

# Birdland and the Anthropocene

ART EXHIBITION AT THE PEALE CENTER

**October 6-29, 2017**

*[thepealecenter.org](http://thepealecenter.org)*



## Birdland and the Anthropocene

Here we are in Baltimore, famously known as Birdland, and I'd like to think we love all of our birds. Sports teams are part of our identity, but so is poetry, and a diversity of actual birds that by the nature of their existence keep our ecosystems healthy. Birds provide pollination, seed dispersal, insect control (and thereby disease control), pest control, and more. If that isn't enough incentive to be grateful to them, bird-watching is a fifty billion dollar industry in the United States.

I've gathered together artists who consider extinction, endangered species, and the postnatural—organisms that have been intentionally altered by humans. Some artists examine ornithology, the scientific study of birds—some play with the methods involved. Our technological advances have harmed the natural world in many ways, but how can we use technology to save it? Extinction discloses domination and exploitation in political systems, but how are birds used as symbols in these narratives? We imitate birds, but what does this reveal about our perception of them? What is it like to be a bird?

Consider birds for birds' sake—they are living dinosaurs, full of beauty and portent, present in every aspect of our culture. We've coevolved with birds. The neuroanatomy of human speech and birdsong share structural features. Some studies suggest that human language might have evolved from birdsong.

Mostly birds. That's this show and my life. As an artist/curator and volunteer for the bird conservation/wildlife rescue group, Lights Out Baltimore, I've dedicated much of the last eight years to advocating for birds.

Birds are in trouble. They are disappearing. The silent spring that Rachel Carson warned us about is affecting regions piecemeal. The causes include habitat loss, death by free-roaming cats, building collisions, invasive species, pesti-

cides, and more. A combination of these factors results in a loss of resources.

In this new geologic epoch, the Anthropocene, humans have changed how the Earth's systems work—evolution, migration, biodiversity, climate, and others. Fifty percent of bird populations in the United States are likely imperiled and might disappear within a century.

I've been an active birder for sixteen years. In the time I've spent observing the habitats in our city, I've witnessed the onset of this distressing change. There are fewer birds. And yet, there has never been such a swell of interest and scientific inquiry into understanding birds' physiology, especially their intelligence. We race to understand what is being lost.

We asked the community to weigh in on these issues. In workshops, Baltimore City students and artists responded with art that is included in the exhibit. We've engaged with local conservation groups. We're hoping to collect bird stories from city residents with the app, "Be Here Stories."

The Peale family included many artists and naturalists. Rembrandt Peale opened the first purpose-built museum in the United States, now The Peale Center. He also established the first gas light company in America and showcased the new technology here. Today, we know that light pollution attracts birds into deadly glass environments resulting in collisions, a leading cause of bird mortality. This inadvertent effect reminds us that humans must be careful of our inventions. We need helpful darkness.

Considering the Peale's history, can there be a more ideal site for this exhibition? What ties this all together? We investigate how the natural world shapes us and how we shape it. We determine threats and countermeasures in a world that is fast becoming characterized by absence.

Lynne Parks, *Curator*

## ARTISTS

Amy Boone McCreesh  
Andrew S. Yang  
Anne Greene + Arjan de Nooy  
Ashley Cecil  
Ashley Kidner  
Ben Piwowar  
Benjamin Andrew  
Cathy Cook  
Center for PostNatural History  
+ Ian Nagoski  
Chris Siron  
Christina Baal  
Divya Ananthataman  
Edger Endess  
Elisabeth Pellathy

Glenn Ricci  
Jennifer McBrien  
Jessica Rassp  
Jieyu Zhang  
Jonathan Latiano  
Krista Caballero  
+ Frank Ekeberg  
Laura Drogoul  
Linda Franklin  
Lynne Parks  
Monique Luchetti  
Nicole Shiflet  
Sandy Anderson  
Susan Humphrey  
William Rhodes

We would like to thank The Peale Center for the opportunity to present this exhibition and by extension we thank Nancy Proctor, Director, and James Dilts, President of the Board of Directors.

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Thank you Peale Garden cleanup volunteers: Carl Banks, Mimi Cooper, Ashley Kidner, Jennifer McBrien, Ursula Marcum, Wendy Olsson, Lynne Parks.

Above and beyond, Cathy Cook.

The marvelous Cathy Goucher, thank you.  
Ursula Marcum and Glenn Ricci—thank you for a thousand essential things and all around awesomeness.

Brian Miller always has answers and help, thank you.

We know Scott Pennington and Melissa Webb are also the best.

Jess Rapp, thank you for taking on the extinction ritual so brilliantly.  
Chris Siron, your support is boundless. Thank you for always being there.  
Idil Yakut, design extraordinaire, I couldn't have done this without you.

And thank you, artists, for such exceptional art and extraordinary effort.

## Make Studio Artists:

Alex Albert  
Erika Clark  
Aimee Eliason  
Chuck Fischer  
Jeanne Hannon, Julia Hinmon  
Dasha Kalumuck  
Zach Manuel Louis Middleton  
Tyrone Weedon  
Jerry Williams  
Dontavius Woody *with guest* Julie  
Dietrich-Eisler

## Baltimore Lab School:

**Teacher:** Laura Parkhurst

**Students:**

Jeffrey H. <i>Grade 2</i>	Ahuva B. <i>Grade 5</i>
Josue C. <i>Grade 3</i>	Wyatt G. <i>Grade 5</i>
Caden D. <i>Grade 3</i>	Samantha L. <i>Grade 5</i>
Gabi E. <i>Grade 3</i>	Luke L. <i>Grade 5</i>
Eli K. <i>Grade 3</i>	Ryan R. <i>Grade 5</i>
Miles M. <i>Grade 3</i>	Ben S. <i>Grade 5</i>

**Teacher:**

Zac Lawhon

**Students:**

Mitchell B.	Frankie F.
Justin L.	Zane M.
Natalie F.	

## LECTURES (AT 2 PM)

- 10/7 Benjamin Andrew  
Christina Baal  
Chris Siron
- 10/14 Lindsay Jacks (AT 12 PM)  
*Lights Out Baltimore* Director  
Jieyu Zhang  
Lynne Parks
- 10/21 Elisabeth Pellathy  
Cathy Cook  
Nicole Shiflet  
Ben Piwowar

10/6 & 10/28 (AT 8 PM)

## EXTINCTION RITUAL

Performed by *The Flock\**  
Music by Dan Rassp  
Costumes and choreography  
by **Jessica Rassp**

\*Common Yellowthroat – E'tonia Ford  
Downy Woodpecker – Lisi Stoessel  
Mountain Quail – Lynne Parks  
Belted Kingfisher – Jess Rassp  
Carolina Parakeet – Kristen Faber  
Summer Tanager – Claire Wayner

## SUNDAY PROGRAMS

- 10/14 Lindsay Jacks  
*Director of Lights Out  
Baltimore*
- 10/15 Dariusz Skoraczewski  
*Cello Concert*  
*Baltimore Symphony  
Orchestra's Principal  
Cellist, bird-song  
influenced selections*
- 10/22 Ian Nagoski  
*Music Researcher,  
Early 20th Century Bird  
Recordings and  
Bird-Imitations*

10/22 (AT 12 PM)

## OPEN MIC WRITERS

Tatiana Nya Ford  
Linda Franklin  
Jenny O'Grady  
Timmy Reed  
Jo Brown  
Lisa Lewenz

# AMY BOONE-McCREESH

I am interested in creating multi-media artwork that addresses the clash between handmade and technical processes with a decorative and maximal aesthetic. For this piece, *Too Loud to See*, I have paired a sound piece made from extinct bird sounds from Cornell University's lab of Ornithology with a custom pattern and mixed media garlands. The intention for this piece is to create an experience that is overwhelming to a variety of senses. The pattern and physical pieces that I have created are true to my aesthetic and reference the natural world. There are layers of previous artworks printed digitally and "real" physical artworks in the space. The combination of the spatially-challenging visuals alongside the haunting repetitive sounds of extinct birds are intended to question what is "real" through an immersive experience.

