

Rainbow Stag Snacktime

by Allison Peschek



Rainbow Stag Snacktime (2023) is a linocut relief print that was created to celebrate the life of a Rainbow Stag Beetle (*Phalacrognathus muelleri*). Though the adults are known to live longer than most other beetle species (up to 2 years in captivity), they also deserve to be immortalized as a truly unique organism. This captive male #5 beetle, in particular, was one with a tremendous amount of personality, and a constant craving for citrus! While caring for this organism, it was impossible not to enjoy the quiet grace they exude. This piece of scientific art was created to depict him in a unique style, surrounded by the flora of their native range (Queensland), all the while still managing to sneak an orange slice. Additionally, *Rainbow Stag Snacktime* is an experimental take on the use of texture, layering, and color. This work pushed the envelope on what it means for a visual to be “busy,” all the while providing balance and focus amongst the chaos. Nonetheless, it was a work meant to merge principles of science and art, and to generate interest for these spectacular and fascinating animals.

As for the technical methodology behind the creation of this piece, it was made through the means of a reduction, with a linocut style of printmaking. Using carving tools and a mounted piece of linoleum on wood, the surface was initially carved back in order to print the green-ombre layer. After printing this layer, the process became irreversible by carving back the surface further in order to print the black “key” layer. Finally, the remaining colors were hand-painted with watercolors. The material used in the print itself was carved linoleum printed with ink onto thai-kozo paper. The additional colors present other than green were hand-painted with watercolor paint.