

DIRECTOR'S INVITATIONAL ARTIST

Carel Brest van Kempen

Brest van Kempen's meticulously executed paintings explore the rich variety of nature. He believes that chief among nature's hallmarks is its diversity and he complains that as a whole, wildlife art is a poor reflection of that diversity. "I'm trying to do my little part to help fix that," he laughs. Art is a secondary passion only to Carel's fascination with ecology, and he sees himself as a visual storyteller. "As I explore the planet's ecology, it conjures a flow of scenarios and stories in my imagination. My paintings are a means for me to realize these narratives and to work out their details. I try to say as much as I can about how the particular subject lives and interacts with its environment and other organisms." His ability to do so with authenticity is the result of intense field research. He spends as much time in the field as possible, studying the habitats of his subjects. Often, conditions are far from ideal, but his sense of adventure outweighs any difficulties.



Beginning with small compositional sketches, he goes on to complete a finished drawing. After referring to his slides to verify markings and anatomical details, he traces his drawing onto a board and then does an underpainting. Once he begins the actual painting, it takes him approximately one-and-a-half hours to complete an area the size of one-square-inch, most often using acrylics.