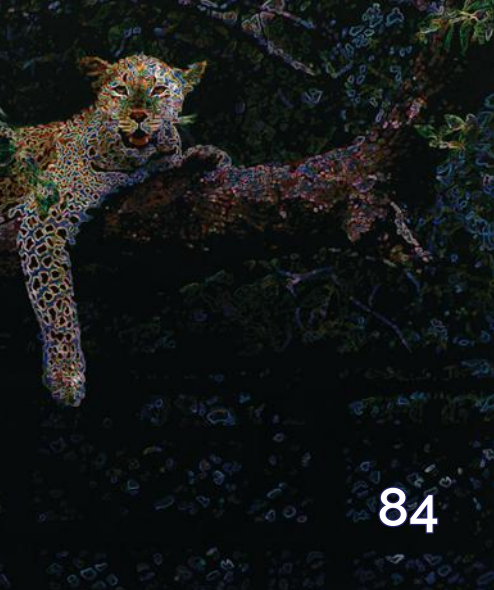
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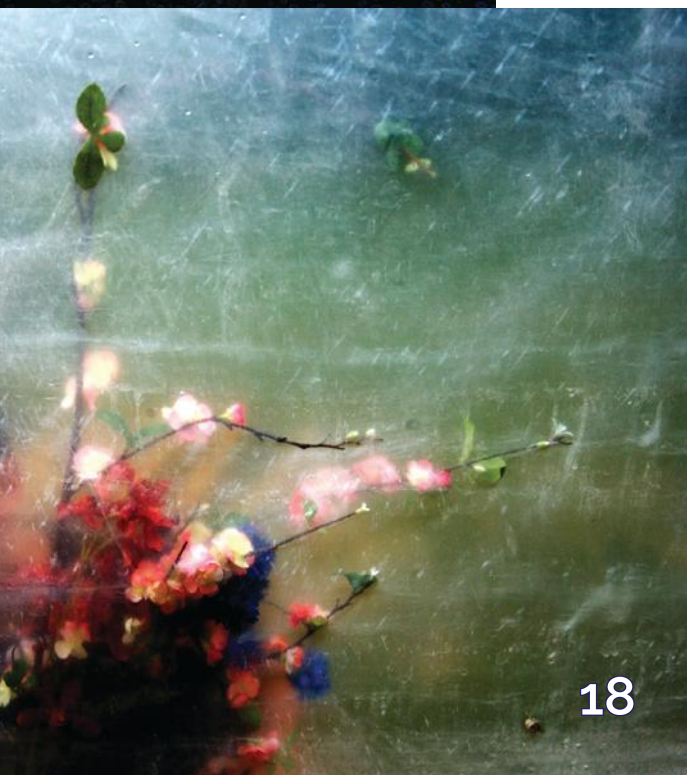
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Liz Ruest

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ArtAscent

Art & Literature Journal

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artists and writers from around the world



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Oleksandra Osadcha, Liz Ruest, Rusty Sherrill

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Foreword and Artist Profiles

Oleksandra Osadcha is a freelance art historian and art critic living in Kharkiv, Ukraine. She earned her Master of Art degree in art history at Kharkiv State Academy of Design and Arts, where she is also currently researching her doctoral thesis. An active curator of art exhibitions in her hometown, Oleksandra is interested in the issues concerning visual representation of sacred motifs in contemporary art.



On The Front Cover

A King's Revenge
by Stewart Wayne Fanning



On The Back Cover

Sunbird
by Clare Haxby



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Foreword

"Wild above rule or art, enormous bliss."

John Milton, *Paradise Lost*

The word culture is widely used in various contexts, having over 200 definitions. It is derived from the Latin word *colere* which translates to *cultivating earth, preparing it to raise crops*. Gradually its meaning was transferred to the human spirit, saying that spirit should be cared for in the same way that we care for the soil. Thus, culture is often perceived as something opposite to nature. Culture is stereotyped as being refined and positive, while nature is often thought of as being chaotic, wild, and negative.

Since the Renaissance, people have tried to control nature by analysing it and making it orderly. This inspired contemporary artists to refer to the archaic period. Looking through the archaic prism, the world appears spiritual again, and connections are restored to an ethical ideal that disappeared in the industrial epoch.

The ability of Wild to evoke imagination with the mystery within made it an important factor in the culture of the 20th and 21st centuries. Artists like Paul Gauguin or the les Fauves group (French for *the wild beasts*) were attracted not only to simplified and eloquent visual language of the pre-historic epoch, but also to its holistic viewpoint and passion. Their creative impulses seriously influenced further development of art – from Abstract Expressionism to site-specific installations.

Some influential minds think our society came to the point of being "over-civilised," saying we have to rethink this concept. Hence, we decided to suggest that the artists and writers "go wild." Their responses which we received for the 21st volume of ArtAscent Art & Literature Journal are deeply personal and profound, promising an exciting journey into the Wild side of our identities.

By Oleksandra Osadcha

Casey Orr

www.caseyorr.com



Gig from Animality; Women, Animals and Instinct
Archival inkjet print | 30 x 22.5" | \$600



Artist

Syncretism of prehistoric thinking was traced to various forms of totemism. Our ancestors, believing in their connection with a spiritual being (an animal or a plant), attempted to keep the universal balance that is lost in today's world. Yet, contemporary artists like Casey Orr seek to reestablish this connection between human and nature.

Casey sees her digital camera as a tool to explore and analyse the surrounding world. She claims photography has the power to expose hidden things and poetically transform reality using visual metaphors and symbolism. This is why portraiture is Casey's favourite genre – it enables the artist to represent the whole Universe through one's personality. However, the upshot of this is that no two representations will ever be the same, nor will one representation ever be a final or eventual outcome. The only thing that remains constant is the artist's desire to achieve maximum integrity of the piece. This type of approach induced Casey to consider our visceral emotional sphere and its correspondence to the rhythms of the rest of the world. Those rhythms are often overshadowed by the noise of modern life, but they are still in each of us, in the wild part of ourselves. The author addresses this subject in her *Animality* photographic series.

Animality is a range of portraits showcasing two types of women: 1) Those described by the artist in her statement, "who align themselves with animals and their inherent powers" (they are captured wearing fur clothing, feather decorations, or animal prints), and 2) Those "who, through animal husbandry and farm work, have a daily commitment to animals" (they are photographed together with their pet – from a horse to an owl).

The concept of the series evolved from the notion that, due to their physiology which is strongly tied up to their biological rhythms (menstrual cycles, hormones, childbirth, etc.), women are solidly connected to nature. Their

biological body rhythms always remind them of their inner wilderness; it is often something they tend to avoid or tame. This perspective reveals the feminist aspect of the project, calling up the ecofeminist art movement and the works of Ana Mendieta, a Cuban American author, who is best known for her *Siluetas* sculptural performances (also known as "earth-body works"), which included silhouettes of the artist's body created in mud, earth, rocks, wild flowers, and leaves – maintaining the relational theme of cultural and natural. Whereas Mendieta's vision of the subject is generalized archetypal, Orr's photography appeals more to the individual's intimate level of its interpretation.

Animality perfectly illustrates that one doesn't need high-sounding words and wild gestures to convey the simple message American poet Henry David Thoreau formulated, "Wildness is the preservation of the World."

Casey Orr is an American-born photographer, who currently resides in England. She obtained her BA in Art and Art Studies from Goddard College and holds a PhD in photography from Leeds Metropolitan University where she now works as a senior lecturer. Casey's creative works were on the display at the University of the Arts, Philadelphia; Jen Bekman Gallery, New York; The Yorkshire Sculpture Park, UK; Look Liverpool International Photography Festival; and on the walls of HM Prison Leeds, the first time a prison space has been used as a space for art.

By *Oleksandra Osadcha*

Casey Orr

Poppy from Animality; Women, Animals and Instinct
Archival inkjet print | 30 x 22.5" | \$600



RIGHT PAGE: Gill from Animality; Women, Animals and Instinct
Archival inkjet print | 30 x 22.5" | \$600



Gold

Casey Orr

Margaret from Animality; Women, Animals and Instinct
Archival inkjet print | 30 x 22.5" | \$600



RIGHT PAGE: Mary from Animality; Women, Animals and Instinct
Archival inkjet print | 30 x 22.5" | \$600



Casey Orr

Anita from Animality; Women, Animals and Instinct
Archival inkjet print | 30 x 22.5" | \$600



RIGHT PAGE: Allison from Animality; Women, Animals and Instinct
Archival inkjet print | 30 x 22.5" | \$600



In most cultures, horses are associated with nobility, grace, and freedom because they embody life-forces that are untamed and close to wildness. These life-forces, at times, take us in unpredictable directions. Writer Anne Anthony was inspired by horse symbolism, as is evident in this featured poem.

To create a connection with the public, an artist (in the widest meaning of this word) has to put some "grabbing" details into his or her work. Contrast (visual, emotional, verbal, etc.) is one of the best ways to get the attention of a reader. And Anne successfully uses contrast in her writing. First of all, she concentrates on describing dramatic contrasting moments that portray the true nature of her characters. Anne says this about her heroes, "They are not superheroes, nor are they saints or angels, and sometimes they are not very likable. But, they speak honestly, even when they lie."

The High Horse poem recounts a dark moment of hardship and despair. It was written under the author's impression of an encounter with a young woman whose behaviour seemed to be extremely maximal and self-confident. This person, being "on her high horse," reminded Anne of herself at the age of that girl, and her poem portrays the changes of her life positions taking place over a period of time.

Anne's writing style is amplified by the rigid poetic structure she chooses for her poem, the sestina, – a complex poetic form that consists of 39 lines – 6 sestets (6-line stanzas) and a three-line envoy. Interestingly, the last word of each of the final 5 sestets is taken from the last word of a line in the first sestet. Its origin is ascribed to Arnaut Daniel, a French troubadour of the 12th century. Anne aspires to transfer the imposing tonality and often exaggerated attention in the sestina to the emotions that defined troubadour poetry.

Systematically, the writer follows the thorny path of the hero's spiritual transformation and return to the pure, initial self, saying, "The path to god lies wild, not planted." This line evokes parallels with the quote by John Muir, a Scottish-American naturalist, author, and environmental philosopher who wrote, "In God's wildness lies the hope of the world – the great fresh unblighted, unredeemed wilderness. The galling harness of civilization drops off, and wounds heal ere we are aware."

Anne Anthony is a full-time writer living in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. She holds a BA in English from New York University; an MSW in Community Organization and Social Administration from the University of Maryland School of Social Work; and an MA in Professional Writing, Carnegie Mellon University. Her fiction has been published in *Brilliant Flash Fiction*, *Tell Us a Story*, *Literary Orphans*, *Firewords Quarterly*, *North Carolina Literary Review*, and *Crack the Spine*. She is a member of the North Carolina Writers Network and currently serves as the representative for Orange County.

By Oleksandra Osadcha



High Horse

I

I rode the same high horse you ride so loose and wild,
flung lordly edicts to the masses until rotted roots
tripped my horse and slipped my saddle; face-planted
in my tumble to Earth. No soul came to my rescue,
no gentle forest creature sniffed me out
or beheld the fresh fear beneath my nails.

II

The devilish mare dropped crap in her flight; scattered nails
thrown from her loose shoe; left my fate to the wild
to master dirty secrets; a less certain trail masked my way out.
I camped in the dark, there where tangled roots
forced a trip of my ego. A prayer for rescue
rose from folded hands above feet loosely planted.

