

Willow and Yoki
mixed media on panel
26 x 18 cm 2022

Willow and Yoki are siblings. Fox siblings. More specifically, Japanese fox siblings.

Yoki has been experiencing that he starts to possess paranormal abilities that increase as he gets older and wiser. According to Yoki's mother, all foxes have the ability to shapeshift into human form. While his father speaks of foxes employing this ability to trick others— as foxes in folklore often do—his mother portrays them as faithful guardians, friends, and lovers.

Other supernatural abilities commonly attributed to Yoki's kin include possession, generating fire or lightning, willful manifestation in the dreams of others, flight, invisibility, and the creation of illusions so elaborate as to be almost indistinguishable from reality. Some tales speak of foxes with even greater powers, able to bend time and space, or take fantastic shapes such as an incredibly tall tree or a second moon in the sky. Willow is brand new. She is what they call a Kitsune-bi.

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WILLOW AND YOKI have special powers. To love, to befriend, to protect, to trick and to deceit. It's all inside them.
They have to choose wisely which power to feed and which to starve.

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Chris Berens

Chris Berens studied illustration at the Academy of Art & Design in 's-Hertogenbosch, graduating in 1999. He has developed a complex and time-consuming painting technique, mostly shown as mixed media on panel.

"I'm most comfortable using fine brushes and drawing inks and graphites, but I also regularly use water color paints, markers and acrylics", Berens says. "For some time now I've added digital image making to my line of techniques, meaning 3D sculpting, digital painting and image processing. I combine and mix them with my more traditional media."

After his first major solo show at Jaski Gallery in 2005, Chris Berens' fame spread quickly. The young artist has already exhibited all over the world, from Amsterdam to New York, from Tokyo to Los Angeles, Seattle and Singapore. He also designed the cover for Panic of Girls, an album which was released in 2011 by Blondie. Deborah Harry and Chris Stein, founders of the band, are admirers of his work.

Back home Chris has been the subject of a television documentary. Chris Berens, Master of his Magical Universe was made for Dutch broadcaster Avro's Close Up series in 2013 and has since been broadcast several times at home and abroad.

Chris Berens also featured prominently in the television documentary Krabbé searches for Van Gogh, in which actor/painter Jeroen Krabbé traced the path of Vincent van Gogh in co-operation with Dutch artists.

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