Amy Boone-McCreesh creates multi-media artwork that addresses the clash between handmade and technical processes. A decorative and maximal aesthetic often fuels her visual vocabulary. Amy completed a two-year fellowship for emerging artists with Hamiltonian Gallery in Washington DC (2014), where she exhibited and was included in Scope, Miami and (e)merge DC art fairs (2012, 2013). Her work has also been included in exhibitions across the country including a site-specific installation at Mixed Greens (NY, New York, 2015), Transmitter Gallery (Brooklyn, NY, 2015), Transformer Gallery (Washington DC, 2015). Recent collections include the Department of State, U.S. Consulate in Monterrey, Mexico (Art in Embassies, 2013). Recent publications and features include *New American Paintings* (issues 106 and 118) and the *Handmade Life*, published by Thames and Hudson (2016). Amy is currently a visiting assistant professor at Dickinson College in the Art and Art History Department.



Amy Boone-McCreesh  
*Too Loud to See, 2017*

# ANDREW S. YANG

Flowering plants hustle their seeds throughout the landscape by way of animal partners who desire their fruit, as well as the seeds they contain. Birds can eat and pass seeds from a variety of species within a given day, acting as winged couriers for future generations of plants. However, millions of birds die every year when they collide with buildings whose windows mirror the surroundings and create a fatal illusion of space, or are attracted to building lights without seeing the impermeable glass at night. If birds die with the seeds that they carry, then those seeds become ends without means, orphaned from their living vehicles. In a vast ecology of interruption, millions of seeds likely never get a chance to try their luck at sprouting.

In Chicago, birthplace of the “skyscraper,” hundreds of birds collide with buildings on a daily basis. The Chicago Bird Collision Monitors (CBCM) work as an all-volunteer group that retrieve fallen birds waylaid by our growing architectural ambitions. Dead birds are brought to the Field Museum of Natural History where they are cataloged, skinned, and cleaned at the Bird Lab - the feathers and skeletons becoming part of a comprehensive archive of avian demise. The guts of these birds, however, are usually thrown away together with their stores of seeds - cornucopias of trees, flowers, and shrubs that could be. With the help of emeritus collections manager, David Willard, I glean the seeds by dissecting them out of the bird stomachs. The seeds from each individual bird become part of a growing collection of plant-possibility spanning a variety of fruit and seed eating species - from sparrows to thrushes, robins to grosbeaks. For each kind of bird a ceramic stoneware pot is made by hand - a makeshift surrogate for the stomach from which the seeds were liberated, the pot is a new vessel in which the seeds are given a chance to germinate; each pot is glazed in a style drawn from the coloration and feathering of the particular.

Andrew Yang is a transdisciplinary artist interweaving across the naturalcultural and biohistorical. His projects have been exhibited from Oklahoma to Yokohama, Chicago to Kassel, including the 14th Istanbul Biennial (2015) and solo exhibition at Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago (2016). His writing can be found in journals including *Leonardo*, *Biological Theory*, *Gastronomica* and *Antennae*. He was a visiting scholar at the Max Planck Institute for the History of Science in and seminar-leader at the Haus der Kulturen der Welt's Anthropocene Campus in 2016. He holds a PhD in biology, an MFA in visual arts, and is Associate Professor at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago + research associate at the Field Museum of Natural History.



Andrew S. Yang  
*Two Vehicles*, detail from *Flying Gardens of Maybe*, 2012 -

# ANNE GEENE + ARJAN DE NOOY

Ornithology refers to the scientific study of birds, including their physiology, classification, ecology, and behaviour. Because of their visibility and often colourful appearance, birds are a popular object in both science and visual arts – photography in particular. With their pseudo-scientific approach hunter-collectors De Nooy & Geene defy the borders between these disciplines, adding a dimension that is largely absent in both the study and the imaging of birds: humour. Their classification of bird pictures exhibits a sometimes hilarious outcome of creative and associative thinking, with every section of their book *Ornithology* opening new perspectives on birds. The index of their book seems to be copied from a reference book on ornithology. But, as in most of their works, they only make use of scientific methods to create an artistic microcosm that resembles its scientific counterpart. *Ornithology* was winner of the *Golden Letter* for 'Best Book Design' from all over the world.

With photography Anne Geene (Breda, 1983) archives, organizes, interprets and arranges the world around her. She analyses and catalogues this information in a seemingly logic way. Seemingly, because her interpretation of the collected data is essentially a personal and ironic reference to our eagerness to ordering and knowing everything. In her work, the relationship between the photographic image and science is a central theme. She studied photography at the Royal Academy of Arts in The Hague and graduated in 2010 at Sint Joost, Breda. She concluded her photography studies with a Masters degree in photography at the University of Leiden in 2012. In 2014 she won the ING Unseen Talent Award and her work was selected for several national and international exhibitions and collections.

Arjan de Nooy (Goes, The Netherlands 1965) studied chemistry and photography. One could say that his work is related to both fields: the scientific and artistic. Using his own as well as found images, he constructs histories, archives, 'scientific' theories and other stories. Those works often have a fictional character in which his own role may vary from an art historian to a feminist, from a collector to an ornithologist.



Anne Geene and Arjan De Nooy  
*Untitled*, from the series *Camouflage*, 2016

# ASHLEY CECIL

When I began my artist residency at the Carnegie Museum of Natural History in 2016, I had no idea that I would be so taken aback by the magnitude of the many conservation problems we face in Pittsburgh and around the globe. One of the topics I quickly gravitated toward was bird conservation and the museum's work at Powdermill Avian Research Center in partnership with BirdSafe Pittsburgh. Together these entities "work to research and reduce bird mortality in the Steel City." It's estimated that up to one billion birds die in the US every year from colliding with windows.

*Wood Thrush on Yellow* is one in a series of oil paintings that captures native bird species heavily impacted by window collisions. The avian portrait is framed by a silk-screened design of both Mountain Laurel (PA's state flower) and the iconic Pennsylvania keystone symbol. Below the painting are replicas of the museum's specimen tags - one for each bird of the same species added to the museum's collection due to a window strike since 2014.

Akin to the artworks from the Arts and Crafts movement, my work is meant to endear you to nature, to these threatened creatures, and to inspire you to get involved in the solution. Learn how you can make your windows bird-safe at [www.decorativefilm.com/ashley-cecil-bird-safety](http://www.decorativefilm.com/ashley-cecil-bird-safety).

Ashley Cecil is a Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania-based artist and illustrator specializing in paintings of flora and fauna that illustrate the interconnectedness of the natural world and its inhabitants. Her love affair with all things organic and wild has blossomed as the result of studying landscapes with accomplished master painters in London while earning her master's degree at the Sotheby's Institute of Art, immersing herself in vast collections of floral textile prints in European museums, painting from live observation at institutions including the National Aviary, collaborating with top-notch floral designers, and serving as an artist-in-residence at the Carnegie Museum of Natural History.



