



All the Prize Winners in our *International Artist Magazine* Challenge No. 140

WILDLIFE



Pamela Mangelsdorf

Arizona, USA, *Leonardo*, oil, 24 x 36" (60 x 91 cm)

Grand Prize is a four-page editorial feature
in *American Art Collector* magazine

Intrigue in the Details

Arizona artist Pamela Mangelsdorf works in photorealism, making changes to her reference photos when necessary for the composition she has in mind. Primarily a wildlife artist, Mangelsdorf says photographs are almost mandatory, as most animals rarely pause long enough to capture from life.

"Wildlife is so complex and each species offers its own unique character. My goal is to capture that uniqueness with my paintings," she says. "My inspiration comes from nature. I'm fortunate to live in the Southwest desert surrounded by wildlife such as coyotes, bobcats, javelina, quail, owls and many other beautiful species. My studio windows look out on these wonderful animals as they go about their daily lives. A trail camera eavesdrops on them during the night providing me with yet another window into their fascinating world."

Mangelsdorf's photorealistic style forces her to be very observant of the small nuances of her subjects. "I want to capture the essence and personality of the animals I portray. The shape of the eye, the texture and color of the fur or feathers is very important to me. Attention to detail is perhaps the most important element of my artwork."

She adds that as she's developed in her artwork, she has learned how to listen to her own instincts and interests. "I was frequently encouraged to 'loosen up' my

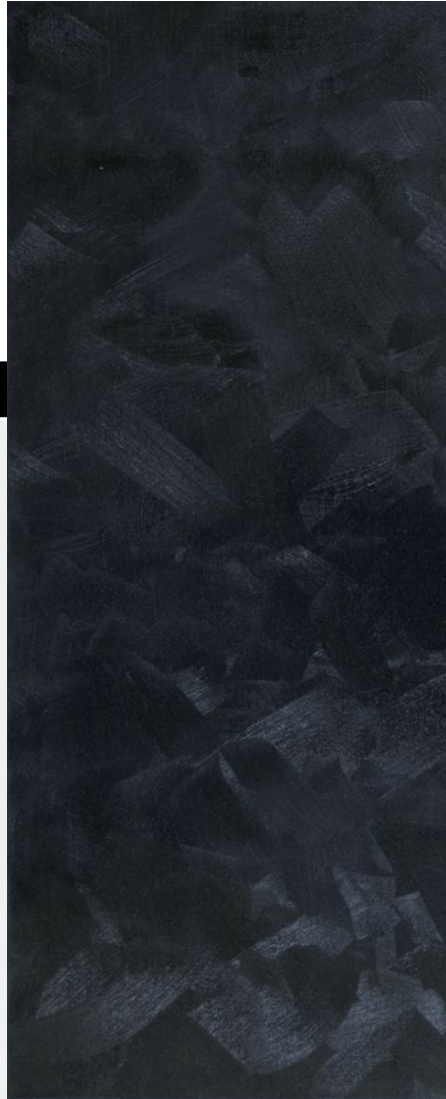
style and not concentrate so much on the details. However, the details of the subject were what excited me. My subjects are always detailed. The details are what allow me to understand and portray more fully the essence of the animal."

My Inspiration

Wildlife conservation initiatives are of particular interest to me, and I was intrigued by the story of Leonardo's life. Leonardo was a beautiful jaguar-leopard hybrid that was born into captivity. Raised in a cage and trained for the entertainment industry, his canine teeth were pulled and his claws removed. He endlessly paced a tiny cage until he eventually found a caring home with a wildlife conservation center in Scottsdale, Arizona. After eight peaceful years there, Leonardo passed away at the age of 17. Magnificent is too small a word to describe how regal Leonardo was, and I hope my painting reflects some of his majesty.

My Design Strategy

My design goal was to create a portrait of Leonardo that would invite the viewer to visually stroke his luxurious coat. After reviewing many photographs of Leonardo, I settled on this over the shoulder pose, which draws attention to his patterned



fur. In addition to his coat, I wanted to center the viewer's attention on his head, eye and whiskers. To accomplish this goal, I deliberately chose to eliminate any distractions by using a dense black background to isolate his features.



My Working Process

Using my chosen reference photograph, I made a 24 by 36" copy and then transferred Leonardo's image onto my canvas. Next, I painted the black background with a large brush with cross

hatch strokes using burnt sienna and ultramarine blue for the black. Then, I began painting the body and the rosettes. I continued to layer until I got the values, colors and shapes correct. The mediums used were Royal Talens and Schmincke water-mixable oils.

Contact Details

- » Email: pamelamang@cox.net
- » Website: pamelamangelsdorf.com