III

The break of dawn sparked fire and scorched the planet.
Tips of flame licked my ragged nails
and burned my sorry self begging for rescue
and wallowing in self-pity; Days lost, whiled
away, down one path or another, a faithful fight of spiritual roots.
With lips blistered by chapter and verse, I shouted out:

IV

ENOUGH! Strayed horse turned inside out,
she circled the carousel ride with hooves firmly planted.
Dropped the brass ring; kissed the forgotten girl of my roots.
Swirled boundless in clouds of a god without nails.
Holy spirit rejoiced the return to the wild.
Hold scared these truths of my rescue:

V

The path to god lies not in holier-than-thou rescue.
The path to god lies not by ruling life out.
The path to god lies wild,
not planted.
Wipe ancient blood from rusted nails.
Eternal joy springs from living roots.

VI

Sinful pride streamed through roots
of coloured hair, and preached rescue
by a mortal man hammered with nails
until god, in Her mercy, buried a tumor to carve out
the slick slippery black and white rules planted
in a child's soul, such cancerous weeds grown wild.

VII

This night I ride bareback, naked and wild,
singing full-bodied arias; my thighs firmly planted
into less god fearing flesh until all life runs out.

David Weinberg

www.d-weinberg.com



Chapter 2, Plate 4

Pigment print | 32.5 x 43.5" | \$3,800



Artist

Culture is inseparable from the society that produces it. Therefore, isolation and seclusion are often seen as something wild and opposed to culture. In reality, wildness isn't always about freedom and boundlessness; sometimes it's about the power that is born in seclusion that makes *Wildness* even more alluring, as David Weinberg proves in his photographic pieces.

David's early works were mainly delicate abstract pictures, produced out of the reality's fragments that were recomposed into dreamlike timeless images. However, his recent series appears to be focused on narration. The artist tells the stories of other people, while keeping to the subtle and intuitive language of his abstractions. One of the series that demonstrates a combination of surrealism and documentality in David's style is *Mr. Wild's Garden*.

The background of the series is rooted in the artist's childhood memories of his wanderings around abandoned green houses throughout Wisconsin, and his elderly neighbour who, as the artist recalls, "isolated himself in a house swallowed up by weeds and secrecy." All photographs are divided into "chapters," as David named them, each telling a story of solitude and estrangement. Using a subdued palette of pale greens, browns, and yellows, David creates morbid (or, perhaps, morbidly attractive) sceneries, captured through a plastic screen. The place doesn't look desolated; curiously, it's not human silhouettes pressed against the plastic that leave the feeling of someone's presence, but plants that seem to be in control of this tiny world.

The viewer can't get rid of the impression of being involved in the scenes as an unwilling spectator. A clammy feeling of curiosity, which makes the whole contemplation of the photographs resemble an act of voyeurism, provokes dozens of questions: Is that deafening solitude a sort of escapism? What force has

created such a reclusive space? Why do the plants look like flies caught in a spider's web? With Hitchcock-like suspense, the artist gives us no answer. He stirs up our fantasy, giving everyone a chance to be the director of his or her own "tale."

The atmosphere of *Mr. Wild's Garden* is similar to the site-specific projects by Valerie Hegarty. David, like Valerie, uncovers the mechanism behind our attitude towards Wild – it's a mixture of incomprehension and fear of something "bigger-than-us." Nevertheless, in contrast to Hegarty, David avoids showing direct destruction, which is stereotypically associated with Wilderness, manifesting its powerfulness even in the hidden form.

David Weinberg is a Chicago-based photographer. He received a BS degree in Business from Roosevelt University in 1967 and spent 35 years in his family's business. David launched his career as a photographer in 2001 and established a contemporary art gallery in his home city, now known as *Weinberg/Newton Gallery*, where he works as Executive Director. His works have been exhibited at such venues as the Elmhurst Art Museum, Art Chicago, Loyola University Museum of Art, and the Field Museum. David's photographs were published in such books as *Towering Mirrors*, *Mirroring Towers* (2006), and *Hot Ideas for a Cooler Planet* (2007).

By Oleksandra Osadcha

David Weinberg

Chapter 2, Plate 1

Pigment print | 32.5 x 43.5" | \$3,800



Artist

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Chapter 4, Plate 7
Pigment print | 32.5 x 43.5" | \$3,800



David Weinberg

Chapter 2, Plate 2

Pigment print | 32.5 x 43.5" | \$3,800



Artist

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Chapter 4, Plate 5
Pigment print | 32.5 x 43.5" | \$3,800



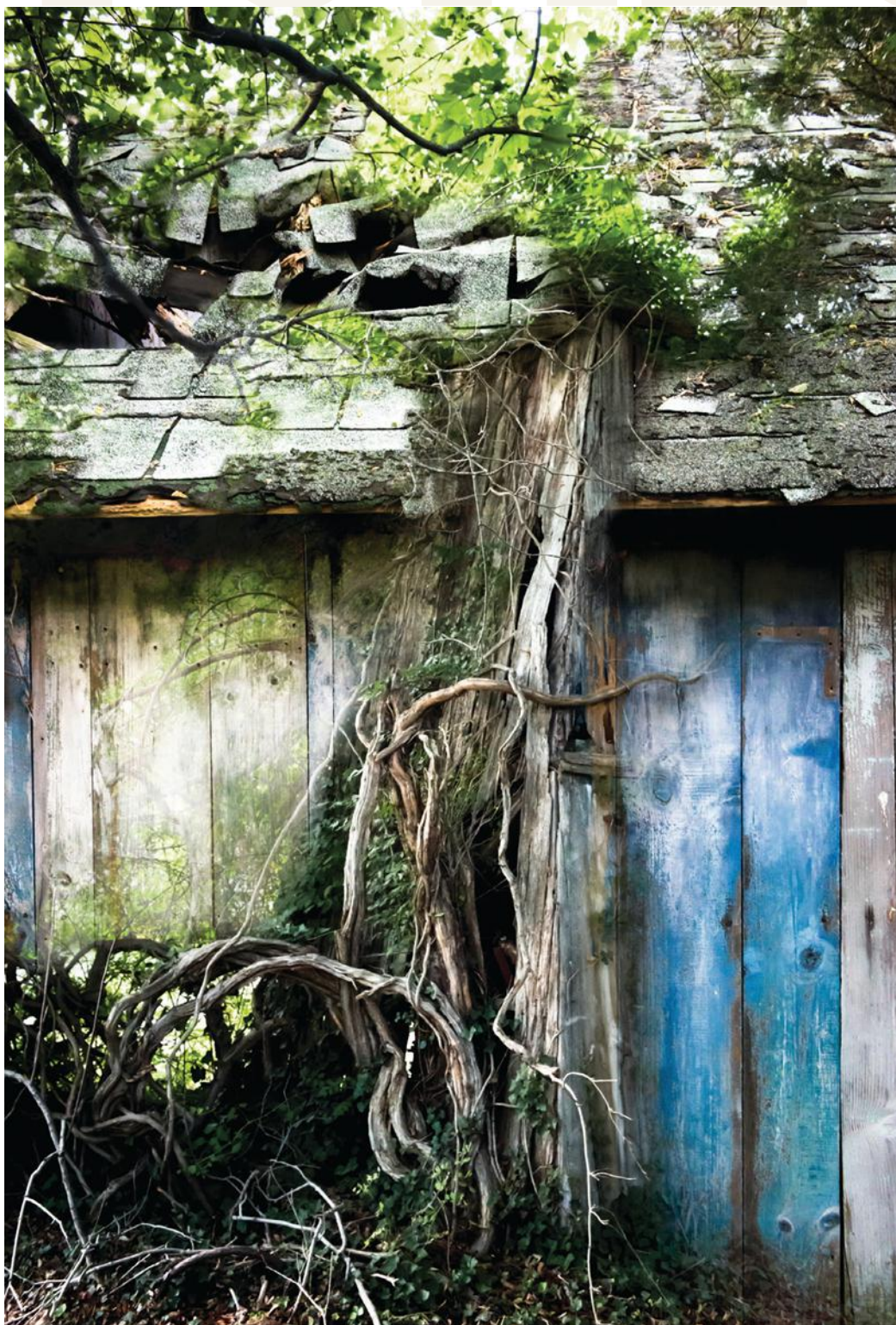
Barbara Boissevain

www.barbaraboissevain.com



Trees Will Outlive Us No. 2

Archival digital print | 20 x 30" | \$750



Art is often seen as an “alternative” elaboration of nature. Nevertheless, we can’t deny that art inherits a lot from nature and follows its rules, particularly the rule of Time, which makes it obvious that the man-made heritage is contingent on Wild forces. Barbara Boissevain manifests this in *The Trees Will Outlive Us* project.

The title of the series, *The Trees Will Outlive Us*, derives from the phrase of the artist’s grandmother Anna. Barbara’s family once owned a farm on the Montauk Highway, which was built by her greatgrandfather over a century ago. During one of Barbara’s visits to the farm, her grandmother pointed out two trees that she planted in front of her house when she was young. Her mother said, “The trees will outlive us.” Such prophecy prompted the artist to create this series of the shots she had recently made on the family farm, which is now abandoned and is being gradually consumed by the forest.

Barbara used the images of the farm in digital photographic collages. The artist enhanced textures and slightly modified the colour palette, showing how the aesthetical focus of the computer collage shifts from the materiality of an image to the abstract form. As a result, such a surprising fusion of forms provokes the viewers’ imagination and engages them in the creative process.

The same creative method of photographic collage was used by the world-renown photographer Boris Mikhailov in his *Yesterday Sandwich* series, which is based on an overlays technique. However, if Mikhailov played on the visual oppositions of the combined slides, Barbara tried to tune in all the parts of the shots to create a feeling of nostalgia and eternal delight with nature’s grandeur.

In a very eloquent way, the artist argues anthropocentric perspective, traditional for Western culture, and questioned in, “Who are the real hosts of this planet?” Mankind has been striving to take over nature for thousands of years; nature has appeared to give in, and yet, it gets the control back repeatedly. Barbara’s series seems to be an artistic refrain to the words of an ecologist, Dr. Timothy Goodwin, who said “...we do not own these woods. They own us.”

Barbara Boissevain is a photographer and visual artist based in the San Francisco Bay Area. She received her BFA degree from the San Francisco Art Institute in 1995 and her MFA from San Jose State University in 2013. In 2009, she received the *Best of ASMP Award* from the American Society of Media Photographers for her documentary work on Peruvian Quechua children and culture. Her work has been exhibited in many venues across the US and Europe: Root Division Gallery, San Francisco; the Euphrat Museum of Art, Cupertino; the Institute of Contemporary Art, San Jose; the Phoenix Gallery, New York; and the Mentenkov House Museum, Yekaterinburg, Russia. Currently she works as an adjunct professor in the photography department at San Jose State University and as an Artist in Residence at the Cubberley Artist Residency Program in Palo Alto.

By Oleksandra Osadcha

Barbara Boissevain

Trees Will Outlive Us No. 1

Archival digital print | 20 x 30" | \$750



Artist

Trees Will Outlive Us No. 1
Archival digital print | 20 x 30" | \$750



Tal Eshed
www.taleshed.com



Hallucination 7
C-print | 39.37 x 25.47" | \$4,500



Hallucination 1
C-print | 39.37 x 25.47" | \$4,500



Samantha Armatys



Fukushima

They run rampant there on the abandoned expanses of car parks and silent streets forgotten in time. Shadows are burnt into the bitumen beneath the hues cast from cars parked so long that no one owns them now. No one owns anything here now. He flicks his finger across the screen like he's flicking away a cigarette butt into the mounds of debris along the roadside. There's no smoking here either. There's not much -ing of any kind. Walking, breathing, living, dreaming, that's all done. Instinctively his hand goes to his mouth but hits the abstract rhombus of a mask that splits the air in two. It's not far.

