

NATIVE WILDLIFE – Read the Story

Royal Bath – White Bison



I had this walnut for many years before finally settling on the right image for it. The idea had to kind of ooze into me by osmosis. One day recently I thought of a white bison, of course!

It seems so obvious now but the wood was waiting for me to actually see some white bison in the flesh. After many years of trying, I'm glad I waited and listened to the wood.

I saw the grain in the wood as a wallow where this legendary king of the plains would take his dust bath. And then after the idea for the piece came, I was actually looking through my archives of photographs and came across pictures of the white bison bull I saw at Royal Gorge, which I had forgotten about! So "Royal Bath" was born.

Original on Walnut

Sierra Nevada Red Fox



Last fall I received an email from a biologist friend which showed a picture of a fox with a very good story. I did a little research and discovered that this fox was last seen in the 1920s and was thought to be extinct. In the fall of 2010 a remote camera in the

Sierra Nevada wilderness captured an image of one. Since then some dedicated biologists have captured a few more images of this illusive creature. It is wildly exciting for me to hear some good news, especially these days when we are inundated with a volcanic flow of bad news and too much information.

The Sierra Nevada Red fox is a true native species. Unlike our native Gray fox or the introduced Red fox, this one is very shy of people and civilization. I'm afraid I can relate to that a good bit of the time.

Bat-eared Fox



An unexpected and welcome thrill in Africa was coming upon a family of Bat-eared Foxes in the Serengeti. It was early in the morning and they were resting next to the road. We did not expect to see these interesting creatures during the day so it was a quite a treat. We sat a good distance away and watched them for a while until the mother gave the signal, and they all got up and disappeared into the grass. My reference pictures were not very good so I really didn't think I would be able to do an image of them. But when I asked God for help in deciding what to do a picture of next, I found this wood with a grain line in it that reminded me of the foxes huge ears.

Original on Pecan

Time to Pray - A Tribute to Mothers



A mother is walking her little ones along a lovely trail in the woods. She is hungry and knows that her babies are too. She knows of a big grove of berry bushes just up ahead that they can pluck and have a fine woodland snack. Filled with anticipation she approaches the grove but then suddenly senses something, a shadow perhaps or a scent of something ominous. She stops and the kids are all right behind her, impatient, oblivious. She is tense and the hair on her neck begins to rise up. The kids all fall quiet now and stop their blundering about, huddled behind her. Mom stretches herself to her full height in order to see what danger lies ahead...and at that moment it's time to pray if you are the one in the sights of the momma bear.

Ghost Walker



While in Colorado doing an art show I mentioned to my host that I had been trying to find some aspen wood to work on. He offered to give me a few pieces from his firewood pile, a couple small logs. It sparked the genesis of my doing 3 dimensional pieces, which I had been considering for some time. This is the first piece of that series. I love to do animals on wood from the area they live in so an elk was perfect. The wood, being

straight grained and narrow, gave me a challenge as to composition. Ghost Walker is the result of staring at this wood for hours until the idea came to me of how to best utilize it. The color is all natural.

Original on Aspen

Thinking Like a Mountain - She Wolf



My initial inspiration for this piece came from the wood. I knew it was to be a wolf looking between the trees. A few years later it finally became clear just who that wolf was. My intent was to render her quite real and pensive, yet powerful. Her eyes look not quite at you but through you or beyond you, and the fierce green fire in these eyes will never go out.

"...As she came out of the water we realized it was a wolf, not a deer...a half dozen pups joined in a welcoming melee of wagging tails and play... In a second we were pumping lead into the pack... When our rifles were empty, the old wolf was down and a pup was dragging a leg...

We reached the old wolf in time to watch a fierce green fire dying in her eyes. I realized then and have known ever since, that there was something new to me in those eyes, something known only to her and to the mountain.

Since then I have seen state after state extirpate it's wolves... I have seen every edible bush and seedling browsed...every edible tree defoliated... In the end the starved bones of the hoped for deer, dead of its own too much, bleach with the bones of the sage...

I now suspect that just as a deer herd lives in mortal fear of its wolves, so does a mountain live in mortal fear of its deer. And perhaps with better cause...a buck pulled down by wolves can replace itself in 2 or 3 years, a range pulled down by too many deer may fail of replacement in as many decades."

Excerpt From: *Thinking Like a Mountain*

by Aldo Leopold.

Cutthroat Trout and Fishing Fly (diptych)



What a beautiful creature! I am amazed at the range of colors that they possess. Unless you see these lovely animals alive you cannot appreciate the brilliance of their color; the colors fade with the life. This is a trout I caught in the San Juan Mts. of Colorado.

Pride of a People, Shame of a Nation - Bison



This picture was exciting for me as it evolved. Artistically I wanted an intimate look- the texture of the fur and depth of the eyes one on one. But I also kept thinking about the history of this animal as I was working and how that history is wrapped up in the history of people. I wish we would learn from the past, too often it seems we do not.

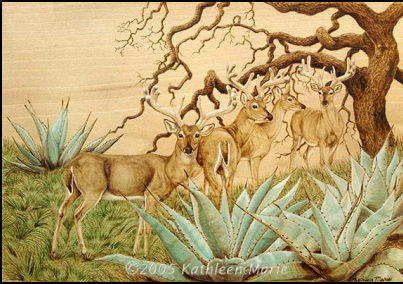
I thought of hiding the image of a wolf within the bison as an artist's plea. It is a suggestion to pause and consider the wisdom in protecting our natural resources and how we all are interconnected in the web of life.

Clear and Present Danger - Bear



When I work on a piece like this I need to conjure up within myself the fury and fierceness of the bear. I must move between being the bear and being the one who confronts the bear. In so doing I seek to bring the viewer of my art beyond voyeurism to response and interaction, to feel not only the thrill and impact of an encounter with true wildness but to respect it. My thoughts have often gone to wildness as I work. I think I would prefer to die at the whims of a rogue bear on his turf than to succumb to one of the many wretched cancers of society, for then I will have truly lived.

Velvet Dream Team



Original on Texas Walnut. This image is based on a photograph I took out at Pedernales Falls State Park, which is 3 miles from my house. I met the camp host one day while in the bird blind and he graciously told me about the group of bucks he and his wife saw regularly near their secluded camper. A week later I came by early one morning just before dawn and the doe showed up first, then the bucks. It was an amazing opportunity to get some great pictures and I am very grateful to the Millers for providing it.

Beyond Awesome - The Heart-stopper - Elk



This bull may look like a fantasy but he is quite real enough. I was studying a book on world record elk and saw these sheds, which were found on the San Carlos Indian Reservation in Arizona in 1986. The Artistic shape of the antlers called to me so I created this awesome bull to carry them. He is my idea of who might have worn such a crown.

Original on Spalted Hackberry