

Lauren Cooney

Title: *Lepus Arcticus/Canis Lupus Arctos*

Artist's Statement

As I read "Good Morning, Midnight," I found myself drawn to the beautiful imagery constructed by author Lily Brooks-Dalton around such isolated landscapes. Rather than painting something that directly reflected the narrative of the book, I took note of those passages that stood out most to me and decided to tie them all together. Ultimately, I chose to incorporate the oranges of jupiter, the pastel arctic sunsets, and the creatures Augustus and Iris encounter in the forbidding, arctic landscape.

Contrast was another key component of my painting. I choose to portray the arctic hare and arctic wolf in my painting to reflect the dichotomy between the two settings of the novel, which seem vastly different but mirror each other in their sense isolation and peril. The animal skulls, an image I am often drawn to in my works, convey a sense of contrast as well. For me, skulls are intricate and beautiful, yet they cannot be separated from the feelings of death that accompany them.

Bio

I can honestly say I have no idea where my passion for making came from, only that it has been a constant throughout my life. Though I am always exploring new avenues of creativity, I always find myself drawn back to my favorite mediums: painting and printmaking. My subjects vary greatly but I always try include elements of the natural world - images of birds, fish, fungi, plants, animal skulls and skeletons. I also strive to include an element of humor or whimsy in my art, often reflected in my Pop Art-inspired aesthetic inspired by the bold colors and graphic style of artists such as Yayoi Kusami, Roy Lichtenstein, Charley Harper, and Lisa Congdon.

Though I love creating larger, more formal works of art, I also have a mission for creating art that is more accessible to a broader audience. This led me to create Odd Flora Arts with my partner, Matthew Erdmans. We are two independent artists and art teachers who make small scale work and works printed on materials that have practical uses for consumers, such as coasters, totes, and cards. Our art celebrates Salem and the Pacific Northwest and has been instrumental in connecting us with the wonderful group of makers around us who support and inspire each other in making Salem a place where art is accessible to everyone, regardless of income.

www.etsy.com/shop/OddFloraArts