The built-in camera reflects the scene, a postcard of a wasteland sent to no one. The overlaid virtual creature darts across his line of vision. He pans trying to keep up, one eye cast ahead at reality, the other transfixed on its warped facsimile. He has never seen this one before. He wants it so badly he can almost reach out and touch its sparkling feathers. It shakes. It shudders. It's his. It feels like pins and needles, like the sound of spilt marbles, like popping candy inside his head. He rides the intoxicating wave forward, further into the exclusion zone. Silhouetted like a cut out, his car becomes another part of the set, as distant and inconsequential as the blackened trees. Battle lines. State lines. Safety lines. Lines are always easier to cross than they seem from a distance.

There's nothing as disconcerting as an unmoving escalator. It's something about those metallic teeth jutting out like the bottom half of a jaw opened up at a forty-five degree angle ready to snap to life at any moment. She stands at its base in the monolithic silence of the cavernous mall. It's a dream in there. The one where it's just you and you're so small that your eyes don't reach the railings and there's no rules but your feet are frozen in place by the majesty of it all and you just want to scream to hear the sound of your voice echo in circles but all that comes out is a hoarse whisper because there's no words in dreams and there's no shouting at divinity. It's like she's standing in front of a mural so pretty her smile aches. She's seen the movies. She's sent this post card to herself a thousand times in her head. "Greetings from the End of the World." The screen flicks to life beneath the warmth of her touch. It's just ahead. Bleeping like a beacon, the point on the map radiates.

It's the darkest daytime he can remember. Everyone takes for granted the cleanliness of windows in the world outside but in here the fog of dust is as sombre as midnight. The shelves are stacked ready for the shoppers who will never come, the stamped dates mark a decaying time capsule. On the covers of magazines pristine in their racks, he can't even place the celebrities with their perfectly angular limbs. Scrolling through the wiki of memory it's as if he's never seen that isosceles of arms propped under chin before, that awkwardly sharp undulation of breast, but he's sure he's been told to want it once. Under the harsh light of the torch application, the colours are all wrong. It's hard to picture the shapes as masses of skin still breathing somewhere, easier to imagine them crafted from wax or plastic or some material immune to age. Regardless of composition, the dust has settled on them too. The beacon is pulsating as he approaches. Closer and closer and closer. Its pink light pierces the virtual darkness just beyond the wall. It's anyone's to conquer.

The space between them contracts like the core of a star as it starts to die. It's one of the last untouched stations left. Others have tried but no one has come as close. It will be shut down in hours if no one claims it. The authorities have reported the long-term risks too high for a property without ownership. But he will own it. But she will own it. Her feet hit the top of the stairs and the jaws don't close. He steps around the overturned trolleys on the other side of the door. It is there now, as tangible as a mirage. Fingers press down on glass as smooth as a skimming stone. The light on the screens illuminates the whole auditorium: the blackened mould on the damp ceiling, a mosaic of ruin. The beams from opposite sides reach up and up above the station, meeting and mingling and fighting for particles. Two eyes set ahead, two on the screen. Their silhouettes freeze in acknowledgement, mannequins of circumstance. Skin and plastic and wax. Decay and ruin. Pixels of fur and feathers and light. It belongs to them now, this empire of dust at the end of the world.

Arms drop to their side as the ground shakes beneath them. It is real. It is real. It is real.

