

Lady Lepidopterist Study (Ode to Margaret Fountaine) - Framed

Chloe McCarrick

£995



REF: 4087

Height: 28 cm (11")

Width: 15 cm (5.9")

Depth: 3 cm (1.2")

Description

Cyanotype, handmade paper cut collage

Inspiration

This artwork was inspired by Victorian lepidopterist Margaret Fountaine. Described as a natural-born hunter: whether it was love, adventure or butterflies, her pursuit was relentless and her energy legendary. She emerged from an unremarkable Victorian upbringing with an extraordinary drive to self determination which defined her entire life.

Unconventional by nature, Fountaine was never cowed by society's strictures, or by what was expected, this provided her with many exciting opportunities. The price of her freedom was high but she never regretted her choices. A passionate lover and fearless individualist, her life was founded on the idiosyncratic determination to pursue her own path irrespective of convention.

Technique

Lady Lepidopterist Study (Ode to Margaret Fountaine) was created by constructing a hand-cut collage using female photographic portraiture, a renaissance style wig made of layers of hydrangea flowers and photographs of preserved butterfly specimens from my private collection.

My private collection of specimens were passed down to me from my grandparents and some gifted from my mother, the rest I have collected when exhibiting in Paris from the Deyrolle- (oldest taxidermy and natural history shop and museum in Europe).

Being able to use butterflies passed down through generations, pieces I fawned over, studied in books and adored visiting collections in natural history museums around the world is a beautiful tribute to my devotion to science and thankfulness my family fed my quest for knowledge and passion for studying science.

I first learned about Margaret Fountaine on one of my many visits to the Butterfly House in Williamson Park, Lancaster, England, the visitor guide started telling me a story about her studies, they showed me books and gave details of where to see her specimens at The Natural History Museum and her hometown of Norwich (Norwich Castle).

I photographed each specimen, used illustrations from my sketchbooks, some new and some from my earlier years) as the base of creating her head of butterflies.

After coating the handmade paper with light-sensitive chemistry, they are left to dry in a dark room. The large scale negatives are then contact- printed onto the paper pieces by exposure to daylight (UV rays).

The prints are then processed by thoroughly washing in water to remove any unexposed solution. They can then be hung to dry, developing to full density Prussian blue after 24 hours. Once dried the individual butterflies are cut out and mounted onto the print to create a multi-layered, 3-dimensional artwork.

Signed by the Artist.

'Own Art' Option Available - Contact the gallery for further information.