Ashley Cecil  
*Wood Thrush on Yellow, 2016*

# ASHLEY KIDNER

Without habitat there are no nests, without nests there are no eggs, without eggs there are no birds. Where eggs would have been there is only darkness. Where the songs of the air would be heard there is only silence.

In this installation the ground nests of five Maryland birds, all listed as threatened, are roughly replicated using native plants and organic material. The blackened areas within the nests represent the approximate space the eggs would have occupied.

Ashley Kidner is a Baltimore based Land artist. Kidner works mainly in stone, wood, native plants and water, making use of natural materials often found on site. The installations that Kidner creates and documents (with photographs and drawings), often carry an environmental message. These works slowly deteriorate, breaking down through decay and erosion, while the more permanent materials such as stone and plants remain. Recent work has involved drawing attention to the plight of bees in Maryland through a series of stone and pollinator plant installations. These "Pollinator Hexagons" can be found in Leakin Park (Nature Art in the Park), Lake Roland Park (Art on the Trail) and Montpelier Arts Centre in Laurel. Kidner has also installed a huge vine sculpture at the Adkins Arboretum on the Eastern shore of MD in addition to work shown in this year's Fieldwork exhibition at Artscape. Kidner is originally from Norfolk, England, studied Geology at college and currently runs his own landscape business.

PELLE MUSEUM BIRD EXHIBIT

OCTOBER 2017, GROUND NESTS  
WITHOUT HABITAT THEIR IS NO NEST

1  $\nabla$  KILLDEER; GRAVEL, CREEK GRASS  
*Charadrius virginicus* (Status threatened)

2  $\nabla$  UPLAND SANDPIPER; GRASSES, STON  
*Bartramia longicauda* (Status threatened)

3  $\Delta$  CLAPPER RAIL; GRASSES  
*Rallus crepitans* (Status threatened)

4  $\square$  PIPING PLOVER; GRAVEL, BEACH SAND  
*Charadrius melodus* (Status threatened)

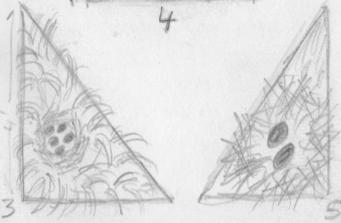
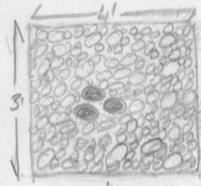
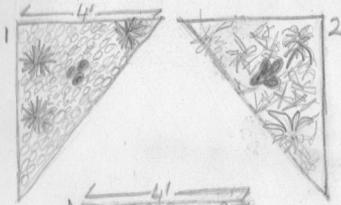
5  $\Delta$  BROWN PELICAN; GRASSES, SOIL  
*Pelecanus occidentalis* (Status threatened)

BLACK ARMS REPRESENT THE  
LACK OF EGGS IN THE NESTS

WHERE EGGS WOULD  
HAVE BEEN ONLY  
DARKNESS REMAINS



HABITAT GROUND NESTS



# BEN PIWOWAR

In my work, I use abstraction to reflect on fragility, adaptation, and regeneration. My installation and sculpture is improvised on site with construction salvage, studio ephemera, and architectural remnants. The resulting constructions tend to behave like displaced organisms working toward an uneasy symbiosis within a strange environment—not unlike bird populations contending with urban spaces in a changing climate.

Ben Piwowar is a Baltimore-based painter and installation artist. His work has been included in exhibitions at Meyerhoff Gallery in Baltimore, MD, Artspace New Haven in New Haven, CT, the Rice Gallery at McDaniel College in Westminster, MD, VisArts in Rockville, MD and Soho20 Chelsea Gallery in New York, NY. Piwowar received a 2017 Maryland State Arts Council Individual Artist Award in sculpture and installation and is a finalist for the 2017 Trawick Prize. He earned his Bachelor of Arts from the University of Maryland and his MFA from the University of Connecticut.



Ben Piowar  
*Nesting Studies #2*, 2015

# BENJAMIN ANDREW

I've made velcro time machines and LED labyrinths, smartphone audio tours, animations, comic books, websites, and animated comic book websites—but it's not all art. I think it's vital to take art across the street and introduce it to other disciplines; for the sake of innovation and community, and my own curiosity. I have too much fun dabbling in science, cinema, and literature to wear the artist's hat all the time.

When I design interactive projects or experiments, I hope audiences will have transformative experiences without thinking about the traditional roles of art. Incorporating pop culture and digital media makes art more competitive in the age of 24/7 newsfeeds and instant gratification. At the end of the day, I want to capture people's attention and make a difference.

Many of my projects feature imagery and language from science fiction—entertaining tropes that underscore my commitment to the genre while making the work more accessible. I've dressed like a time-traveling scientist to start conversations on the street, and invented shrinking "micronauts" to engage people with microecology. Science fiction makes connections between the real and the imaginary; weaving allegories that might inflict change upon the world. Behind the winking references and humor in my work, there are always darker themes like climate change, extinction, and post-humanism. In spite of these fears, I want to tell stories and create genuine adventures that are unique to our moment in time.

Benjamin Andrew teaches at the Pennsylvania State University, specializing in interdisciplinary science and digital media courses. He has organized and participated in science/art programs at the SciArt Center and Johns Hopkins University, and thinks STEAM sounds cooler than STEM anyway. Andrew received his MFA from the Maryland Institute College of Art in 2013, and has exhibited in Baltimore, Washington D.C., New York, and beyond.



Benjamin Andrew  
*Menagerie*, 2017

# CATHY C. COOK

*"Living on a small swampy lake in Wisconsin all summer I wake up to the cranes' call and I know the day's end by their return. Cranes are part of a natural environment that has its own sense of time; they remind me of prehistoric existence because their form and their rituals have remained relatively unchanged for millions of years."*

-- Cathy C. Cook

The Whooping Crane has been on the endangered species list since 1967, and is the subject of a population recovery program that includes migration training. The Sandhill Crane has been the subject of the most successful recovery program to date, bringing the species' numbers back from the brink of extinction.

The *Cranes in Motion* project is the culmination of Cook's extensive research from 2013 to 2016. While in the field, she and collaborator Paul Dickinson braved freezing temperatures to document thousands of migrating cranes at their refueling stops in Nebraska, Wisconsin, and Maryland, capturing their calls, mating dances, migration patterns, nesting, and other activities. This intermedia project including documentary, poetry, moving images, and sound explores the fascinating dynamics of crane culture and natural history. A selection of elements from *Cranes in Motion* are in this exhibition: *Mimicking Whooper* uses state of the art gaming software to provide an opportunity to virtually interact with these birds - to figuratively dance their dance. Through the lens, the photographs enable us to meet the cranes eye to eye, and ponder the magnificent details of evolution's handiwork. Ultimately, Cook aspires to create an experience that will help connect humans to cranes at a time when their wetland and grassland homes are threatened and their environment compromised, opening the way to a greater understanding and empathy for the complex ecological issues surrounding this ancient species.