Wen Liu
www.wen-liu.com



Foundation

Latex, bronze, reclaimed furniture, stool | 35 x 30 x 15" | \$3,500



Tower of Babel
Toys, wire, paint | 60 x 30 x 24" | \$4,500



Stewart Wayne Fanning



Pleb for President
Digital print | 8.5 x 11" | \$150



The Campaign
Digital print | 8.5 x 11" | \$150



NEXT SPREAD: The Cosmic Giant
Digital print | 8.5 x 11" | \$150





Stewart Wayne Fanning

The Crystals Commeth
Digital print | 8.5 x 11" | \$150



Pinsville
Digital print | 8.5 x 11" | \$150



Cullen Wegman
www.cwegmanart.com



The Kid AKA William
8.25 x 5 x 6" | \$400

RIGHT PAGE: Kill'in Jim James "Killer" Miller
10 x 5.25 x 5.25" | NFS





Chris Boyko
www.boykoart.com



Phase: Temp, Articulate, Energy
Oil on canvas | 36 x 48 x 1" | \$800



Inhalation: Saturation, Intake, Consumption
Oil on canvas | 36 x 48 x 1" | \$800



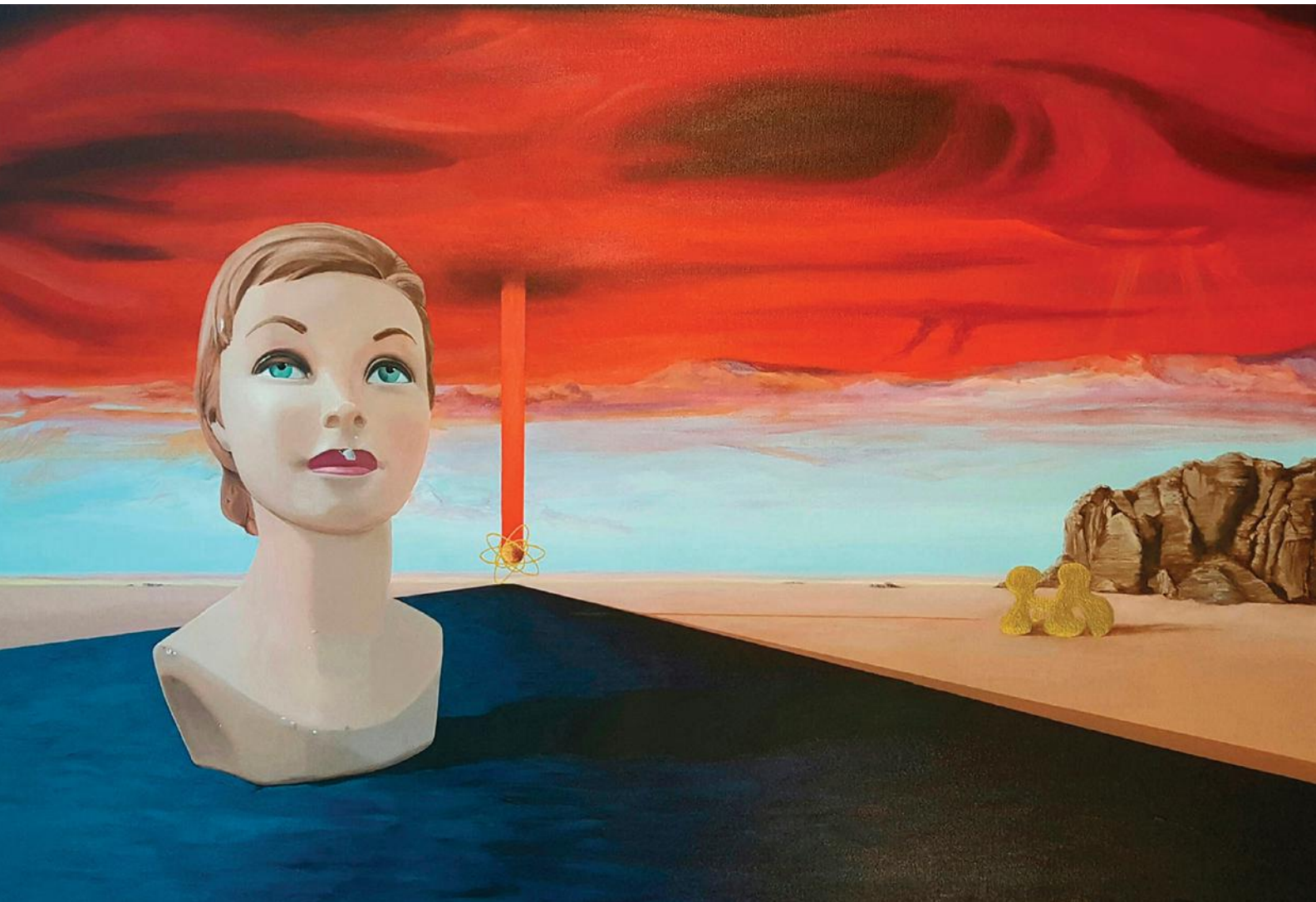
Eric Johnston

www.ericjohnstonfineart.com

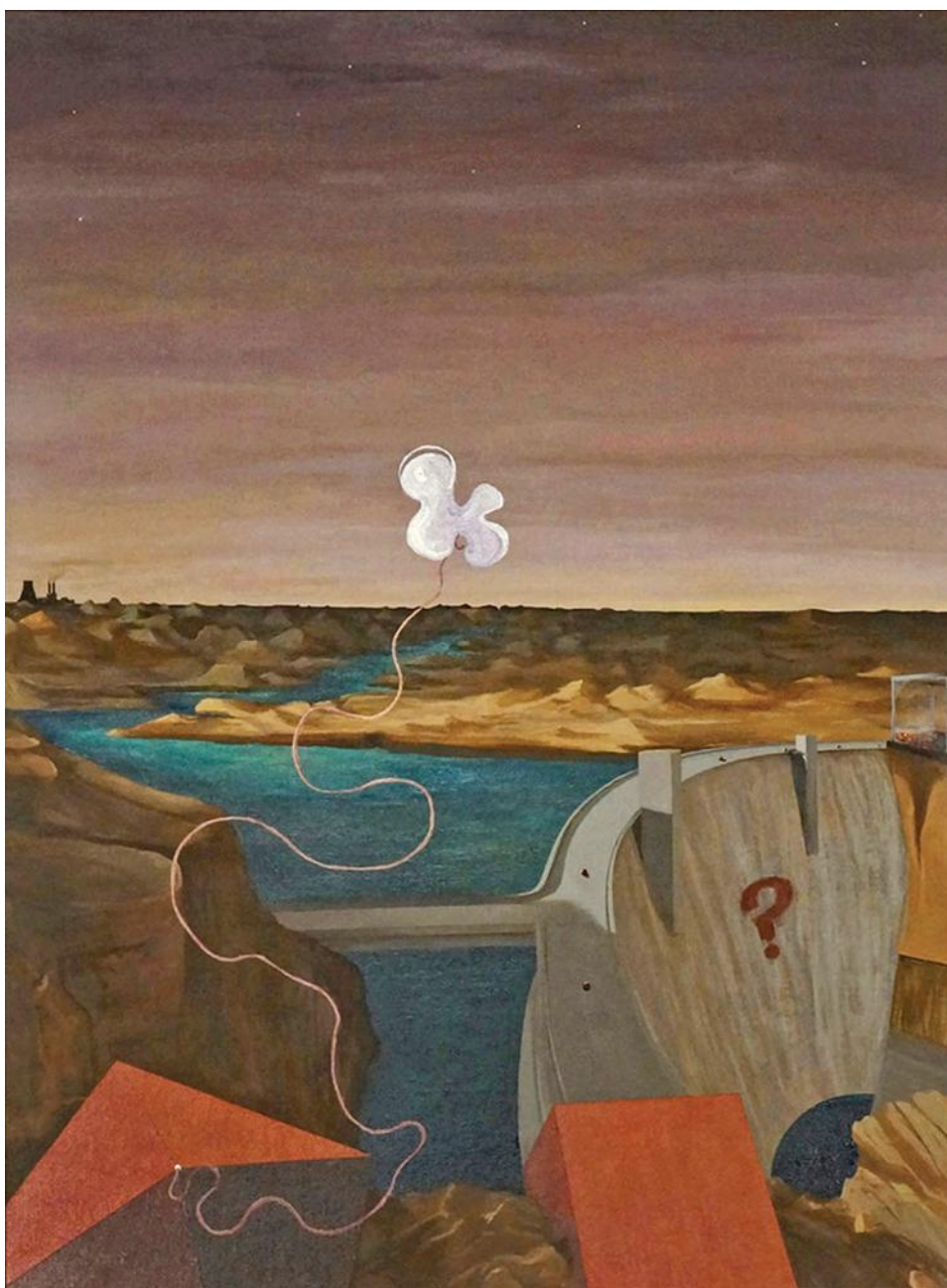


It Became Strange Once They Showed Up

Acrylic on canvas | 36 x 24 x 1.5" | \$26,950

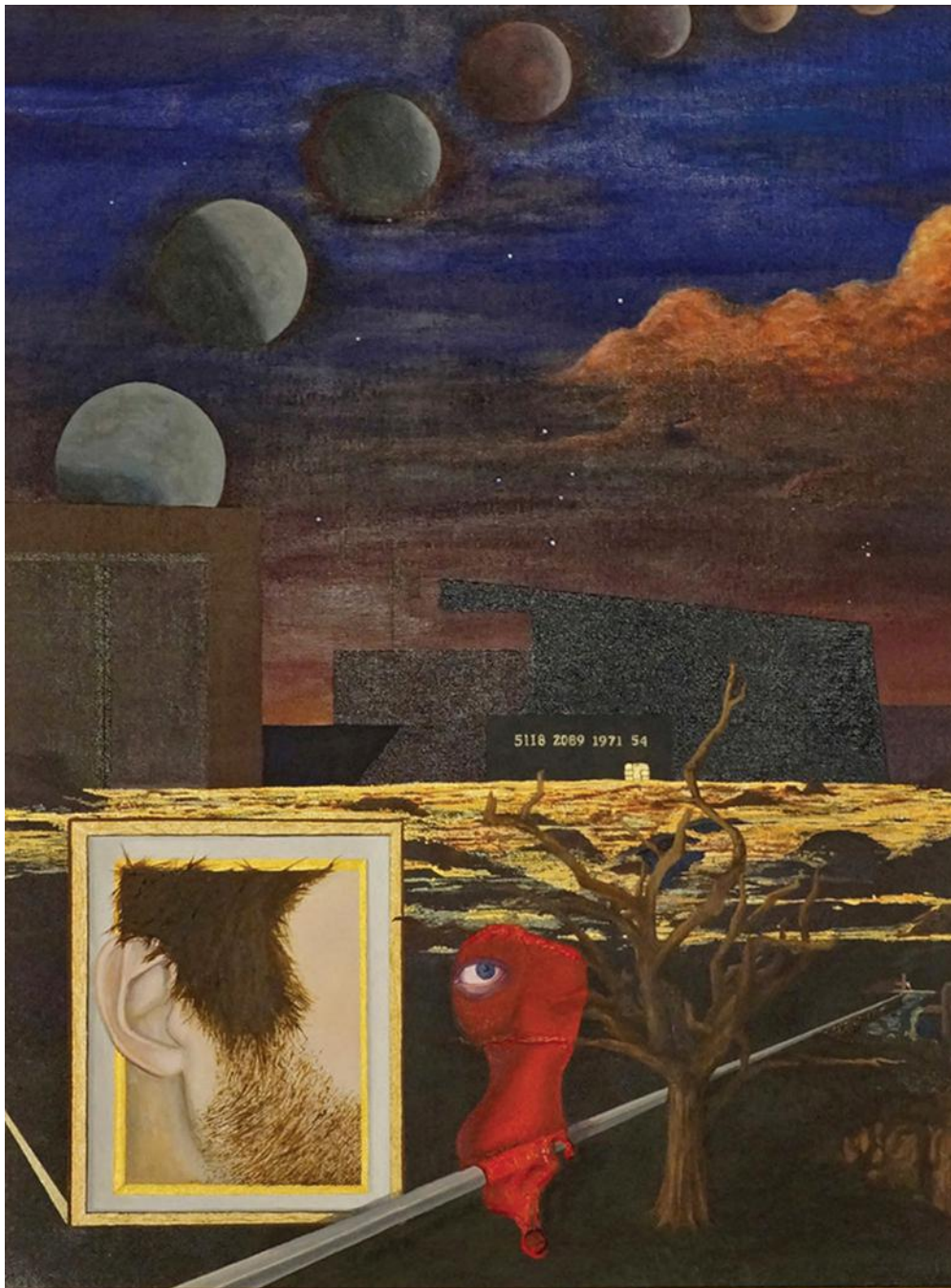


Power
Acrylic on canvas | 26.75 x 32.75 x 3" | \$22,950



Eric Johnston

Corporate Halo Over Desolate Dreams
Acrylic on canvas | 26.75 x 32.75 x 3" | \$22,950



Social Networking
Acrylic on canvas | 26.75 x 32.75 x 3" | \$22,950



Michael Dennis
www.michaeldennisart.wordpress.com



Queen Bee - Ladies of Nature Series
Handmade clay sculptures | 17 x 7 x 5" | NFS

RIGHT PAGE: Mother's Flock - Ladies Nature Series
Handmade clay sculptures | 12 x 10 x 6" | NFS





Michael Dennis

Winter Nights

Mixed media (crushed rose petals, crayon, acrylic) | 11 x 14 x 1" | \$1,000





Wildly Free

I'm so wild I could scream!
She would shout this often.

Wild? I thought. Like the Brumby's that could
been seen grazing on the ridge at sunset?

You make me so wild! Directed at me,
caused by me. I made her wild.

Wild? Like the tiny purple and yellow flowers that
grew out from the tree stump down by the creek?
Like the orange-breasted Robin, who played hide
and seek in the crevices of the now crumbling
and abandoned quarry? No, not that kind of wild.

Thundering black clouds, rain pelting, wind rip-
ping at worn white sheets on the old wooden line,
broken branches flying, hundred-year-old glass
window smashing kind of wild. Yes.

Because I was wild too. Free, untamed and
pure. River running, mane flowing kind of wild.
Reckless, shoeless, breathless, and careless.
I ran from routine, from order, from responsibility.
Don't hold me, don't cage me, just love me.

You better do as you are told. They would say.
She will be so wild if you don't.

Strap flying, spoon breaking, closet locking,
hands tying, eye-blackening kind of wild.

How could I be anything other than me. Raw.
Following my own heartbeat, my own call,
the call of the wild.

Just let her go. He would say. She'll settle down.
She's a wild one... that one.

But my wildness turned her wild. In an uncon-
trollable, seething, ugly way. Lips curling, teeth
baring, bristling hair kind of way. Furniture crash-
ing, body breaking, life ending kind of way. Sirens
calling, grave digging, tears falling kind of way.

Now wildly free. Spirit free. I run with the wolves,
the mountains, the rivers. On the wind I fly.

Captive and caged, she sits and stares at the
floor. She made me so wild...her only words.

Chandra Rice

www.chandrarice.blogspot.ca



BOTH PAGES: Eruption

Textile: felted wool and alpaca roving | 16 x 16" | \$260





Keith Spinn
www.keithspinn.com



BOTH PAGES: Formation Pool

Acrylic, mud, sand, ash, cinnamon, pigment, modeling terrain, resin on panel | 15.75 x 12.75 x 2" | \$500





