

Julee M. Hutchison

WHILE LIVING IN ARIZONA, Julee M. Hutchison and her husband rehabilitated desert tortoises and Gambel's quail. That daily communion with the natural world exposed them to the connections between, and the souls of, animals. Now, as a Telluride, CO, resident, she frequently watches neighboring ranch animals—from lambs frolicking to cows nuzzling their calves. "I'm not anthropomorphizing them. I really think they have great love and great spirits. I see a lot of individualism in them," she says of her frequent subjects.

Playing up the animals' personalities, Hutchison frequently paints portraits of sheep, cows, and horses, with the high-elevation, clear Colorado light casting their faces in warm and cool colors. Many of the aesthetic choices she makes reflect her decades-long career in graphic design.

Although Hutchison earned a degree in fine art, she viewed graphic design as a more secure career and pursued that profession instead. But living near the Scottsdale Artists' School in Arizona drew her into painting once again. When she relocated to Colorado, she focused more attention on her natural environs and fine-art career. But she still relies on her strong design sensibility. "I stepped back and realized that a weakness I felt in a lot of paintings was the design. I think [my career] gave me an edge on designing a good painting," she says. Hutchison's work can be found at Telluride Gallery of Fine Art, Telluride, CO; Mockingbird Gallery, Bend, OR; and www.juleehutchison.com. —Ashley M. Biggers



Winter Highlights, oil, 20 x 20.



The Day Awaits, oil, 24 x 27.