

Website: www.soukupstudios.com

Start in art: "I have a bachelor of arts degree from Colorado State University, and since graduation I've maintained a connection with the Art Students League of Denver. I've been painting full time for more than four years now."

Inspiration for this painting: "I loved how beautiful this animal looked in her environment. The shadows on her body reflected blue from the sky and blended with the blues of the background mountains. The

Jill Soukup

gesture of twisting her neck made for a nice composition, and her white coat, hit by sunlight, made for some really fun texture."

Painting process: "My oil paintings begin with a process of elimination that starts on my computer where I screen a large selection of digital photos. I transfer and transform these images by cropping, cutting and pasting, and resizing elements to create a basic structure.

"I print the images in black and white and then spread them out like a deck of cards, face up on a table, to explore, compare and contrast the many possibilities. I'll sketch on the printouts with charcoal and white pastel to play with variations in the composition. Gradually, I eliminate the weaker

compositions until I'm down to a few, which I post on a board.

"Often the inspiration for a work is lost in these steps, and a concept is abandoned altogether. But if an image maintains enough integrity through these trials, I create a sketch and/or color study and, in some cases, go directly to the final canvas.

"Attempting to push depth in a two-dimensional format, I start painting wet-into-wet with various textures and applications, then scrape and blend the paint using a palette knife and brushes. I sometimes use life studies to provide guidance in color and value."

Vignette: "The hardest thing about *White Goat* was that I never felt all the technical issues were solved. I had this nagging feeling that something just wasn't right. I finally walked away from it for a while and, when I came back, realized it was fine. My husband and I often joke about how mean and demanding my 'boss' (me) can be. She's always cracking that whip!" @



White Goat (oil, 15½x15) was an Animal/Wildlife finalist in the 2006 23rd Annual Art Competition.