

# Laurie Goodhart



*Grounded in the earth brings her closer to the mystical  
Her art completes the connection  
Each piece unearths mysteries  
Look deeply --- Patti Croop*

## The Influence of Artemis



Greek Artemis, moon goddess roaming the forest  
Roman Diana, triple deity who ruled the world  
Artio, Helvetian goddess of wild life, transformation, and abundance  
Saxon Ursel, Grandmother of God  
Christian Saint Ursula, made mortal and now buried in the earth

Artemis, Diana, Artio, Ursel, Ursula – this global goddess was the first to touch Laurie's life. As a youngster in Upstate New York, she found Artemis while nesting in trees or daydreaming under her grandfather's grape arbor. In these natural sanctuaries, this quiet wilderness, she developed roots, birthed images, and bonded with Artemis. Artemis, in return, taught Laurie that inspiration

lies in the land, and that by living simply, she was free to honor the wild places within and without.

### Under Aphrodite's Sway



As Laurie entered young adulthood, she became entranced by Aphrodite, Greek Goddess who inhabits the natural world, creating the sense of grace that permeates a place or a particular moment. All the beauty of the world -- forms, colors, gestures, every sort of beauty – is part of Aphrodite's grace. Her influence extends beyond procreation to creative fusion in all things, including across disciplines, such as the literary and the visual. One could almost say that Aphrodite is the source of this world's delight in all its permutations.

Aphrodite's grace is evident throughout Laurie's work. Notable aspects of particular paintings include, the subtle background gesture of exchange in *Yellow Urn*; in *Red And Blue Pitcher*, both a primal fecundity symbolized by the ocean and fish, and the elusive female face, a distinct awareness overseeing all of it; *Pink Pitcher With Penguins* has a sensuality that is almost tangible.

Aphrodite invites one to surrender to beauty, to be overwhelmed, to swoon in the presence of magnificent beauty. Such beauty can come in any form and take us completely by surprise.

### Leaning towards Circe's Life



Circe, daughter of the sun, is said to have lived alone on the island of Aeaea, defending the sanctity of her world through peaceful means and magic. A strong immortal woman, dwelling happily within a rich tapestry of plants and animals, Circe's unassuming strength resonated in

Laurie: “I couldn’t find anything about her that I did not understand or aspire to; not the least of which is that for Circe, eating and sleeping are optional activities rather than necessities.”

“Circe is said to live harmoniously with all the plants and animals on her island. I see her go through her day in paintings like ***Starlings And Doves***, ***Bronze Libation Vessel*** and ***Water***.”

Laurie is no stranger to following her inclinations onto uncharted paths. In fact, it’s been over three decades since she and her husband left urban life to improvise something rural and sustainable on all levels, a life rich in rituals, raising most of their food, and making and marketing goat cheeses: “Both of us were drawn from city life to living close to the earth. We found that living quietly creates the time and space to apprehend the mythic hidden in each day – the transformations worked by the seasons, the compounding power of ritual, the alchemy of milk into cheese.” This awareness animates all her paintings.

### **Saraswati – Uniting Sensory & Spiritual**



Saraswati, Hindu goddess of knowledge, music, & wisdom

Consort of Brahma & procreatrix, mother of creation

Thurathadi, protector of Buddhist scriptures

Japanese Benzaiten, player of the lute

Yang Chen Ma, Tibetan music goddess

Laurie also felt an enigmatic but insistent awareness of Saraswati, as if she were inevitable, since her teen years and she was finally able to make her way to India in her 30s. Though feeling quite at home with the ubiquitous fusion of the sensory and spiritual, Laurie was astounded by how the ancient miniature paintings seemed to have come to life everywhere she looked. After an extended stay, she journeyed home, with Saraswati vividly present.

This union blossomed in Laurie’s 40s. She and her husband gave up their successful Adirondack farm and moved to rural Quebec, leaving behind Laurie’s flourishing painting career in the Hudson Valley. She wanted to dive deeply into the dark, unexplored work that had been calling. “Undistracted in a huge white studio, buried under long boreal winters, I could allow more subtle imagery begin to emerge on the canvas and speak, as in paintings like ***Air*** and ***Still Life With Tattooed Figurine***.” It was the presence of Saraswati, Indian river goddess and

creator of all arts from math to magic, who had been calling relentlessly for years; she had not previously had the time to give her.

Saraswati's realm of writing and creating led to a unique script that Laurie employs as a visual component and cryptic carrier of poetry and inspiration in a variety of different pieces, such as ***Kleio***, ***Blue Legs***, and ***Aphrodite Calls To Pele***.

### **The Artist's Mythic Journey Continues**



Laurie recently returned to Upstate New York. After decades of working directly with both wild and domesticated elements of the natural world, she is able to see with Saraswati's eyes the rhyming motifs that are shot through so much of our tangible and immaterial worlds: "Rhyming is the only way i can describe the (often rhythmically) repeating correspondences i notice across time and between unrelated realms; as though the entire world were a multi-dimensional poem, or grand opera -- much more so than the adage, 'History repeats itself' implies."

Saraswati's, Circe's, and Aphrodite's influence infuse Laurie's imagery, mingling and layering, resulting in a body of work she calls *The Remnants And Residents Of A Lost Sanctuary Of Aphrodite*. "Those three mythic archetypes, and the two threads of my professional life -- artwork and sustainable agriculture, -- cross-pollinate beneath the surface as I sift through remaining evidence of ancient worlds, trying to sense how people of lost cultures met basic survival needs and how they responded to the very human hunger for beauty, meaning, and story."

*Patti Croop, who collaborated on this bio, is an honored owner of Laurie's artwork. She writes, works for social justice, and continues to hope for a better world.*