

# DANIELLA NAPOLITANO

## *Personal Statement*

*“An understanding of the natural world and what’s in it is a source of not only a great curiosity but great fulfilment.”* – Sir David Attenborough, famed natural historian

I am at my happiest when I am learning about, talking about, or interacting with animals.

Animals are my primary subject matter that I explore through scientific research, personal reflection, and societal perspectives. These themes originate from my childhood curiosity about the natural world and, most recently, human’s relationship to it. The combination of the two has grown into narratives of every-day wildlife in our immediate surroundings—even the often overlooked or infamously loathed “trash” animals.

I liken my creative practice to that of a natural historian informed by ecology, biology, and natural history research. I observe animals and plants, translating the information I learn into a “popular” rather than “scientific” form; visual narratives that incorporate factual information with a whimsical approach to animal behavior. My earliest influences have been children’s books that distill knowledge in a way that is fun for the reader and therefore more memorable. I combine a research-based methodology alongside personal experiences with the animals I observe. I take simple pleasure in sharing moments with the animals that live in my immediate, urban surroundings. By highlighting these “ordinary” animals in my work, I remind the viewer that they share a space with wildlife.

Print media allows me to express both emotional and factual aspects of the animal world.

Through linocut relief printing, I can tell a straightforward narrative reminiscent of illustrations in posters or textbooks while reflecting on my intimate connections with the animals through monotype and a more immediate brushwork. In addition to traditional print methods, I want to explore other modes of presentation such as bookmaking and installation to engage the viewer in a more immersive way.

I am currently pursuing a Master of Fine Arts at Arizona State University in printmaking. Printmaking is not only my primary media but a great passion of mine. Unlike other artforms, printmaking is often a communal experience since not many people have the space or money to build their own printshops. Instead, a community is built around a shared love of printmaking. I wish to continue to continue the tradition by teaching print media to future artists.