As an artist, filmmaker, educator and eco-activist, Cathy Cook has been creating films, animation, poetry films, collages and installations since the early 1980's. She has exhibited her award-winning work internationally in both solo and group shows including MOMA, The Whitney Museum, PBS and numerous other venues. In 2001, Cook was awarded a Guggenheim Memorial Fellowship. Nature, topical social issues, and poetry have been staples in her creative work. Cook's *Cranes in Motion* project, took her to the largest migration locations for Sandhill Cranes and Whooping Cranes. Currently Cook is an Associate Professor in Visual Arts - Cinematic Arts at UMBC. Cook migrates between Baltimore and Wisconsin, where she lives on a small swampy lake with her dog Zippy. They share residence with cranes, loons, eagles, badgers, deer, herons and coyotes.



Cathy C. Cook

*Cranes in Motion*, 2016

*Mimicking Whooper* - Interactive Installation, Photo Documentation: Paul Gaudynski

*Specimen #342494 - Crane Skull*, 2015

# Center For PostNatural History + IAN NAGOSKI

The Center for PostNatural History is the world's only museum dedicated to the collection and exposition of life-forms that have been intentionally and heritably altered through domestication, selective breeding, tissue culture or genetic engineering. Founded by Richard Pell in 2008, the Center for PostNatural History operates a permanent museum in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania which houses such attractions as a genetically modified goat that produces spider silk in its milk, engineered photosensitive E. coli bacteria, a collection of purebred dog skulls and hundreds of other specimens of postnatural history. It has exhibited in the Wellcome Collection in London, Museum für Naturkunde in Berlin, The ZKM in Karlsruhe, The CCCB in Barcelona, and other museums of science and culture throughout Europe and the United States. It has appeared in the pages of National Geographic, Nature Magazine, American Scientist, Popular Science, Forbes and New Scientist. The CPNH has received support from the Rockefeller New Media Fellowship, Creative Capital Fellowship, a Smithsonian Artist Research Fellowship, De Waag Society, The Kindle Project and was awarded a 2013 Kavli Fellowship from the National Academy of Science.

Ian Nagoski is an autodidact musicologist and proprietor of Canary Records which has issued over 40 collections of obscure and under appreciated recordings. His research is focused on American immigrants' musics in the early 20th century and the history of human-bird sound interactions, among other things. He has lectured throughout the US, Europe and the Middle East. An early 20th century recording of a nightingale was selected by Nagoski to be included in the MoonArk project which is set to place a reliquary of human artifacts permanently on the surface of the Moon in the year 2018. He was awarded a Kindle Project Makers Muse Award in 2011.



Center for PostNatural History and Ian Nagoski  
*Birdlike & Wingless*, 2017

# CHRIS SIRON

A traditional silhouette is starkly metaphorical, a literal trace of a human in a relatively fleeting interval of time which no longer exists. I created silhouettes that evoke instant anthropomorphism by using, as subjects, the heads of extinct birds, while including human elements such as hats, hairstyles, and clothing. I became interested in the idea of using cut profiles when I learned of Moses Williams, a well-known African-American silhouettist who was a former slave of Charles Wilson Peale. Williams worked in Peale's Philadelphia museum after being set free.

Rembrandt Peale introduced the first gas street lighting to the United States and founded the first gas company in the Western hemisphere. I think of gaslight and its projecting shadows. It harkens back to the silhouette art form, and even to Indonesian shadow puppetry, and further in time, to the shadows on walls of caves in pre-history during the making of cave paintings. A traced shadow is similar to photography in that it freezes time. These original shadows are gone as are the humans in the work of Moses Williams (and he, himself), but so are the species of these birds. Nothing is left, but vestige.

Chris Siron was born in Washington D.C. at Doctor's Hospital on Eye Street, N.W. His educational experience includes the Painting and Printmaking curriculum in the Fine Arts Department at Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond, VA. He also completed courses in animation at the Children's Museum in Washington D.C. and photography at The Corcoran School of the Arts. His collages and photographs have been published in *Throttle*, Georgetown University's C.O.R.E., and *Pannus Index*. In addition to the visual arts, he has contributed soundtracks to animation and film. Chris works at the National Gallery of Art and lives in Baltimore, Maryland. He was awarded a Maryland State Arts Council grant in 2008 for works on paper. In 2015, he created an animation titled *Nocturnal Voyage*, which addressed bird deaths owing to building collisions. In 2017, his designs for bird-friendly window film were used for windows at the Patuxent Wildlife Research Center in Laurel, Maryland.



Chris Siron  
*Labrador Duck*, 2017

# CHRISTINA BAAL

Amaranthus: the genus of flowers that symbolize immortality; whose name in Greek means “unfading.” There is an inevitable sense of sadness when painting extinct birds; the sheer joy that I feel from recalling the memories of encountering a living species in nature is noticeably absent. Instead, there is a sense of longing for something that I can never find, no matter how hard I look or how far I wander. Passenger Pigeons will never again block out the sun; Ivory-billed Woodpeckers will never fill old-growth forests with their hammering; Eskimo Curlews will never fly thousands of miles from the Arctic to the southern tropics in the throes of migration. Lost. These birds are lost, forever.

To illuminate the plight of birds in a world hurtling towards environmental uncertainty, I have chosen to envision eight of the most iconic extinct birds as vivacious, living things. I painted them exactly as I would any other bird I met in the wild, celebrating their lives despite the sorrow of their loss. While these birds no longer fly the earth's skies, stories of their existence forever haunt us with the weight of the destruction humans have wrought on this planet. Like an amaranth, these stories will last forever as unfading reminders of our responsibility to ensure that humankind does not jeopardize the continued existence of the 10,000 species of birds that still remain. And at the same time, there is inspiration in their stories. The incredible lives of these lost birds are perhaps the most powerful of mirrors that can reflect the wonder that exists all around us right now, if we are only willing to open our eyes and see it.

Christina Baal is an artist, birder, and wanderer who earned a BA in Studio Art from Bard College in 2014. After graduation, she set off to fulfill her dream of seeing and drawing each of the 10,000 species of birds in the world. Her adventures have taken her across the country, from the crags of Maine to the canyons of Wyoming and the Pacific Ocean along Pacific Highway 1. Along the way, she has met hundreds of birds and countless people who share a fascination with the creatures that can defy geographic and cultural boundaries. She hopes to share the wonder that birds bring into her life through her paintings.



Christina Baal  
*The Great Auk, 2017*

# DIVYA ANANTHARAMAN

The prehistoric elegance of birds stirs the most primal human responses-flight, longing, desire. Birds have eluded us, inspired us, at once tenacious in their will to survive, and delicate at the mercy of our destructive ways. These works seek to look back at the birds we have lost, and to look forward to what may come-whether it is evolution gone awry or a distorted remembrance.

Divya Anantharaman is a professional taxidermist and artist based in New York City. Her area of expertise is birds and small mammals. She was the taxidermist in residence at the (now closed) Morbid Anatomy Museum in Brooklyn, is currently a board member of the New England Association of Taxidermists, and co-authored the book "Stuffed Animals: A Modern Guide to Taxidermy". Divya has won awards and honors for her work in both traditional and interpretive taxidermy competitions, including a Best in Show and Best in Category at the 2015 GSTA Show and Competition, a blue ribbon at the 2016 NEAT show, and most recently a second place in the professional division at the 2017 World Taxidermy Championships. Her work has been featured in Breakthrough Magazine (the premiere taxidermy trade publication), and is regularly featured in press as wide and varied as the Science Friday, National Geographic, BBC Science Radio, and hit Discovery/Science Channel TV Show Oddities. Her artwork has been shown at galleries like La Luz de Jesus in LA, Arch Enemy Arts in PA, Rush NYC, and one of her mythical birds is on permanent display in the Chamber of Wonders at The Walters Art Museum in Baltimore. She began her foray into taxidermy in 2007 as a self taught artist, and eventually received professional training from award winning traditional taxidermists, attending state and national competitions, and networking with local conservationists. She has turned what was once an odd hobby into a professional career. She is passionate about conservation and aims to use taxidermy as a tool for awareness, and regularly volunteers with the Audubon Society and WCS.



