

October 20, 2016

# BANOVICH



John Banovich, *Tusk*, 2014, Oil on Belgian Linen, 85 x 85 inches  
© John Banovich

## Painting Animals:

### The windows to our past, and the prophecy of our future

John Banovich

My artistic journey began, in many ways, at age 7 when I completed my first oil painting titled, *Meeting of the Gang*, featuring Rudyard Kipling's *The Jungle Book* characters. I have always been enchanted and intrigued by exotic animals and say that I didn't choose animals; the animals chose me. Painting animals allows me to fall into a rhythmic dance. They are living, breathing, and awe-inspiring creatures. They pull you in with the presence of life and I feel privileged to capture their story.

Animal art is all I have ever done or wanted to do. There is an ancient mystery in the eyes of wild animals. Looking deep within, we come face to face with ourselves –for they are the windows to our past, and the prophecy of our future. Painting a wild beast makes me feel as if I am paying homage to them. It is starkly apparent that nearly every large wild species on earth is experiencing a decline in population. **Wildlife one day will only be experienced in captivity, on**

**film and on canvas.** I feel a great responsibility to document how, as a society, we feel about our time on earth, living beside “Big Things with Big Teeth”. I believe that interacting with wild Ambassadors can engage us to learn more about wildlife and wild places, and in the end, we will save only what we know.

**Through my art, I hope to move, reveal and inspire people to seek a deeper understanding of the world around us and bring together groups of individuals to unite on a common ground.** Now more than ever our natural world is severely threatened and with this increased pressure, a new paradigm must emerge. Conservationists, sportsmen and environmentalists must come together and join forces in areas of overlapping interests and consider bridges for those areas of similar interests

In 2007 I started the Banovich Wildscapes Foundation as a way to give something back to the world that has given so much to me. The name WILDSCAPES refers to large abundant landscapes –wild, balanced and intact ecosystems. There is nothing more important to future generations than wildlife and wild lands. **Special places that lift our minds, replenish our spirits and renew our passion for living.**

The mission of BWF is to awaken and inform the people. If we don’t do something now, then wildlife and wild places will be gone forever. Never before has the wild kingdom faced the level of threats as it does right now. Animals are being poached and slaughtered at an unprecedented rate, and millions of human livelihoods depend on their survival. Rural people around the world can benefit from the utilization of wildlife, but if the animals continue to be poached, removed and exploited because they are viewed as an expensive burden, then we, as humans will all lose a part of ourselves. BWF currently supports 12 projects in 7 countries.

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“John Banovich has merged the world of wildlife art and conservation in a unique and exciting way. John is able to use his status as world-renowned artist to further conservation efforts even in the remotest parts of the world, working to save Siberian tigers in the Russian Far East, lions in Africa, and even the brown bears of North America. John brings energy, imagination, and leadership to the conservation arena, seeking new partnerships and new mechanisms to save the world's wildlife.”

- Dale Miquelle, Program Director, WCS

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“John Banovich not only possesses the vision to capture nature on canvas with unmatched insight and skill, he also extends that vision to saving the wild places that mean so much to all of us. He is an unrivaled artist and conservationist and a gift to those who marvel at the man and his art.”  
-Chris Dorsey, CEO and President, Orion Entertainment

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[John Banovich](#), b. 1964, Butte, Montana (United States)

John Banovich is an American oil painter known internationally for his large, dramatic portrayals of iconic wildlife. Today, Banovich's work can be found in many museum, corporate, and private collections including the National Museum of Wildlife Art, Wildlife Experience Art Museum, Museum of the Southwest, Natural History Museum, Hiram Blauvelt Art Museum, Leigh Yawkey Woodson Art Museum's Birds in Art show, Salmagundi Club, traveling exhibitions sponsored by the Society of Animal Artists and showcases hosted by Safari Club International and Dallas Safari Club. In the press, Banovich's work has been showcased on ABC's Entertainment Tonight, The Outdoor Channel, The Great American Country Channel, Orion

Entertainment, Versus, PBS and NBC has written about his dedication to his conservation work and named him an NBC Cause Celebrity. Learn more about [Banovich's art](#) and about the Wildscapes Foundation [here](#).

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This post is part of the [MAHB's Arts Community space](#)—an open space for MAHB members to share, discuss, and connect with artwork processes and products pushing for change. Please visit the [MAHB Arts Community](#) to share and reflect on how art can promote critical changes in behavior and systems and [contact Erika](#) with any questions or suggestions you have regarding the new space.

MAHB Blog: <http://mahb.stanford.edu/creative-expressions/painting-animals/>