

Birds of Mars Digest

Number Eighteen

January—February 2023



Woodstar Cafe Art 2023

Paintings [01—15]

Drawings [001—005]

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This year is off to a good start so far! Thanks to my friends at the Woodstar Cafe I have an ongoing display of art in the small room at the far end of the cafe. The idea behind the exhibit is to help raise awareness of the Northampton Survival Center, a food pantry which has been serving Hampshire County since 1979.

I am planning to donate 10% of all proceeds from sales of my artwork this year to the Survival Center; by supporting my artistic endeavors you also help support people getting food they may need.

As mentioned, I currently have a small display of a half-dozen or so artworks at the Woodstar Cafe. I am looking forward to warmer weather when I can make some paintings outdoors in that part of town. I plan to change the artwork every few weeks or as I make new paintings for display at the cafe. I am open to whatever may happen throughout this process.

I am also planning on making some small poster-style prints of various works. My main thoughts are to enjoy the process of making and sharing art, as well as having the art be affordable so that individuals whom resonate with a piece will be able to have it in their home to enjoy.

Woodstar Cafe Art 2023 [01-15]

This section of this *Birds of Mars Digest* has organized in one place information about the series of Woodstar Cafe artworks created in January—February 2023. Initially I thought all of the works would be 11x14 inches, and I would just have a series of work that size. But I quickly realized that this was not going to be the case.

Along with three 11x14 inch paintings, there are a series of nine 5x7 inch paintings, which are part of the “Noho Pop” series of artworks. Also, there is a large painting of the Woodstar sign on cardboard. And there are two paintings on stretched canvas of the Woodstar sign that I made, in part, with stencils.

These are all the completed paintings to date. I also have about five or six other paintings which are in various states of progress. I’ve set these aside for now and will take a look at them in a few months. For March I am thinking that mostly I will make some sketches over at the cafe and then see if an idea for a painting or other artwork comes out of those sketches.

Or I might take some photos of some pastries and make a painting of those. I once made a series of spray-paint on paper artworks of a piece of cake that was photographed at the Woodstar. Those artworks were in a group show at FOE gallery, back when they were in town.

1. Spring is Coming

11x14 inches, acrylic on board



These are the first two paintings in the series. They are acrylic on board. I'm not sure what to say about them. I finished them in mid-January, and it is about three weeks after that now. I've been working on a lot of other paintings since then, so I feel somewhat detached from these two. I think they are nice paintings. I see things I'd do differently, or make more finished, but none of that bothers me. Art is funny, because it somehow never seems finished. There's always more one could do.

2. Woodstar Sign

14x11 inches, acrylic on board



3. Small Woodstar 1 [Noho Pop #70]

7x5 inches, acrylic on canvas board

The following group of paintings in the Woodstar 2023 series (#3-11) were made in part using stencils I cut specifically for creating these artworks. There was a lot of experimentation and a lot of trial and error. My goal in creating these was, besides having a nice work of art, was to develop a technique using a stencil which I could empty for future artworks. In doing this I would give myself the option of being able to make some artworks quickly, so that I would be able to create some affordable works of art.

Artwork that takes hours to complete over the course of a month calls for a certain price tag. Artwork that I can make in an hour, calls for another, and it is in the creation of these. This is something I learned throughout 2022, and already began when I created the Noho Pop series of artworks.



4. Small Woodstar 2 [Noho Pop #71]

7x5 inches, acrylic on canvas board



5. Small Woodstar 3 [Noho Pop #72]

7x5 inches, acrylic on canvas board.



6. Small Woodstar 4 [Noho Pop #73]

7x5 inches, acrylic on canvas board.



7. Small Woodstar 5 [Noho Pop #74]

7x5 inches, acrylic on canvas board.



8. Small Woodstar 6 [Noho Pop #75]

7x5 inches, acrylic on canvas board.



9. Small Woodstar 7 [Noho Pop #76]

7x5 inches, acrylic on canvas board.



10. Small Woodstar 8 [Noho Pop #77]

7x5 inches, acrylic on canvas board.



11. Small Woodstar 9 [Noho Pop #78]

7x5 inches, acrylic on canvas board.



12. Big Cardboard Woodstar

20x18 inches, acrylic on cardboard



13. Stencil Woodstar 1

16x12 inches, acrylic on stretched canvas



14. Stencil Woodstar 2

16x12 inches, acrylic on stretched canvas



15. Outside Scene

14x11 inches, acrylic on board



Drawings/Studies [001–005]

January 2023

I begin numbering at 001 to denote the beginning of a new year. In 2022 I made a total of 265 drawing sheets. Not all of them were art related; many had to do with music. For 2023 I am maintaining two separate drawing sheets folders—one for just art and one for just music.

Please note that there are ten additional Woodstar studies that were made in November—December 2022.

001 Study: Woodstar 11. A detailed study of the Woodstar sign for a design for the first 5x7 inch paintings. This is an early design for those paintings.

002 Study: Woodstar 12. This is a drawing of the curved metal bar that is under the Woodstar sign. I was trying to get a better understanding of the shading.

003 Study: Woodstar 13. This is a gridded out compositional study for ‘painting #3’, which is a painting still in progress.