Divya Anantharaman  
*Bird of Nine Tails, 2017*

# EDGAR ENDRESS

*Project Santos* is a series of prints that re-assemble botanical and zoological illustrations. Scientific expeditions that incorporated illustrators were launched in the European colonies in Africa and the Americas during the XVIII and XIX centuries. Eduard Rüppell in North Africa, Alexander von Humboldt in South America and José Celestino Mutis in Colombia, among others, organized a system of knowledge production and documentation. The illustrations depicted the physical landscapes, peoples, and economies of the colonies, advanced the knowledge of the region and in some cases transformed how Europeans perceived the New World. But they also reinforced a dominant idea of otherness through exoticism and ultimately facilitated a colonial discourse of controlling nature and its occupants.

Edgar Endress is a George Mason University associated professor teaching new media and public art. Born in Chile, he has exhibited extensively throughout the Americas, most recently in Museum of Contemporary art (Macba), Barcelona Spain. In 2007, in association with Provisions, he initiated the Floating Lab Collective, a team of interdisciplinary artists who deploy innovative art projects in collaboration with urban communities. His work focuses on syncretism in the Andes, displacement in the Caribbean, and mobile art-making practices. He received his MFA in Video Art from Syracuse University. He has received numerous grants and fellowships, including from the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts and the Creative Capital Fund.



Edgar Endress  
*Project Santos, 2017*

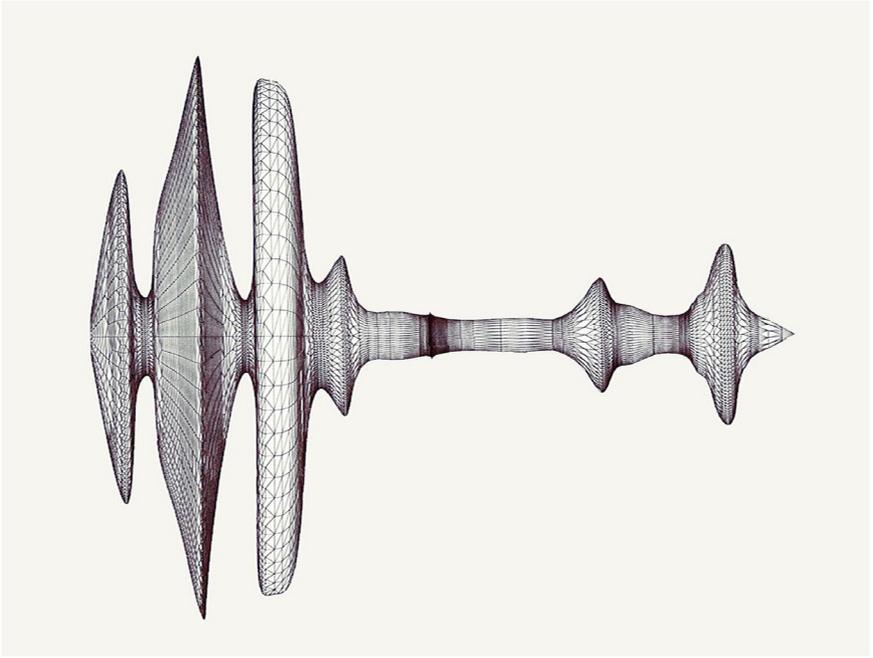
# ELISABETH PELLATHY

The rearranging of relationships in the studio is based on current ideologies of accessibility of information, which can often negate the tactile experience of objects. In exploring this gap, the discussion arises from concepts of cataloging the disappearing.

The objects and prints created exist as a catalogue of the disappearing, much like an 18th century wonder-cabinet. The display serves to rarify the object, contain it, and isolate it.

The bell jars and test tubes reference a specimen that has been collected, displayed, which then becomes a commodity to be owned. Perhaps the viewers will contemplate the collective idea of objectifying the experience of the natural world.

Elisabeth Pellathy is a multi-disciplinary artist, utilizing drawing, printmaking, electronic media, and digital fabrication in her work. Born in 1982 in Latrobe, Pennsylvania to parents of Hungarian descent she is keenly aware of the effort to preserve the disappearing, and the poetic slippage that often results. Issues raised by the disappearance of species, language, culture, and information are the catalyst for her visual explorations.



Elisabeth Pellathy  
*Visualized Bird Song*, 2016

# GLENN RICCI

Glenn Ricci has been working with time-based media for over two decades. He is a video producer for the Library of Congress and Co-artistic Director of Submersive Productions, a collaborative artworks company that creates site-specific immersive theater experiences. Combining sound, video, performance, and experience design, he attempts to make new connections between disparate ideas and invites viewers to take a fresh look at familiar subjects. In 2015, Glenn conceived, produced, co-directed, and composed sound for *The Mesmeric Revelations! of Edgar Allan Poe*, the longest-running immersive theater piece in Baltimore history.

Beginning last year, Glenn co-produced, co-directed, and provided sound and visual elements for *H.T. Darling's Incredible Museum Presents: The Treasures of New Galapagos, Astonishing Acquisitions from the Perisphere*, a newly devised immersive theatre experience spread out over all four floors of the historic Peale Center. Following its initial sold-out run and much critical acclaim in Spring 2017, "Musaeum" will be remounting in the fall at the same location. Earlier in 2017, Glenn conceived and facilitated the creation of *Plunge: An Experiential Storytelling Lab*, which paired six performers with five installation artists to create five experiences each for an audience of one. He also contributed sound and lighting design to the project. Based around the theme of "the other", *Plunge* was created to expose audience and performers alike to the still rare art of one-to-one performance. Seeing it as foundational to all immersive experiences, Glenn hopes to pursue this in-person, experiential form of storytelling well into the future.

Glenn was very glad to be given the opportunity to focus on his truest love--sound design--for this exhibit. Playing off of the idea of birds as messengers from the other side, the soundscape is a manipulation of dozens of natural bird recordings. Each utterance is imagined as a mitigated transmission and intentional message from a place of great perspective and wisdom. What do they have to say to you?

Glenn Ricci  
*Bird Spirit Transmissions*, 2017  
Sound installation

# JENNIFER McBRIEN

I wake up every morning, welcomed usually by a bird song, or a look, a sighting of something that just flew past my window. I love the one-to-one connection of the bird looking back at my smile. I love their attitude. How loud they are and how they act like they own the place. They feel as much at home in Baltimore as I do. I have been working with fibers to find the best vehicle for communicating this special connection that I feel with birds. I like playing with whimsy as much as the seriousness of the detailed mark marking. Both exhilaration ,as well as, serious concern, I have for their existence and their extinction.