Vier Und
www.vier-und-art.com



Fire

Acrylic on canvas | 53 x 39 x 2" | \$1,490

RIGHT PAGE: Hunger

Acrylic on canvas | 73 x 43 x 2" | \$2,910





Otto Schmidinger

www.studiootto.com

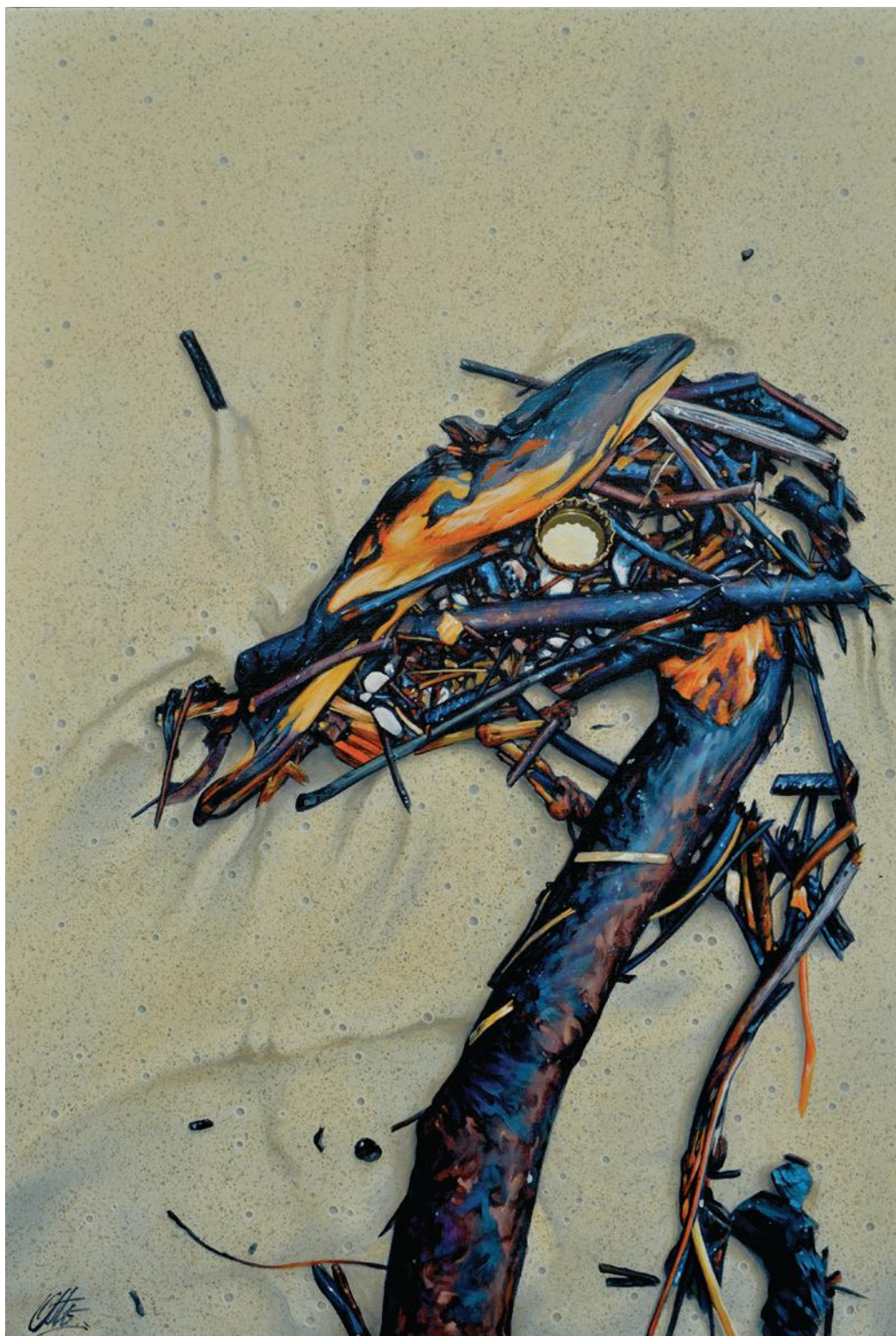


Venus

Oil on canvas | 24 x 36 x 2" | \$3,000



The Cap
Acrylic on canvas | 24 x 36 x 2" | \$3,000



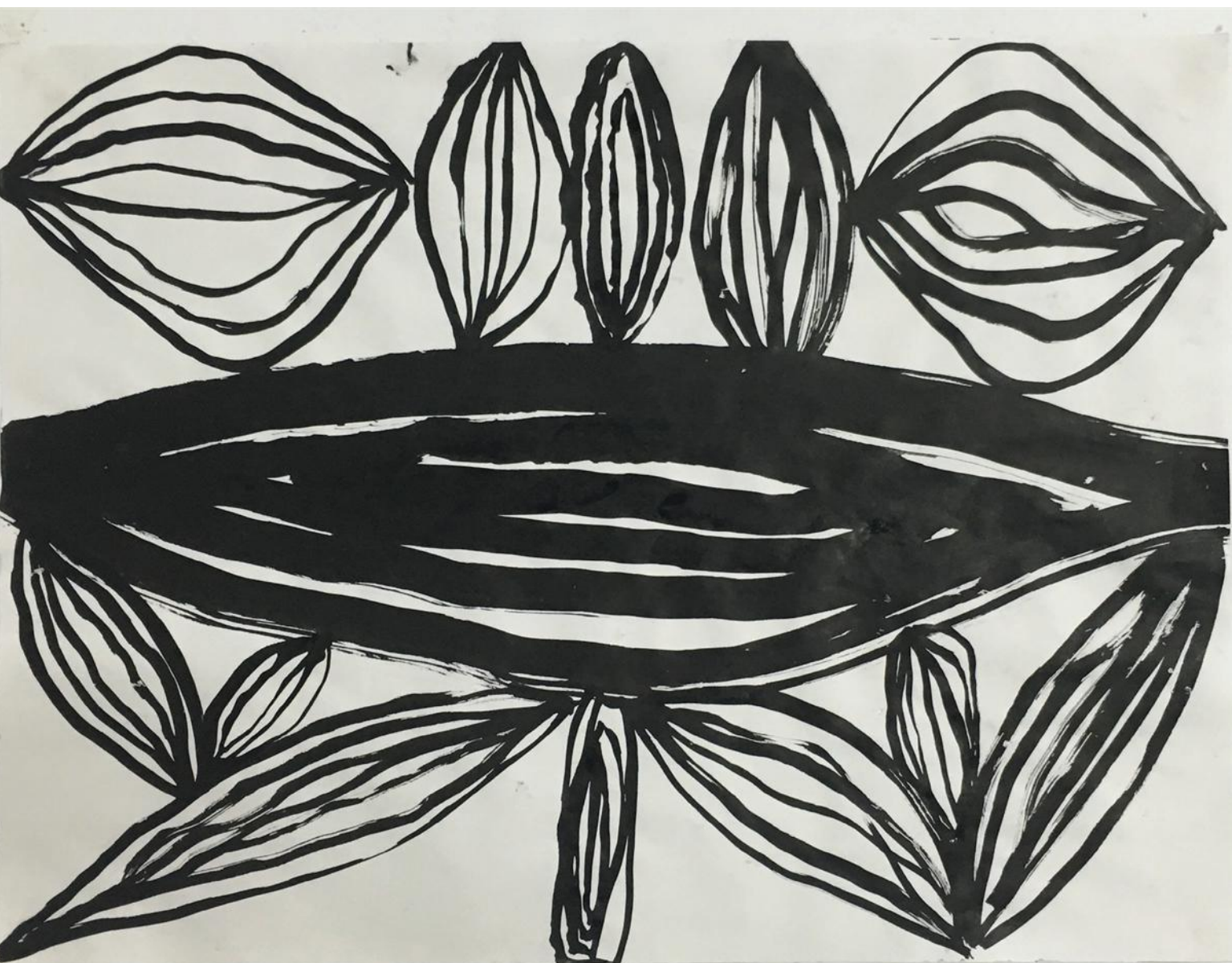
Ernie Novo

www.society6.com/ernienovo

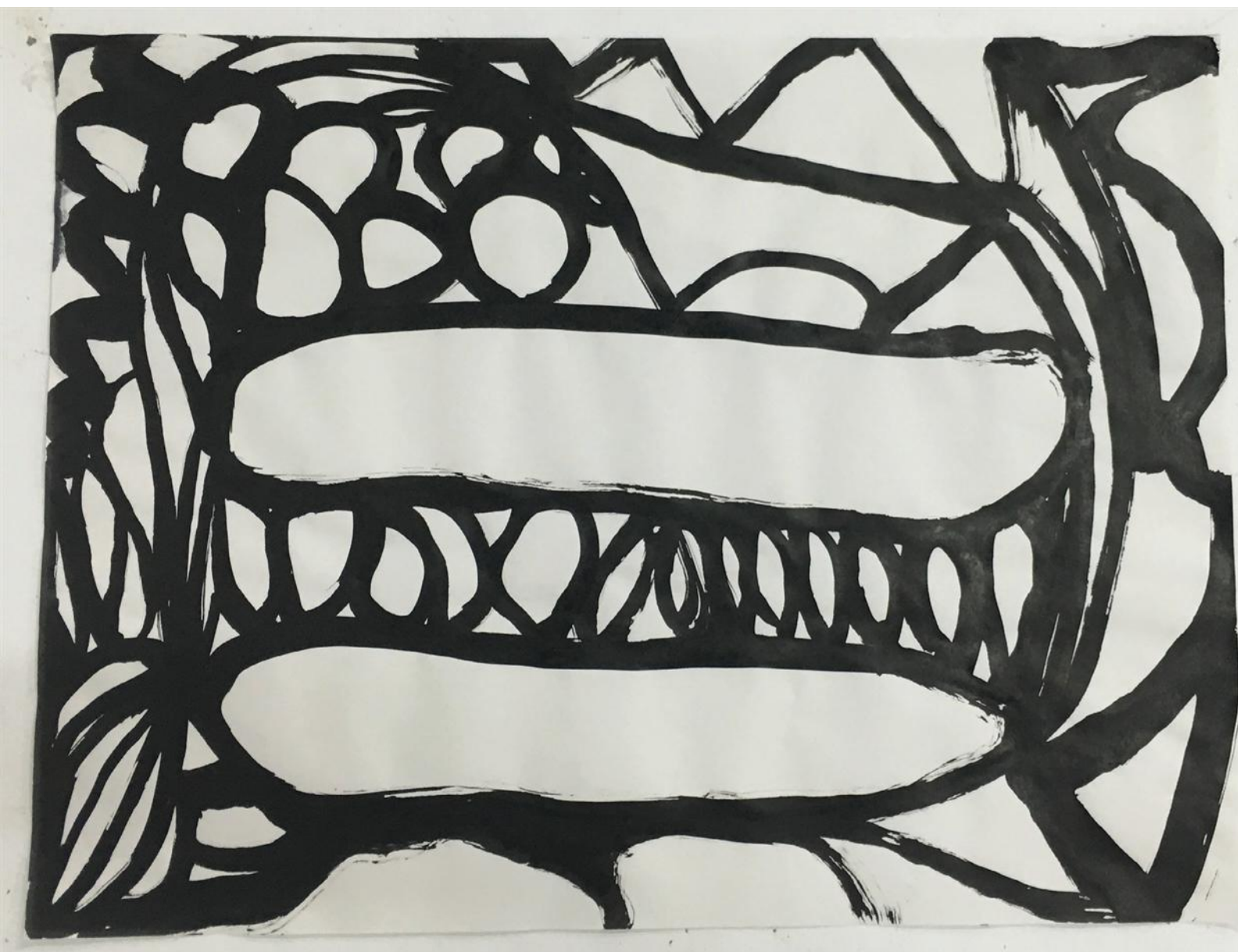


Visual Poem 3

Sumi ink on paper | 18 x 24" | \$500



Visual Poem 2
Sumi ink on paper | 18 x 24" | \$500





Barren Container

Veins sound like the desert wind
 They whisper furiously through the passages before them
 Your words are soft rose thorns
 Echoing in the distance of unborn actions since forgotten
 My vision blurs
 Anticipation of the worst
 Conversations with those also alone
 Anxious about the unknown tangled in their bodies

Voices are calm hiding in a sea of fear
 Frantic the pain decided to stay

NEVER ENDING
 CHURNING
 BURNING
 FLESH TEARING
 BONES GRINDING

Every step clicking code
 While thoughts cease for a moment

Winds curling over my back
 News like sinking rocks in the lake singing waves
 Traces in my legs vibrate with songs from dragonfly wings
 Wings a cicada screamed while hitting hallway walls
 I wander in the ripples of my belly
 Humming songs only mud and heartbeats uncover
 Stillborn bonds created within voids

Admitting the rain's delay



Irene Sirko
www.irenesirko.com

Stallion

Soapstone | 12.5 x 9.5 x 4" | \$1,800



Aleta Lederwasch

www.aletalederwasch.com.au



Man from Water

Pencil, gouache, watercolour | 11.69 x 16.53" | \$1,200

RIGHT PAGE: Woman from Coloured Rock

Pencil, gouache, watercolour | 11.69 x 16.53" | SOLD





Aleta Lederwasch

Man of the Cosmos

Pencil, gouache, watercolour | 11.69 x 16.53" | SOLD

RIGHT PAGE: Man in the Eucalypt

Pencil, gouache, watercolour | 11.69 x 16.53" | \$1,200







Unconsciousness Embodied

Wild and untethered I rage, yet I am asleep
I lash out with worded wounds and physicality unjust, I am unconscious
Spreading emotional damage, the carrier of an unforeseen inheritance
Now lost in the wilderness of grief, guilt, and despair, not understanding

This is wrong,
I hope for more
I want more
There must be more

I grieve and despair and cry for help
Over and over, until
Piece by piece I am gifted light
Love, insight, knowledge

It is time to do the work
To face those bonds which lie physically emotionally memorially
Take the pilgrimage
Brightness awaits



