

LAUREN JOHNSON

Chicago, IL 60646 · (210) 488-2431

Ljohnson@fieldmuseum.org · <https://www.linkedin.com/in/lauren-johnson4689/>

www.laurenjohnsonartwork.com

Artist Statement

The disciplines of science and art are typically seen as distinct from each other, even at odds. As a museum professional and working artist I aim to interweave these seemingly opposite doctrines, creating visual narratives that showcase the beauty of the natural world. My work is inspired by nature and experiments with anatomical explorations of flora, fauna, and geologic scenery. I work in two styles; abstract expressionism and scientific illustration. For me, this dialogue honors the tangible, intricate world of natural history while also embracing the freedom of expression. This interplay allows me to capture my subjects from multiple perspectives, revealing both their physicality and the emotions they evoke.

Scientific illustration is not merely about aesthetic representation; it is a tool for education and communication. My illustrations are rooted in meticulous observations of plants and animals. Working in a natural history museum informs many of my paintings, and this method of creating allows me to capture the nuances of anatomy, biomechanics, and ecology. I am inspired by illustrators of the past including Ernst Haeckel, Maria Sibylla Merian, and Albertus Seba, all of whom saw their art as a tool for education. My work is a celebration of biodiversity, an invitation to explore the wonders of the natural world through the lens of artistic inquiry.

I also create large-scale, mixed-media paintings inspired by colors in a given landscape. These abstract pieces are bursting with ethos, rooted in spontaneity and movement. Using bold colors, gestural brushstrokes, and varied textures I create a visual language that captures the intensity and unpredictability of the natural world. Each piece emerges organically, driven by an intuitive dialogue between materials and mood. Art has the power to reflect our shared experiences, serving as a mirror to our collective emotions. Art can also encourage introspection. The absence of clear representation in these works allows for a multitude of interpretations, encouraging a connection to them that is uniquely individual.

Ultimately, my philosophy in making art is governed by a sense of responsibility and stewardship for the environment. I believe that art has the power to transform how we understand science and therefore the world around us. By making science more approachable, I aim to foster in others a similar reverence and motivation to preserve the natural world. By merging the disciplines of art and science, I believe I can convey a more profound narrative—one that resonates with both hearts and minds.