



Sage Cotignola

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by Sage Cotignola

From an early age, Sage Cotignola sensed the importance of the mythologies and narratives that serve as the undercurrents of our lives. Whether it takes the form of a fairy tale, a work of literature, an epic tale embodying the hero's journey or even the preconceived notions that run through our unconscious thoughts, the narrative form has always shaped the way we interpret the world and understand our place in it. This idea is central to Sage's philosophy as an artist, and has led to her unique style that marries the practice of illustration with that of fine art.

In 2014, Sage graduated from Pratt Institute with a degree in Illustration. Her time there expanded her interest in storytelling, especially in the symbolic visual cues utilized by artists across cultures and vast expanses of time to represent powerful moments of emotional resonance and poetic truth. In particular, Sage's visual vocabulary takes cues from Japanese woodblock prints, Medieval European painting and contemporary mediums such as children's books, all of which often favor allegory rather than realism to illuminate fundamental aspects of reality. In this way, the ambiguous becomes visually concrete, creating an experience in which the fantasy space of the work becomes "truer" than reality. In Sage's own paintings a muted yet rich color palette, the consistent use of non-linear perspective and a cast of creatures that clearly inhabit their environment contribute to an atmosphere of a fantasy world that can be believed. Sage's use of gouache paints both nods to the tradition of meticulous art-making by hand, and allows for a level of detail and matte flatness that further enhances the presence of the imagery.

The confusing or painful experiences of everyday life, when presented as a legend or a fairy tale, can shine a new light on the issue and open new paths of perception. Sage pursues this goal in her work, both for herself and for the viewer. Sometimes she presents a pre-existing narrative in a new way, introducing a twist that prompts a re-examination of a story that was previously set in stone, and raises an eyebrow at ideas that are taken for granted due to repetition throughout history. Sage also often represents her own personal experiences as fantasy, thereby introducing an element of objectivity and creating a trail of breadcrumbs for herself and her viewer to follow to a moment of understanding. Ultimately, Sage believes that in order to explore the ideas that lie below the surface of our cursory understanding, the thinker must be excited and engaged no matter what the subject matter - be it joyful, reflective or grim. She hopes that her audience will be compelled to wander the twisting paths to join her in her offbeat mental landscape. Everyone loves a good story.

Sage Cotignola lives and works in Brooklyn, NY. She is originally from the East End of Long Island.

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"The Vigil" by Sage Cotignola. Gouache on watercolor paper.



"Left Off The Ark" by Sage Cotignola. Gouache on watercolor paper.



"Road Less Traveled" by Sage Cotignola. Gouache on watercolor paper.



"Fed on Technology" by Sage Cotignola. Gouache on watercolor paper.



"That Guy at Work" by Sage Cotignola. Gouache on watercolor paper.



"Autumnal Procession" by Sage Cotignola. Gouache on watercolor paper, 20 x 23 inches.



"Hans the Hedgehog" by Sage Cotignola. Gouache on watercolor paper.



"Night to Remember" by Sage Cotignola. Gouache on watercolor paper.



"Birch Spirit" by Sage Cotignola. Gouache and ink on wood.