

Stolen

August 8th, 1970, a band of boats and planes used explosives and nets to corner a pod of Southern Resident killer whales into Penn Cove, North of Seattle. The young orcas were separated out, while their helpless mothers audibly cried out. Several of the captured orcas drowned in the nets and instead of leaving them, their capturers tied rocks to their tails and let them sink. Two years later the Marine Mammal Protection Act banned the capturing of live marine mammals, which meant that at least in US waters orcas would no longer be captured. One of the whales that was captured during Penn Cove was Tokitae, later named Lolita by the Miami Seaquarium. She was captured at the age of four and taken to Miami where she still lives today.

My motivation for this art piece was to show people the horrible things that happened during the Penn Cove incident. This art represents the initial decimation of the Southern Residents, and is why I decided to paint in black and white. When we saw orcas out in the wild I thought about why people would even consider taking them and confining them in a small space with unfamiliar whales. That's why I am proud to be able to help them recover their population.

Raven