Priscilla Daniels

www.priscilladanielsart.com

69

ArtAscent

Walk in the Desert

8 x 11" | NFS



Malwina Zolyniak



Stalker

Oil on canvas | 39 x 51 x 0.7" | \$4,400



Insanity
Oil on canvas | 31 x 47 x 0.7" | \$3,700



NEXT SPREAD: Self-Portrait with My Cat
Oil on canvas | 39 x 51 x 0.7" | \$4,900





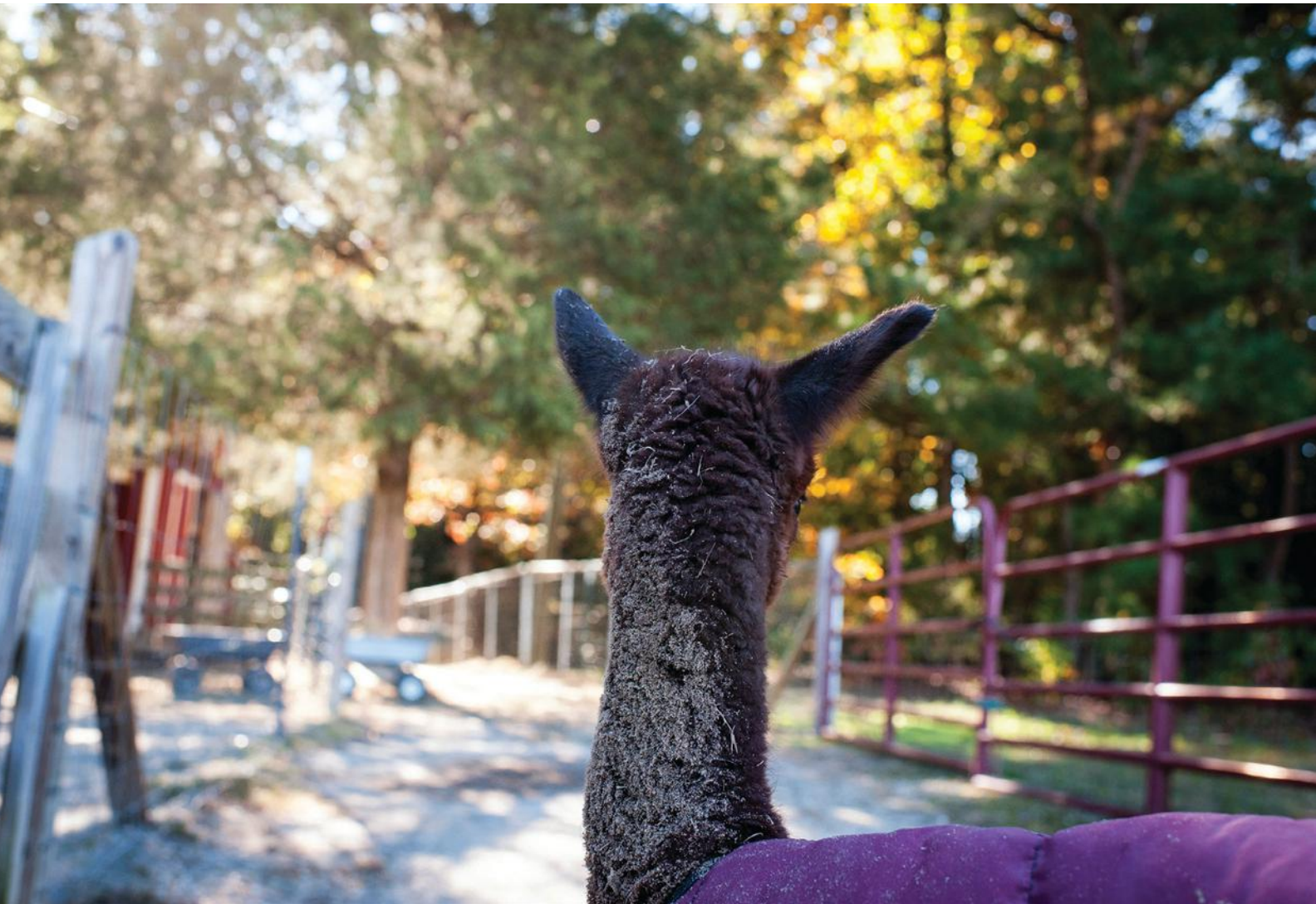
Lauren Barwood

www.laurenbarwood.com



Copper Penny

Digital photograph | 9 x 6" | \$250



Arctic Fox
Digital photograph | 9 x 6" | \$250



Lauren Barwood

Cedar Waxwings

Digital photograph | 9 x 6" | \$250



Pit Viper
Digital photograph | 9 x 6" | \$250



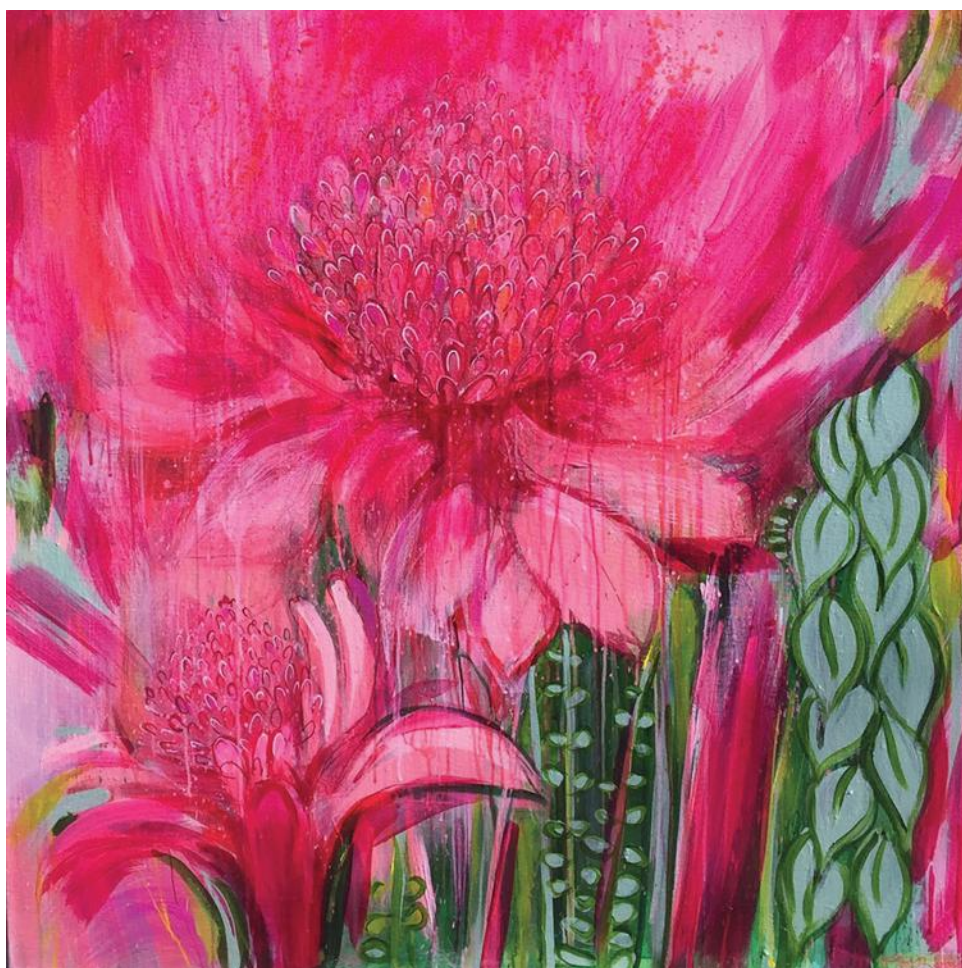
Clare Haxby
www.clarehaxby.com



Meet Me at the Ginger Garden
Acrylic on canvas | 36 x 48 x 1.5" | \$4,900



Magenta Meet Me at the Gingerlilies
Acrylic on canvas | 40 x 40 x 1.5" | \$4,900



Scott MacKenzie

www.scottmackenzieart.com



Glacier Point

Oil on canvas | 36 x 48 x 0.5" | \$2,250



Looking West
Oil on canvas | 30 x 40 x 1" | \$1,750

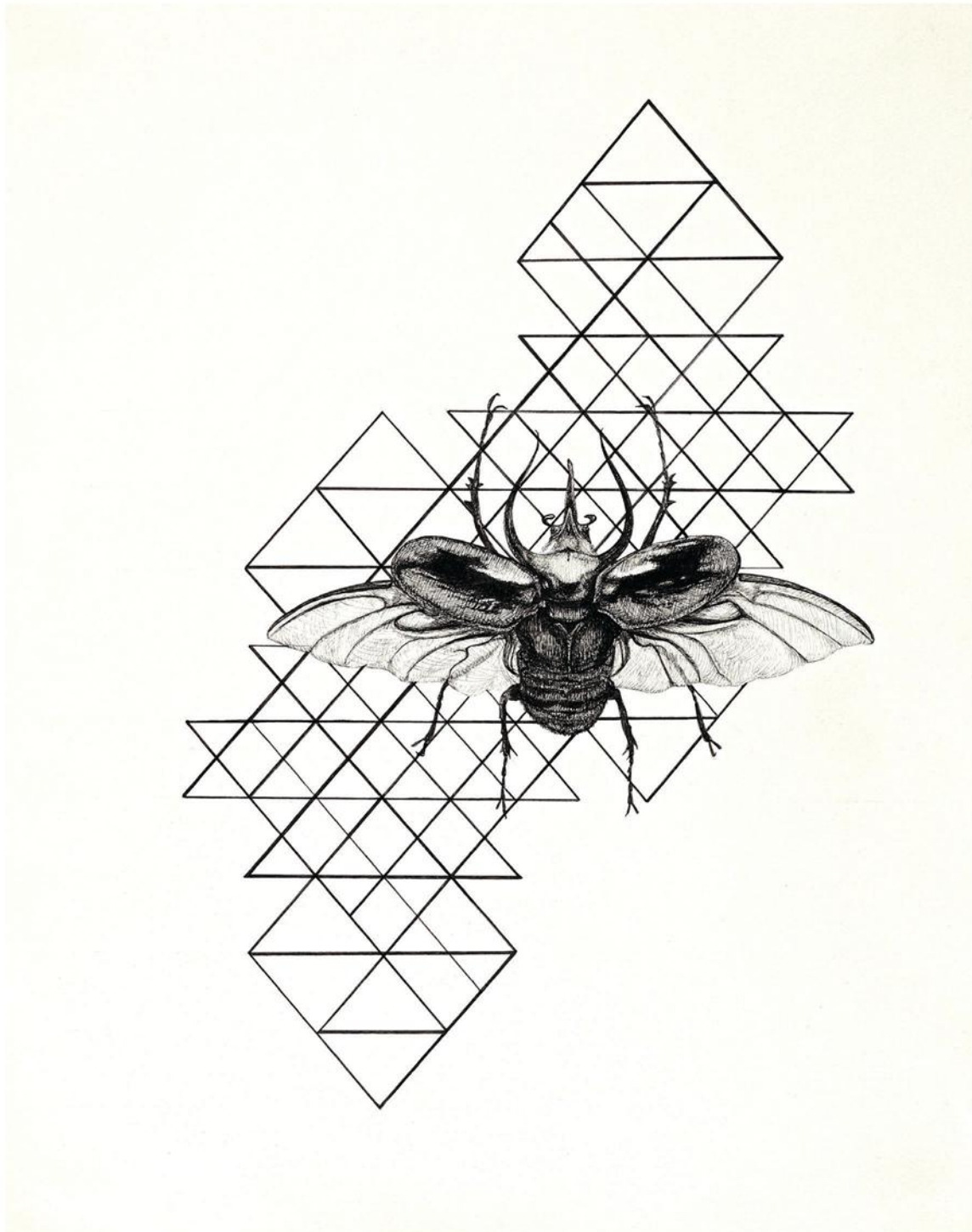


Jennifer Wildermuth Reyes

www.wildermuthreyesart.com



Chalcosoma Atlas
Oil on panel | 11 x 14" | \$300





Where the Wild Things Are

Three men are storming the house
One man is lurking in the street
The wolf is knocking at the door
(His snout is worming through the safety chain)
The sirens are baying. The bombs are falling.
I am telling the truth
(I am not telling the truth. The truth can kill you)
The police are not coming
No one is coming
The elevator stops between floors
(Write 100 times: never go with strangers)
Taxi drivers don't count. Teachers don't count
The doctor plants his penis in a bowl
(I'm making that up) I CAN'T BREATHE!
Mommy has turned into a wolf. I
am going to be eaten all up.
The wolf is in the stairwell
(Write 100 times: I will not play in the stairwell)
Secret passages lace basement to basement
(if one door locks there is no way out)
(no one will ever find you)
(Write 100 times: I will not play in the basement)
The sirens mean take cover under the desks
The fire alarms mean leave your belongings and
march out quietly, quietly. The wolf
is under the bed, waiting.
(Write 100 times: walk, do not run. No talking!) (SHUT UP!)
(Don't say shut up.) (Don't tell.)
The hanged man dangles from the bedroom
shade. The turkey sleeps in the ventilator.
The taxi driver strokes a shrunken head,
a human prune, a trophy on a key ring.
I vomit by the side of the road.
People whisper, people cry
(Children are being burned alive in Auschwitz, in Hiroshima.