004 Study: Woodstar 14. This is a quick study in pencil over a red grid. This ended up being used for ‘painting 4’, which ended up being *15 Outside Scene*.

005 Study: Woodstar 15. This is a pencil study of the fire hydrant. I have a painting in progress based on these studies.

In addition to these drawings I also have two sets of stencils. The first set consists of three stencils, used on the 5x7 inch “Noho Pop” paintings. The second set is of two stencils, used on the 20x16 inch paintings—“Stencil Woodstar”.

Repurposed Art

In creating some of the Woodstar Artworks I repurposed some previously completed paintings. For archival purposes I felt that I should document all of this since in earlier issues of the Digest I had referenced these artworks. However, as is often the case for an artist, I had changed my conception of what the Woodstar artworks would be, and subsequently changed my indexing ideas. The notes below this paragraph shows this at various stages over the past few months.

The following artworks were repurposed. In other words, they were painted over so that new works of art could be made. 11x14" Joker Card, Hemingway, Artist Smurf

In the summer of 2023 when I started making the 5x7 inch Noho Pop paintings I also started a series of 11x14" Noho Pop paintings. More could be said about all of that, but the focus of this paragraph is on the actual physical paintings, not the stories behind their creation. I had created 7 paintings belonging to the "11x14inch Noho Pop" series. But, for whatever reason, they didn't feel right, so I paused. The Joker Card and Hemingway paintings never seemed finished, and the Artist Smurf I never started. That painting just had test marks from some markers on it. I had also started the first two Woodstar paintings on some gessobord that already had Noho Pop numbering on the backs. That is why the first two Woodstar paintings were B09 and B08, but that no longer matters as all of that has been painted over and repurposed.

So, by the late fall of 2022, when I had decided to make the Woodstar paintings 11x14 inches, I took a look at these stalled Noho Pop series of paintings, and decided to repurpose the gessobords. Other things happened as well. Initially I was going to continue these paintings as part of the Noho Pop series, but I decided to not do that, and instead this would be the Woodstar Series of paintings. For the smaller paintings, the 5x7inch ones, which are "Noho Pop" I will make Woodstar paintings within that series since that is the idea behind those smaller ones.

This is an updated list of the Noho Pop 11x14" acrylic on gessobord paintings (see *Birds of Mars Digest #16*) as it appeared in January 2023. This chart is no longer accurate, but I including it to show how a series of artworks may evolve over time. On the right is what eventually happened as far as classification goes.

B01 Calvin & Hobbes Hugging

B02 Smurfette with Flower

B03 Daffy Duck

B04 Snoopy Dancing

~~B05 Joker Card~~

~~B06 Artist Smurf~~

~~B07 Hemingway~~

B05 Woodstar 1

B06 Woodstar 2

B07 Woodstar 3

B08 Woodstar 4

B09 Woodstar 5

11x14" Noho Pop Paintings

B01 Calvin & Hobbes Hugging

B02 Smurfette with Flower

B03 Daffy Duck

B04 Snoopy Dancing

11x14" Woodstar Paintings

Woodstar 1 (B09)

Woodstar 2 (B08)

Woodstar 3 (B05)

Woodstar 4 (B06)

Woodstar 5 (B07)

None of the chart above is accurate anymore other than the Noho Pop paintings B01-B04, of which I still have two. All of the other paintings got mixed up, and I'm not even sure which repurposed ones are which any more. It is best to not worry about any of this and use the numbering system as presented in the Woodstar Artworks section in this issue of the digest. Any future Noho Pop paintings that I might make (at least by this moment's reckoning) would be one that is 5x7 inches on canvas board. See the next page for the 'official' list of all Woodstar 2023 artworks. I'm leaving this in here because it is kind of humorous to me.

Woodstar Cafe Art 2023

January—February 2023

1. Spring is Coming, 11x14 inches, acrylic on board,
2. Woodstar Sign, 14x11 inches, acrylic on board.
3. Small Woodstar 1, 7x5 inches, acrylic on canvas board. [Noho Pop #70]
4. Small Woodstar 2, 7x5 inches, acrylic on canvas board. [Noho Pop #71]
5. Small Woodstar 3, 7x5 inches, acrylic on canvas board. [Noho Pop #72]
6. Small Woodstar 4, 7x5 inches, acrylic on canvas board. [Noho Pop #73]
7. Small Woodstar 5, 7x5 inches, acrylic on canvas board. [Noho Pop #74]
8. Small Woodstar 6, 7x5 inches, acrylic on canvas board. [Noho Pop #75]
9. Small Woodstar 7, 7x5 inches, acrylic on canvas board. [Noho Pop #76]
10. Small Woodstar 8, 7x5 inches, acrylic on canvas board. [Noho Pop #77]
11. Small Woodstar 9, 7x5 inches, acrylic on canvas board. [Noho Pop #78]
12. Big Woodstar Sign, 20x16 inches, acrylic on cardboard
13. Stencil 1, 16x12 inches, acrylic on stretched canvas
14. Stencil 2, 16x12 inches, acrylic on stretched canvas
15. Outside Scene, 14x11 inches, acrylic on board