In *The Genealogy of My Imaginary Family*, I selected a variety of native birds that range from the familiar to the extirpated breeds from Maryland. I wanted them to feel like family portraits, arranged to create a narrative of subtle expressive reactions and silent dialogue. Each portrait is created freehand on the sewing machine. Drawing each mark, value and detail by manipulating the canvas under the moving needle. Each has a final result of a line drawing but with a more labor intensive method that I chose as a dedication towards their preservation.

In my piece *Not for the Shooting Gallery*, stuffed birds are created to be somewhat of a hybrid of the stuffed animals (like the ones you win when winning a game at a carnival) with a stuffed repical. Subjects were selected by either their popularity or their un-popularity. Made of wool blend felt, recycled polyfilled stuffing and freehand machine stitched detailed and wire feet.

Jennifer McBrien is a Baltimore native who began her artistic career as a painter, exhibiting her work throughout the East Coast from the mid 80's to mid 2000's. As a painter, she received two Baltimore City Arts Grants and a Maryland State Individual Artist Award in painting in 2005. McBrien began her fiber direction about a decade ago, using felt applique and a freehand machine stitching method to create functional and decorative works that explore her love for birds and the midcentury aesthetic. She began her own fiber business in which she designs, produced, marketed and sells her housewares and accessories nationwide at numerous craft shows, on-line and in small boutiques and pop up shops. She was a finalist twice for the Martha Stewart American Made contest. She is proud a member of the Charm City Craft Mafia as well as a part of Baltimore's diy craft community.



Jennifer McBrien  
*The Genealogy of My Imaginary Family*, 2017

# JESSICA RASSP

This piece is meant to embody the looming possibility of extinction. Six distinct birds come together to form a Flock that celebrates their vibrancy and life in this world. However, one in the group is already extinct, and they are the first to fall. The others may follow...

My goal in making these costumes is to mimic the shimmering and multifaceted effect of feathers through layering fabric textures. Each bird is distinct in their character and coloring, and their vibrancy is the focal point. In contrast, the skull mask paired with the costume evokes the symbol of extinction. Once the mask is worn, the bird is lost to time.

Originally from Los Angeles, Jess Rassp is a Theatre Artist whose background in painting and sculpture fuel her work in puppetry, scenery, props, and costume design. She is a freelance designer, scenic artist, and performer in the Baltimore area. She is currently the Technical Director for Cohesion Theatre Company. You may see Jess scrambling around Charm City designing for Single Carrot Theatre (*Savage/Love*, *Midlife*, *Year of the Rooster*), Cohesion Theatre Company (*Sally McCoy*, *Men on Boats*, *Schoolgirl Figure*), and Chesapeake Shakespeare Company (*Othello*). Jess received her B.A. in English Literature and minor in Theatre Arts from Brandeis University in Boston. Jess also recently studied with Dell'Arte International School of Physical Theatre in Bali, Indonesia learning traditional dance and wooden mask carving. Next, she will be performing as a puppeteer in Submersive Productions' remount of the devised work H.T. Darling's *Incredible Musaeum* opening November 17th, 2017.

Jessica Rasp  
*Extinction Ritual*, 2017  
Performance

# JIEYU ZHANG

Dead animals attract me because of the power of death to affect people so deeply. An example might be animal conservation—only when one kind of animal becomes extinct do people become concerned that we really need to protect animals. Death is also a result, a conclusion of diseases, pollutions, and disasters. People will sometimes ignore or overlook polluting, but when a result is a great number of deaths, they can often regret their ignorance, or be sad or remorseful. In many ways, it is a struggle of moral obligation, and this word “struggling” is appropriate to describe my work. Struggling is searching for hope and struggling is fighting against with death.

Many birds are facing the decline in population, at least 12% of the birds are threatened with extinction. In China, massive capture already caused several species going to extinct. The reason behind is simply an absurd reason that wild birds taste more delicious and good for health. In North America, a huge number of birds are dying because of crashing into windows, cars, etc. It seems like the story of passenger pigeons has been forgotten. As an illustrator, I urgently feel there is something I could do to help these birds. As a tool of information, Illustration can bring the plight of these birds to people’s attention and create a lasting awareness to the important place they hold in our entire ecosystem.

Jieyu Zhang was born in Shanghai, China in 1992. She recently received her MFA degree from Maryland Institute College of Art, and now as an illustrator and painter, she lives in Reading, PA area. Jieyu has always been fascinated by the natural world and love to draw from observation. She uses watercolour and mineral pigments and especially favoured silk as the painting surface.



Jieyu Zhang  
Paintings from *Bird Song*, 2017

# JONATHAN LATIANO

The planet's sixth mass extinction is on the horizon. Like extinction, this single-occupant installation provides a sensory experience that is both unnerving and ominous in its isolating qualities. Utilizing sound, wind, and darkness, this piece is a departure from much of my previous work. Rather than a physical sculpted structure, it exists primarily within the viewers' own mind and senses.

Jonathan Latiano (born 1982) received his BA in Studio Art from Moravian College in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania in 2006 and his Masters in Fine Art from the Maryland Institute College of Art in 2012. Jonathan has exhibited in numerous solo and group public art exhibitions in cities including New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Washington DC and London England and his work has been featured in local, national and international art publications. In 2013, Jonathan won the Mary Sawyers Baker Prize in Art which led to his first museum exhibition at the Baltimore Museum of Art in 2014.

Jonathan currently resides and works in Baltimore, Maryland and teaches at the Maryland Institute College of Art and the Corcoran College of the Arts and Design at George Washington University.



Jonathan Latiano  
*Do Not Go Gentle into That Good Night*, 2017

# KRISTA CABALLERO + FRANK EKEBERG

*Birding the Future* is an interdisciplinary project that explores current extinction rates by specifically focusing on the warning abilities of birds as indicators of environmental health. The installation invites visitors to listen to endangered and extinct bird calls and to view visionary avian landscapes through a set of stereoscopic cards. This ongoing project explores how declining bird populations signal profound changes over our entire planet.

Calls of endangered birds particular to the region installed are extracted to create Morse code messages and combined with unmodified calls of extinct birds. Over the duration of the exhibition the bird calls are computer manipulated in real-time to project the rate of extinction for the end of the century by decreasing the density and diversity of bird calls. A series of stereoscopic cards offer a loose narration through the soundscape. Similar to the function of technology in the soundscape, the stereoscope becomes the visual tool to see what is now extinct. Textual and visual analysis including poetry, data and composite photographs map and connect regional issues with a global perspective.

Krista Caballero and Frank Ekeberg started collaborating on *Birding the Future* in 2013. The project has been exhibited across the United States as well as internationally in exhibitions, festivals and conferences such as the International Symposium on Electronic Art (ISEA), Dubai; Balance-Unbalance International Conference, Australia; the North American Ornithological Conference; Turf and Terrain, Foggy Bottom Outdoor Sculpture Biennial, Washington D.C; and Futurescapes Symposium, Norway. To date there are five series of the project, highlighting regional specificities while simultaneously mapping global commonalities. Caballero and Ekeberg were recently selected as 2017 Smithsonian Artist Research Fellows to work with the National Museum of Natural History researching the cultural implications of bird species decline.