Don't worry. That's far away.)
I'm on the wrong subway/bus/train.
Quicksand will swallow me up. Slowly,
slowly, it sucks me into the ooze.
It is licking at my chin. Wake up!
(Write 100 times: Keep your mouth shut. Keep your
mouth shut)
Skulls are pyramided by the side of the road
(Small, medium, and large) Line up in size places.
The wolf is opening the latch; soon
he will, at last, get in.
The telephone is broken.
The telephone is dead. I am falling, falling. (My,
what big teeth you have, grandma!) (The better to eat you with)
People are exploding like firecrackers.
People slip away. No one says goodbye.
I'm lost again. Stairs exit onto hospital
wards, and my car has disappeared.
The elevator rockets towards the roof
(Do not use the elevator alone till you can reach the alarm.)
I seem to have killed somebody. (Don't worry)
The sky is falling. You are ten feet tall.
(Write 100 times: Cheer up. Tell the truth. Smile and say
thank you)
My pocketbook has been stolen/lost.
My teacher sits me on his lap. I forget his name.
(Teachers don't count. Doctors don't count)
Wandering in the spiral of the parking garage
the wolf lurks behind the stanchions.
I am a rabid dog, foaming and growling.
Watch out for Charles –
He sets fire to girls' long hair.
No one knows why.

Eleni Nakopoulos

www.eleninakopoulos.com.au



70 Years is a Long Time on the Same Patch of Grass

Oil on canvas | 72 x 54" | SOLD



Life on Earth is Disappearing Fast for Our Closest Relative
Oil on linen | 60 x 44" | \$8,000



Eleni Nakopoulos

Snake

Oil on canvas | 66 x 48" | SOLD





On The Wing

Neither ignorant of the storm
Nor sullenly rebellious at its advance,
These tiny feathered things bare
Their hollowed bones to the gale
And ride its fury with merry spite;
Snatches of their chatter fall brittle
To the ground, breaking in staccato
To the early, cold, fierce drops of rain
And not unkindly mock my flightless state:
They are battered and borne away,
They are carried high and cast down,
They know their frailty, but they do not seek
The refuge of the nest –
They would flee the cat and the hawk,
Build homes beyond the serpent's reach,
But this wild exult knows none
Of Darwin's careful touch: let bones break,
Let wings be shredded,
But even the sparrow's few hours cannot be counted whole
If he flees when he is only born to fly.

Blair Mueller

www.blairmueller.com



Running Zebra

Acrylic on canvas finger painting | 36 x 48" | \$1,500



Siberian Tiger
Acrylic on canvas finger painting | 24 x 48" | \$1,200





Stardust

There was a monumental storm the night you died. Lightning laser beams tore viciously through the peace of your passing with the rhythmic chaos of disco lights, illuminating Earth as you left it. Our ears rang with a disjointed orchestra of noise, rousing thunder, drumming rain, and shrieking wind. Untamed natural elements bursting forth at will – beyond any man's capability to tether or control – it suited you perfectly.

As the news of your death broke to the world with unexpected violence, crowds gathered outside the hospital. Humans howled in public pain at your demise. The disbelief and fear was etched upon their faces – they thought you were immortal. Your life unbound by society's rules, almost crazy in your nonconformity – surely you were immune to a mortal fate, impervious to Death's dark claws. Surely, your light could never be extinguished.

I watched the mass of mourners and pitied them. Huddled together in the cold, fearing the eccentric, electric night, crying as the thunder roared – ruined by grief. I pitied how small and ordinary they all were. The exact opposite of you.

How blindly they clung to your Earthly form at the hospital. Couldn't they see your spirit had soared? You had burst full-throttle from this Earth and blasted through heaven's walls to nestle with the Gods. Zeus had thrown his thunderbolt to Earth in thanks for your sacrifice. For me, the shock came not from the fact that you had passed but that we had held you here this long. Intangible, ethereal beings such as yourself tend to float quickly out of sight.

You were lifted beyond our reach now. Tonight, shrapnel shards of incandescent dust would scatter down from your constellation.

Fierce and vibrant as the sun, our ever-orbiting star – man you blew our minds.



Gilles Boenisch

www.digitaldefeat.fr

Frankedge

23.2 x 21.6 x 15.7"



David Smith
www.davidsmith-studio.com



Islands-Shoreline-Glare
Oil on birch ply | 10 x 12.5" | \$1,600



2 Trees-Winter Sunlight
Oil on birch ply | 10 x 12.5" | \$1,600



Roopa Dudley

www.RoopaDudley.com



Aries

Acrylic on canvas paper | 9 x 12" | Sold





The Whisperers

Do you know where they come from?

Quiet whispers late at night...

Whispered messages throughout the day...

Invisible letters without envelopes or postage stamps...

Can you hear the music that the silent marching band plays?

Do you know what they're all about? The thoughts and dreams that tiptoe through your mind?

They come along when you least expect, and often while you're doing something else.

Some stay barely for a moment, disappearing almost before they've arrived...

Others stay long enough for a cup of tea and a slice of cake...

and some, the really strong ones, seem to hang around forever.

Ideas, rhythms, stories, fears, fantasies, and dreams.

Some wild, untamed, obnoxious,

Others shy, retiring and calm.

You can try and put them into boxes in your head, to organise them like crossword puzzles in lines and rows.

But sometimes they just need to be free, to roam, to adventure and to grow and grow and grow...

And grow and grow and grow...

Until they're so big that you can't seem to keep them inside you any longer and you just have to do something about them!

You have to share them with everyone around you. You need the world to know!

And then you feel proud of what you've done and who you are.

Do you know where they come from? The quiet whispers of times gone past? Of right now times, and times to come.

The hushed tones of adventure and freedom and outrageous possibility.

The messages in languages that you create, with words that make the butterflies in your stomach dance with the excitement of it all.

They come from the whisperers, the ones all around you. The ones you know and the ones you don't.

The ones you hear and the ones you can't.

The ones you like and the ones you you're still not sure about.

They're the ones telling you this story right now you know...

Tina Ybarra

www.tybarra23.wix.com/tinaybarra-artshow



Part the Wild Horse's Mane

Oil on canvas | 20 x 24 x 2" | \$2,000



Herencia
Graphite on paper | 11 x 14" | \$600





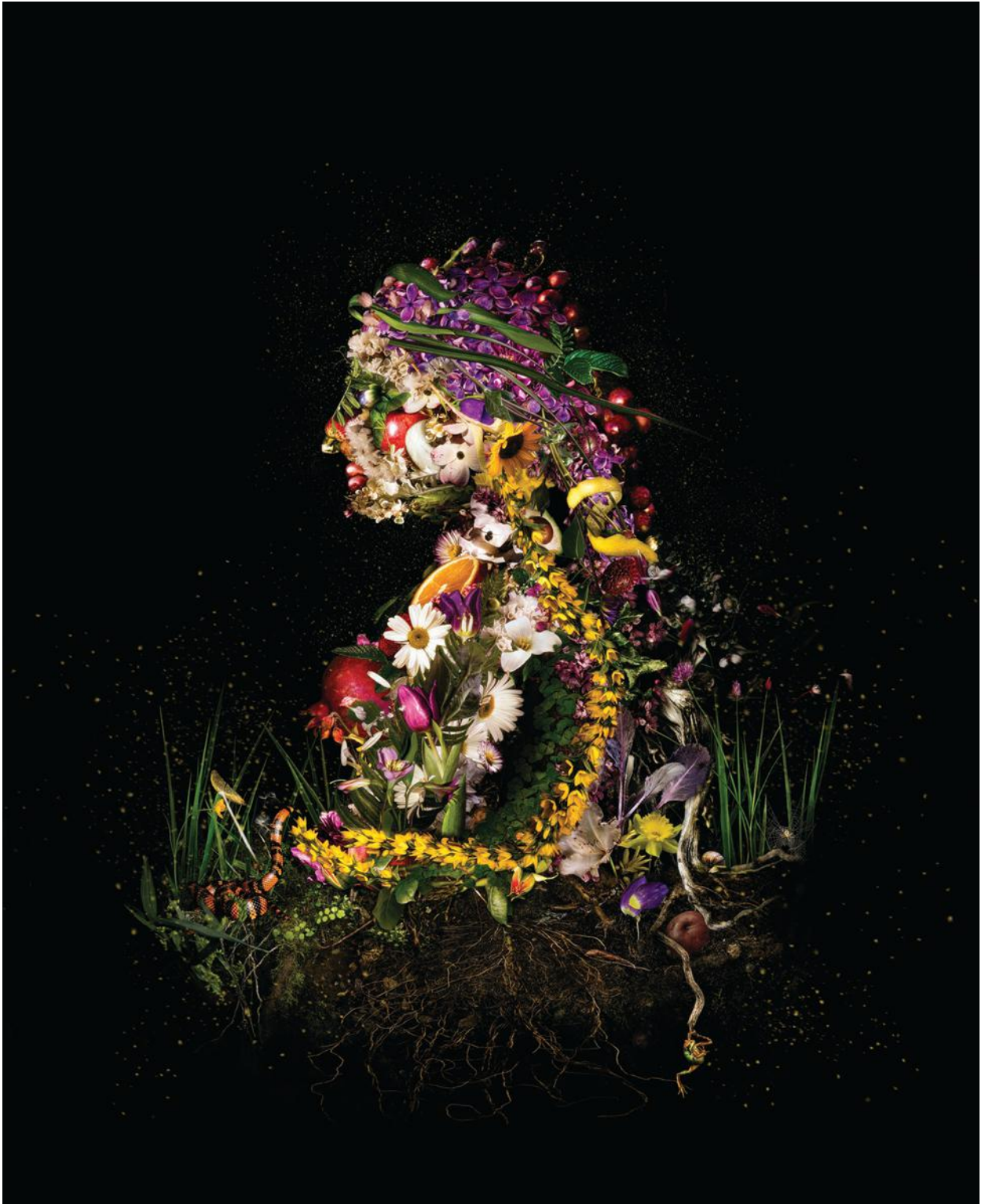
Nature's Playground

An empty playground
Sits waiting
For the voices
Of tomorrow.
Swings hang
Motionless
Begging the wind
For a push.
Slides glimmer
Simply absorbing
The warmth
From a distant sun.
Monkey bars
Transform
Becoming a home
For spider webs.
The stillness settles
As nature slowly
Creeps inward
Reclaiming the jungle gym.



Meggan Joy
www.MegganJoy.com

Warmth
Digital collage | 30 x 40" | \$1,500



Studio Spotlight

A loft to get lost in

After graduating from art school in Tampa, Florida, I worked briefly in my home state before moving to California. I worked as an artist in the clothing industry for 25 years before striking out on my own. Now I am painting full-time, showing in galleries, and working on my novel, *Kid Nitro and the Sinister Slorp*.

