

Ian Sexton
Pacific Northwest Wildlife Painter
By Emma Adair

Ian Sexton was born in Bend Oregon in 1976. As an outdoor enthusiast, Ian draws upon his observations as inspiration for his wildlife paintings. Through the medium of watercolor and acrylics, Ian strives to give his paintings the strong honest beauty that nature offers. Ian lives in Bend Oregon and began painting in 2006. A self taught artist, he paints a wide variety of North American wildlife subjects ranging from elk, deer, bear and cougar, to raptors and waterfowl.

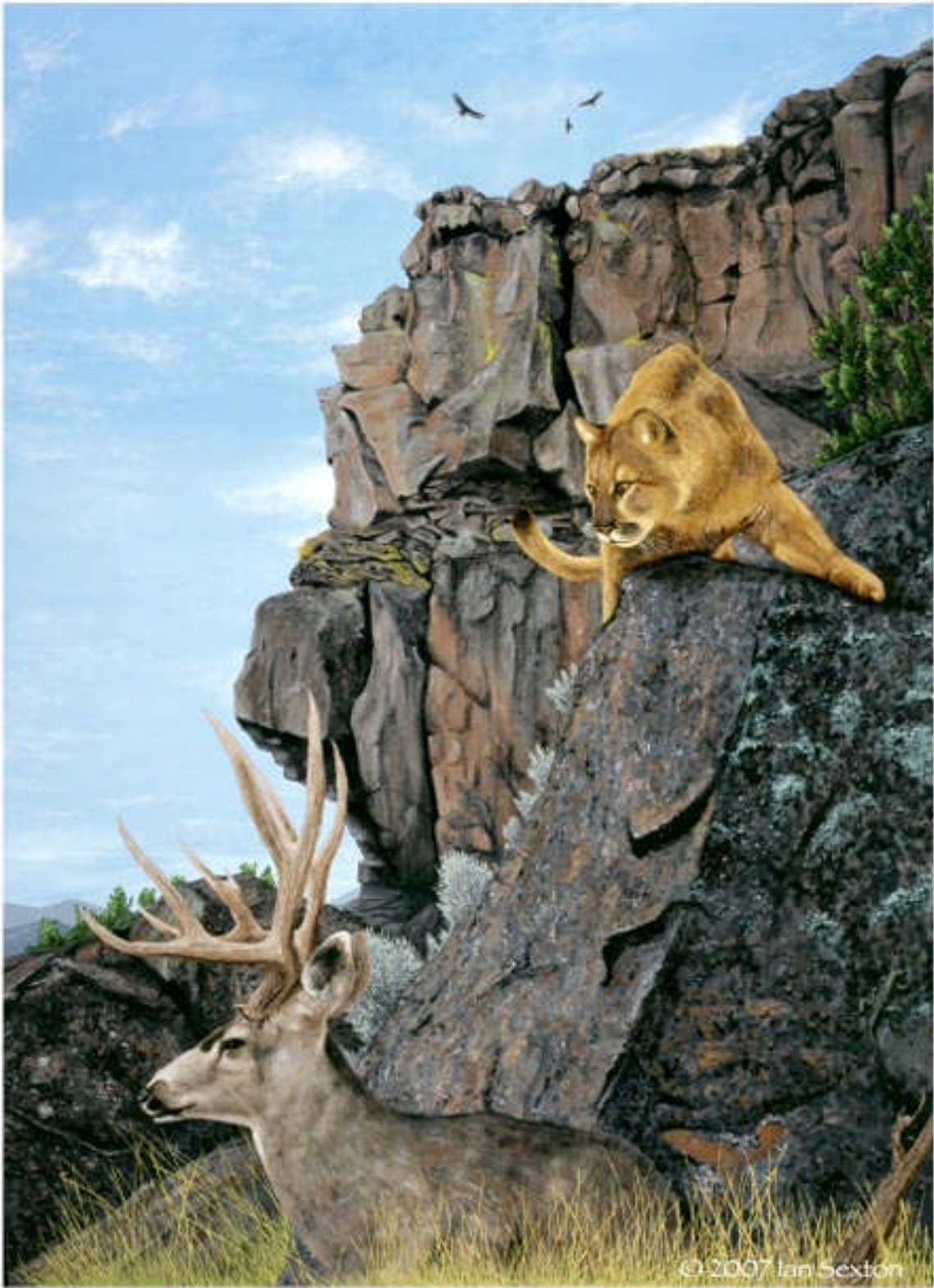
As a young age he was introduced to nature and wild animals through hunting trips in the Ochoco Mountains of Oregon with his family every fall and steelhead fishing trips during the summer. He fell in love with nature and could not wait to get back in the woods as soon as he could. As far back as he can remember, he was always drawing pictures, *"Everyone really encouraged me to pursue my ability. Especially my grade school teachers"*. Ironically when Ian was in high school his art class teacher frowned on Ian's art telling him that he did not think Ian had artistic talent. To Ian this was discouraging but his parents and friends gave support. He eventually talked to the school guidance counselor who suggested going to the Art Institute of Seattle to pursue his talent.





Ian lived in Seattle for three years where he earned an associate degree in graphic arts from the Art Institute of Seattle. During college he focused his classes toward graphic design rather than fine art, *"I took a few painting classes but I just could not get the hang of it. I felt that I was not talented enough to paint so I decided to learn computer graphics instead"*. Ian moved back to Bend after college and started working different graphic design jobs and then started freelancing. Eventually his father (an architect) offered to teach Ian architecture. With Ian's artistic and computer knowledge and his father's architectural knowledge they decided to become partners and formed Sexton Design, LLC. They have been designing houses and doing graphic design together for over a decade. In the back of Ian's mind he knew what he really wanted to do for a living and it wasn't architecture. So in 2006 Ian decided that he was going to teach himself to

paint. Ian did not really know where to start. He had a basic knowledge of color and an eye for composition but no painting skills. He decided to start in watercolor. Ian would make an effort to paint everyday, even if it was only for five or ten minutes. It got to the point where he could paint incredibly detailed watercolor pictures but the time it took to complete a painting was ridiculous. The intricate brush strokes began to give him tendonitis in his wrist. That is when he decided to change his main medium to acrylics, *"Oil dries too slow for me. If I was an oil painter I would probably only complete one or two paintings a year, that's why I chose acrylics"*.



“Final seconds”

Ian thought that his acrylic paintings were starting to look pretty good. He painted some pictures for family and even did a commission of a black bear for an outfitter in southern Oregon *"At this point I thought I was pretty good and then something just clicked"*. He decided to paint "The Final Seconds". He knew in his mind exactly how this was going to look and exactly how to paint it. *"I don't know how I all the sudden figured out how to paint like this but this was the first piece that I was truly proud of"*. Since then his paintings become a little better every time he completes one. Ian hopes within five to seven years that he will be comparable to artists such as Tom Mansanerez or Leon Parson. As fast as he is advancing that might just be possible.

Ian has only done a couple of shows and has yet to approach any galleries. He plans to start marketing his work and talking to galleries in autumn of 2008. Ian's originals or prints are available for purchase. Collectors and Gallery owners wishing to speak with Ian should contact info@WesternandWildlifeArtMagazine.com or call 610-896-4776.