Krista Caballero and Frank Ekeberg  
*The Crowned Hoopoe*, detail from the series *Arabian Peninsula*, 2014

# LAURE DROGOUL

Laure Drogoul is a cobbler of situations, olfactory spelunker, worm charmer, maker of things, performer and conceptualist living and working on planet earth in Baltimore, Maryland. Laure's works are created with a combination of media and theatricality that explore sonic, cultural and environmental phenomena. Her performative objects, structures and events invite the viewer to be a participant as a way to gain experiential and kinetic understanding. She is actively engaged in developing strategies that emphasize people's relationships to each other and other living things and in fostering a deeper understanding of the natural environment and our shared world.

Laure Drogoul has exhibited and performed internationally and nationally, including The International House of Japan in Tokyo, Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington Project for the Arts, Baltimore Museum of Art, PS122 and The Center for Architecture in New York as well as many street corners, vacant lots, alleys and underutilized urban spaces. She has received Maryland State Artist Awards and a Franklin Furnace Award for performance art and has been a recipient of a US/Japan Creative Artist Fellowship. In 2006 Ms. Drogoul was honored with The Janet and Walter Sondheim Prize.

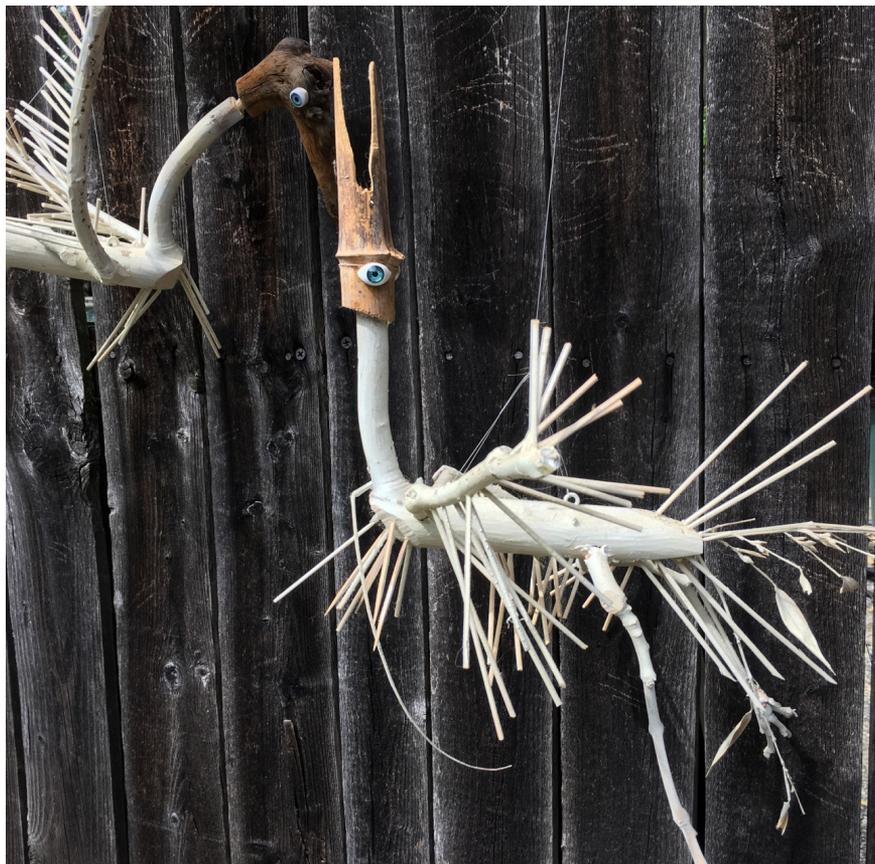


Laure Drogoul  
*friend of friends of friends (Diceros bicornis longipes), 2017*

# LINDA FRANKLIN

Linda Campbell Franklin has tried to serve and save birds for 71 years. When she was five, she found a baby bird fallen from its nest and rescued it. She has a heated bird-bath in the winter. She blesses and buries the dead birds she finds on walks. In 2012, Franklin created an almost life-size heron skeleton that hung high from a tree branch in Leakin Park as part of Nature Art in the Park. Then, she made a video in which the lone heron skeleton finds a mate-- she created the two puppets you see here.

Linda Campbell Franklin is a visual artist and writer who is currently working on a graphic novel. She has written and illustrated many books, made videos, crocheted sculptures, crafted found wood sculptures, and more. Metaphorically, what she loves are stains, shadows, reflections, impressions, and fossils. She has lived in Baltimore for about 24 years.



Linda Franklin  
*They Believe: They Fly Upriver, 2017*

# LYNNE PARKS

Lynne's personal history is full of avians. Her dad often brought injured birds home to rehabilitate, her sister monitors populations through breeding studies and banding, and her mom noted references in literature and art. She bonds with her family through birding. She's learned to identify birds through appearance, behavior, and song. It's part curiosity about the natural world, part enchantment, and part therapy.

As a long-time birder, she especially likes to visit her local patches—parks, wildlife refuges, marshes, and more. She photo-documents her sightings. Her checklists are then uploaded to the online scientific database eBird. In her missing bird series, she removes the birds from these images creating a sense of absence. This conveys the loss she is witnessing in field observations. Bird populations are in decline.

With Lights Out Baltimore (LOB), she monitors downtown for building collisions. The strike victims she collects are stored in freezers until LOB has a seasonal inventory. The birds are then donated to the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History for research. Lynne drew thirteen of these specimens and created templates. With white paper cut-outs she reinforces the notion of ghosts.

Lynne Parks is a Baltimore artist and curator. She volunteers with the bird conservation and wildlife rescue organization Lights Out Baltimore. She has been advocating for birds through photography and multi-media works since 2009. She frequently gives talks that teach the eco-services birds provide as well as the threats they face. In workshops, she invites participants to create art, which she includes in her shows. She recently designed a bird-friendly window film that was applied to the Visitor Center at the Patuxent Wildlife Research Center. She has a B.A. from Hollins College, an Independent Major in Narrative Studies—Creative Writing, Film, and Theater with an additional honorary Theater degree. She is a recipient of the 2013 Mary Sawyers Baker Prize.

*Paper cut-out species: American Redstart, American Woodcock, Baltimore Oriole, Barn Swallow, Brown Creeper, Common Yellowthroat, Eastern Towhee, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Magnolia Warbler, Northern Flicker, Red-eyed Vireo, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, White-throated Sparrow.*



Lynne Parks  
*Loggerhead Shrike*, detail from *Missing Birds*, 2017

# MONIQUE LUCHETTI

There is a general belief that we are in a new epoch, the Anthropocene: a geological age that recognizes humanity's impact on the planet; there is no more nature that stands apart from human beings and the mass extinction in the plant and animal world appears inevitable. This is the melancholy backdrop for my current work.

My drawings start with birds in ornithology collections, where naturalists and scientists have collected, classified, and cataloged the world of birds. The drawings pose questions addressing the contradiction inherent in our race to learn about life on the planet even as we go about systematically destroying it, about what we remember and what we lose in the process.

In my research with the collections, the life of the birds that had once inhabited the study-skins (as the bird specimens are called) is gone, the study-skins are anonymous - except for the labels tied to their legs that specify their species, the date and place of their death, and the name of the person who collected them. I draw the birds as they are organized and cataloged in the drawers, on their backs with their wings closed and close to their bodies, usually with their heads thrown back and feet crossed in repose. First rendered in pencil and then I paint on/over the drawn bodies. The abstractions for me depict the concept of the soul, the individual life force that is so absent among the countless lifeless bodies in the drawers of the museums. The drawings are memorials, I tag them with a symbolic life I have imagined for them, a turn toward the consciousness and energy in all living things that extends beyond the physical body.