My studio space is a loft. My wife and I moved to the mountains four years ago for the peace and quiet, and because it's a lot cheaper than Orange County! All of this helps my creativity. My studio is a place where I go to lose myself in my own world and thoughts.

My creative vision allows my imagination to run wild to see what happens. I draw from a childhood love of monsters, aliens, superheroes, finks and weirdos. Combining those images with my arguably adult mind, I convey different perspectives on very serious subjects. I aspire to make people think in a way they might not have before by reaching out and grabbing them with powerful images. Then I pull them into my world where

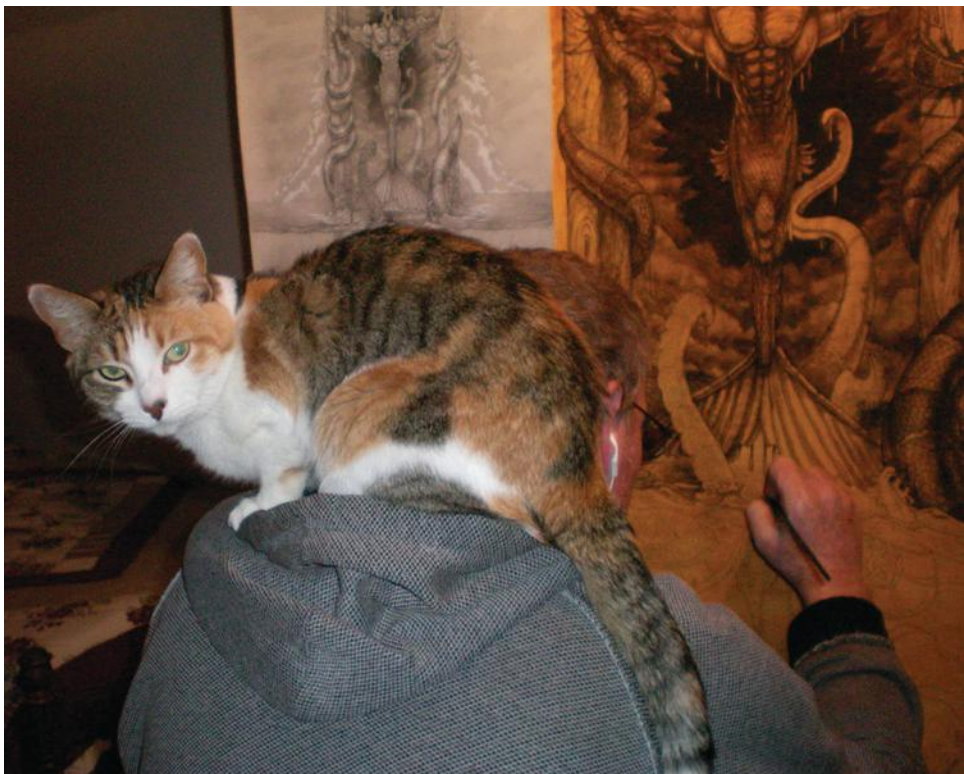
they are free to find their own way, explore and discover new things, wallow around in this place for a while and see what happens.

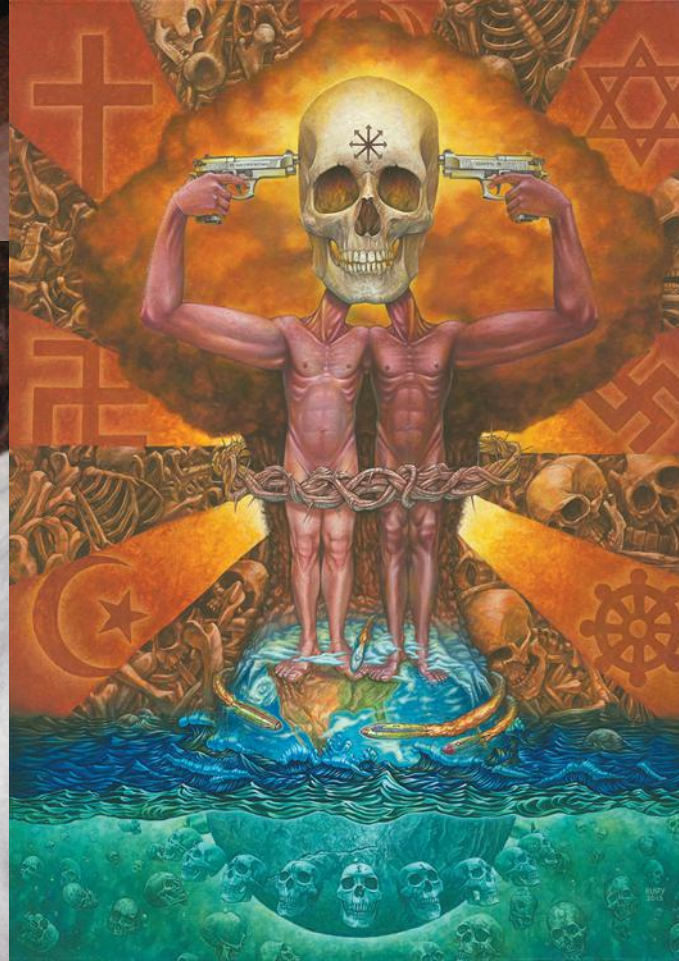
By Rusty Sherrill

Rusty Sherrill was born in Lakeland, United States in 1962 and is currently based in Big Bear City, United States.

Visit <http://dropr.com/portfolio105028>.

View his book *Kid Nitro and the Sinister Slorp* at <http://rsartstudio.com/nitro.html>, Amazon or <https://www.smashwords.com/books/view/304369>.





Artist Interview

Liz Ruest

Become acquainted with perhaps a few unknown dimensions – thoughts, ambitions, wisdoms, life changing moments – of this inspiring artist.

When it comes to your art/writing, explain what you do in 100 words.

I use technology as a glue to combine layers of texture and iconic imagery, building a sense of place and the complexity of life decisions in my compositions. My tools and techniques range from hands-on collage, printmaking, and encaustic wax, to digital cameras, scanners, and microscopes – all to help capture a sense of history. I create colours by building up digital layers, add details, obscuring and revealing, just like in a hands-on collage. Then, I have the luxury of deciding how to share my digital file: online, as a limited-edition print, or as open-edition accessories on print-to-order sites.

What project are you working on now?

I've just wrapped up a "body of work" for the year that I titled, "Factors," large digital images with multiple layers of photography and collage. Now, I'm in prime-the-pump mode for next year's work. Each fall and winter, I start building the basis for another year of images and layers. I'm shooting with my digital camera,

using my collages as plates in my printing press, and experimenting with acrylic and watercolour for more colours and textures that I can scan.



Why do you do what you do?

I process so much visually – it's what I go to sleep mulling over, and what I wake up thinking about – that I can't imagine not doing it. When I don't get art time for too long a stretch, I get antsy. As I combine layers and images, and hit that just-right combination, I can't wait to share it, to find out if you see what I see, and connect.

How has your practice changed over time?

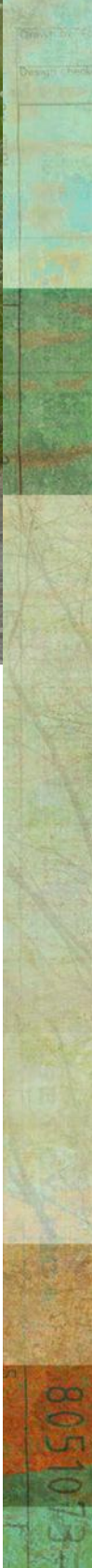
I've made much more of a switch to digital compositing since 2010. Before that, I was trying other ways to get images to layer: Chine-collé printmaking, acrylic matte medium, and encaustic wax. Digital layering allows me to experiment more quickly and freely, and doesn't preclude me from using hands-on methods with the final print, either.

What is your strongest childhood memory?

I grew up in an old house near Lake Ontario, in Canada, with frequent visits to the beach after dinner. That endless horizon and sense of calm have stayed with me, and they are something I still seek in my travels.

What is your scariest experience?

One evening at the beach, I was a little apart from the rest of the family, and started walking into the water. Nobody saw that I had walked right off a drop-off, and I became completely submerged. Thankfully, I was able to calmly turn and swim back, but that sense of being utterly alone underwater has stayed with me since childhood. I am grateful for the sense of self-reliance that seemed to come out of nowhere that evening, and I lean on that to this day as well.



What superpower would you like to have and why?
I always think that I'd like to be a mind reader, to simplify the complex process of communication, but I realize we all think thoughts that aren't always fit for consumption. The editor in me appreciates that we can choose our best words and images to put forward.

Artist Interview (continued)

What is your pet peeve about the art world?

I notice a need, a human need, really, not just an art world need, to label things. But I have more fun when I mash two colliding ideas together, such as handmade and digital, or printmaking and collage. "Mixed media" doesn't always cover the complexity that goes into the work.

What is your dream creative project?

I wish everyone had large digital screens in their homes, so I could just zap them my work! Since that's far-fetched, I'd love to work out how to physically render some of the many layers in my work, rather than flattening them all prior to printing.

Which place in the world do you find to be the most inspiring?

With my French-Canadian background, you'd think it would be France, and I've certainly tried a visit or two. But I keep returning to Scotland, for its landscapes, coastlines, language, and history, despite not having more than a drop of Highland blood in me. I've tried to figure it out, find the origin of my fascination, to no avail. The rugged views, the self-reliant underdogs, and the wonderful people just keep me coming back, and I'm okay with that.

What's the most indispensable item in your studio/practice?

Oh, this is so tough! I am torn between my camera and my computer... But maybe it's as simple as a sketchbook that I can slap collages into, to get creative thoughts moving.

What is the best piece of advice you've ever been given?

To encourage more attempts at art and less focus on perfection, my art teacher in high school said, "If you made it once, you can make it again." That thought frees up a lot of worry about getting it just right, and has led me to creating great quantities of work, but I am pleased with only a small portion of it.

What are your hobbies?

I still love to try new art techniques in my spare time, but when I'm really trying to take a break from art, I dive into



a good book, or explore a bit more of my family tree. My French-Canadian ancestors are so well documented that my genealogy database has upwards of 10,000 names. I track my reading in a database too, on goodreads.com, and have logged over 1,000 books!

Creatively, where do you see yourself in the next five years?

I see myself moving into more and more abstraction, finding a studio to share with friends, and growing my small business enough to fund those trips to Scotland!

Liz Ruest was born in Cornwall, Ontario, Canada, and is currently based in Bellevue, WA, USA.

Visit <http://www.lizruest.com>.

Collect them all.



Next issue theme feature: **Spooky**

Get your copy this November

CALL FOR ARTISTS AND WRITERS

This call theme is "Spooky." Eerie, haunting, sinister, ghostly, uneasy, frightening, uncanny, dark, hidden, unearthly, mysterious or weird.

Share your vision and you may be published in the next issue.

The selected artists and writers will be published in ArtAscent magazine and showcased in our online exhibition for at least two years. Additionally, four of these creatives will be featured in article profiles.

All 2D and 3D artists may apply including writers, painters, photographers, digital artists, installation artists, ceramic artists, jewelry artists, sculptors, fabric artists, and others.


ArtAscent
Applications:
www.ArtAscent.com

*Apply
until
October 31*

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