

JORDAN A. COOK

Rebuilder of WWII Victory Vertical pianos. Internationally exhibited watercolor artist.

michelleandjordancook.com / arukahpiano.com

Artist Statement

I make art that listens.

Whether I'm restoring a WWII-era Steinway Victory Vertical or painting with pigments foraged from the earth, my work is rooted in memory, transformation, and resilience. I specialize in rebuilding pianos that once traveled to the front lines, compact instruments sent to bring music to soldiers. Their scars are preserved as testaments of their history. Each restoration is an act of remembrance, honoring the hands that built them, especially the women who kept the Steinway factory alive during wartime.

I craft gouache watercolor paintings using pigments made from foraged minerals, clays, lichens, and plants that carry the weight of place and time. I explore the relationship between hearing and seeing, using color theory and sound to create works that evoke both melody and mood, paintings that hum with history and possibility.

I come from a lineage of artists and musicians, and my work often reveals connections I didn't know existed, like discovering that my great-grandmother played Victory Verticals overseas, or that a war hero whose piano I restored helped liberate the very concentration camps where my family was imprisoned. These moments remind me that rebuilding is translation. It's how we listen and connect across generations, across silences.

CASUAL

I'm Jordan A. Cook, and I make art that listens.

I rebuild old pianos, especially WWII-era Steinway Victory Verticals, and I paint with pigments I make from foraged minerals and plants. Both practices are about transformation and memory.

I started restoring pianos during a time of hearing loss, and even after my hearing returned, the work stayed with me. These instruments have stories to tell, and I try to honor them, especially the ones that went to war, and the women who helped build them.

My paintings are rooted in place and history. I gather color from the land itself, clay, lichen, stone, and use it to create images that feel like sound. I think of my art as a way to remember, to connect, and to make beauty out of what's been through something.

Whether I'm working with wood or watercolor, I'm always asking: what does this remember? And how can I help it speak?

For media use. Press inquiries: us@michelleandjordancook.com