



## **MEAGEN SVENDSEN** | Artist Statement

I believe that in the cathedral of the wild, we get to see the most beautiful parts of ourselves reflected back at us. And it is not only through other people that we get to experience our humanity, but through all the creatures that live on this planet.

- Boyd Verty

In questioning the binary perception of wildlife as exotic and precious versus common and worthless, I hope to inspire a broader definition of “the cathedral of the wild” to include our urban and suburban settings. By presenting imagery of exotic endangered animals alongside that of more common species, I’d like to engage the viewer in a dialogue about the definition of wildlife, and what it means to have a personal relationship with nature in one’s daily life.

Although I’ve had a close relationship with nature throughout my life, it was in my two years living in Japan as a young adult that I first developed a conscious appreciation of it. In Japan, nature is revered and celebrated in every one of its traditional art forms. I was lucky enough to encounter this through my immersion in the rich tradition of ceramics in the two years that I lived there. The enduring belief in an essential spirit in nature, present in Japanese culture and art, permeated my foundational experience of artistic creation, and has lived with me ever since.