

## Meet Rosemary Conroy – the Artist Behind NHBSR’s Bear in Mind Art

by Mitze Bender

Nestled in the small village of Frankestown, New Hampshire, in part of an old building that was once the fire station, New York native Rosemary Conroy shifts from canvas to canvas swirling and dabbing yellow paint on pieces of art in different stages of completion. From a commissioned whale to a sought-after moose, her paintings bring life to the upstairs studio gallery.

This isn’t always her process. Sometimes she sees the images clearly in her mind; other times she’s inspired by photographs or face-to-face meetings with animals in the wild, like a jackrabbit she spent some time with in Joshua Tree National Park.

The eyes are the final focus of her paintings. Each wild being’s eyes speak to your soul. Some viewers see peace, others solace, and still others see deep thought in their expressive eyes.

Though Rosemary’s love for art and a desire to create started when she was young, it took some time before she fully immersed herself in her paintings. She spent the early years of her career teaching computer technology to NYC stockbrokers in the World Trade Center.

To escape the city’s fast pace, she connected with a bird watching group, rekindled her love for nature and the wheels of destiny began turning. A chance meeting with a naturalist in the group segued into the pursuit of a Master of Science from Antioch University, New England. Not long after obtaining her master’s, she was hired as the communications director at the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests. She continued painting as a hobby thinking, *“Someday, I will focus solely on my art.”*

Like so many, the tragedy of September 11 shook Rosemary to her core. She had once worked in the Twin Towers.

“I realized there are no guarantees you will ever get to ‘someday,’” Rosemary said. “So with the help of my amazing husband, I made ‘someday’ today. And here I am, living my dream! I am so blessed.”

Rosemary shifted her energy and resources to pursuing art full time. “I started painting again and realized how much it fed my soul.”

Because of her deep love for nature, she paints portraits of wildlife and tithes 10 percent of her profits each year to wildlife conservation groups.

NHBSR Program Manager Zeina Eyceoz came across Rosemary’s beautiful paintings when she visited Girls at Work, Inc. in Manchester this summer. When Zeina reached out to ask Rosemary about using one of her bear images for our ***Bear in Mind*** mental wellness program, Rosemary agreed instantly.

“I know how important mental wellness is and am happy my art can help bring awareness to this issue that is very close to my heart,” Rosemary said.

You can view Rosemary’s art in person at the 104<sup>th</sup> Annual Frankestown Labor Day Festival on September 5, 2022 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

To learn more about Rosemary or to schedule a tour of her gallery, visit [www.rosemaryconroyart.com](http://www.rosemaryconroyart.com).