Monique Luchetti lives and works in Brooklyn NY. She has exhibited national and international, most recently at the Brattleboro Museum, Giertz Gallery and Denison Pequotsepos Nature Center in Connecticut. Luchetti has received numerous grants including the Pollock Krasner Foundation Grant, an Artists Space Grant and an Ohio Arts Council Individual Artists Grant. Her work has been reviewed in Art in America, The New York Times, and Zingmagazine and she has been an artist-in-resident at Yaddo in Saratoga Springs NY and Altos de Chavon in the Dominican Republic.



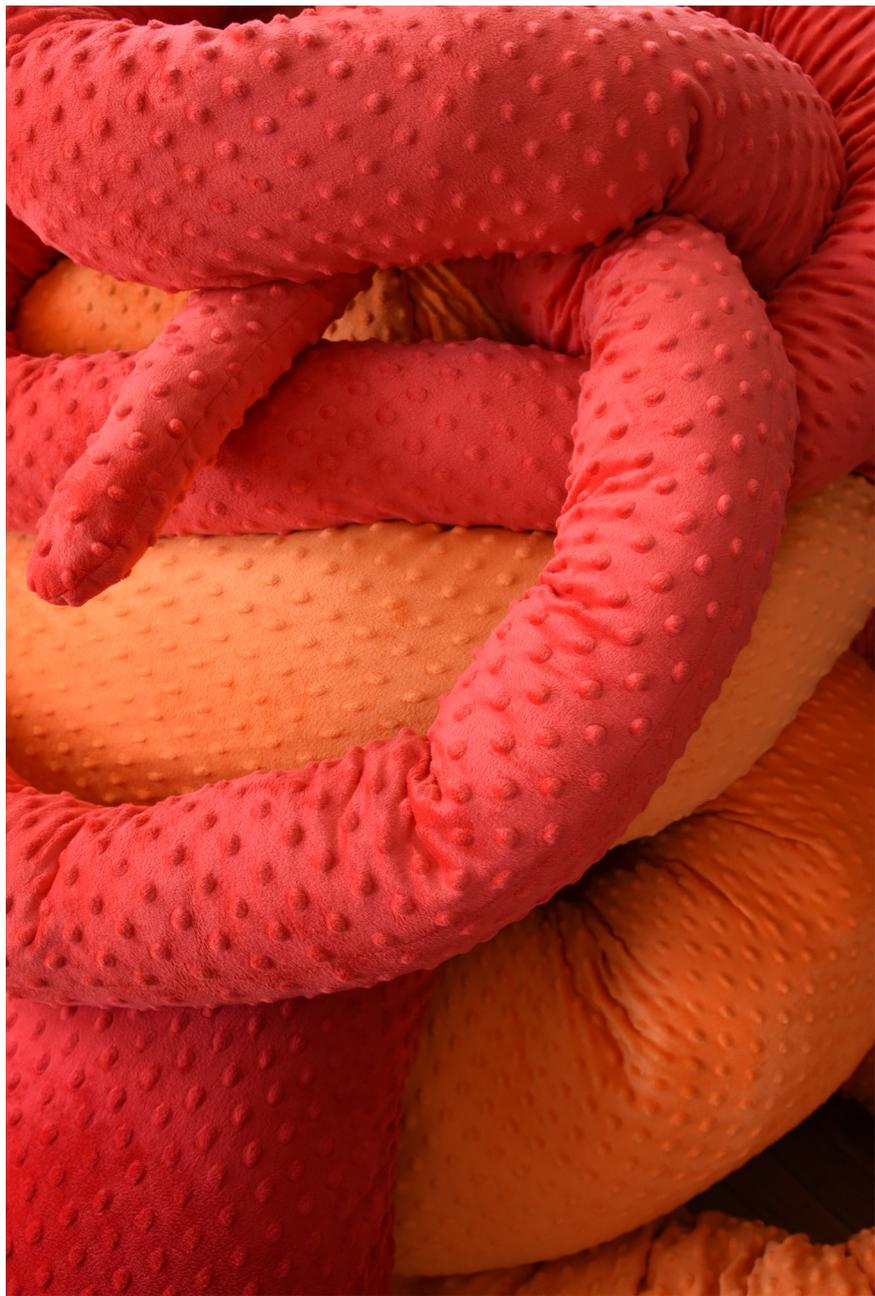
Copyright by Monique Luchetti  
Ivory-Billed Woodpecker  
Paint over Pencil on Paper, Museum  
April 11, 2015  
Colored by C.A. Barlow  
Travis, Texas, USA University

Monique Luchetti  
*Ivory-Billed Woodpecker*, 2015

# NICOLE SHIFLET

In *swallow and swallow*, I invite you to wrap yourself up in a larger-than-life bird intestine and pay homage to endangered species, all while gazing upon an array of postnatural landscapes.

Nicole Shiflet was born in Wisconsin, grew up in Georgia, and, as of the last fifteen years, calls Baltimore home. Her mediums of choice are drawing, painting, installation, and 2D animation. She has shown her work nationally and internationally. She fancies animals, the intersection of science and art, food, and organizing things. In her free time she works as a patent examiner.



Nicole Shiflet  
*swallow and swallow*, 2017

# SANDY ANDERSON

In *Extinction Ceremony*, I am imagining a world without birds, in which humans can only conjure them through rituals.

Sandy is an artist living in New Orleans.



Sandy Anderson  
*Extinction Ceremony*, 2015-2017

# SUSAN HUMPHREY

The natural world is an alluring thing of vibrance and quiet inspiration. A journey through the woods is a salve for the senses - insects and seed pods navigate the breeze, bird song refreshingly sweet to the ear, the earthy scent of last year's leaves in decay underfoot.

We have sculpted the wilderness to suit ourselves, but continue to find fault with wildlife - Birds nest on the side of houses, under overhangs, and in roof gutters where there once was forest. Foxes antagonize the neighborhood dogs as they hunt their native territory-turned-manicured yard. Bats and rodents end up inside attics and basements as they follow their instincts to roost and burrow.

I possess a deep well of empathy for those who cannot speak for themselves, and am saddened by the lack of regard some show for the species we displace. I use that sensitivity to form my thoughts and then translate them into glass, copper, and solder. I place focus on the purity and energy of each subject by employing simple lines while staying true to life in detail and form.

Humankind has been gifted with the ability to be mindful in planning for the future. We also have a clear responsibility to respect, protect, and accommodate the plants and animals who have always lived alongside us. I hope to use the innate grace and intensity of glass to capture attention and inspire reverence, curiosity, and action to preserve the subjects of my work.

Seeking to immortalize the beauty of nature with fluid, defined lines of solder and the depth, texture and luminescence of art glass, Susan (Sue) Humphrey is inspired by both the literal and figurative aspects of the natural world. She spent much of her childhood in New York on Lake George and Northern Pennsylvania woods climbing trees, hiking mountains and learning to love all of the wildlife living around her.

With two intensely creative Grandmothers, Sue learned how to knit, sew and sketch at a young age and has always felt unsettled with idle hands.

Sue earned her Bachelor's of Fine Arts in Industrial Design from Rochester Institute of Technology in 2002. After years of corporate employment, Sue left to find creative fulfillment and work with her hands to build a personally meaningful life. She desires to combine her affinity for the outdoors and her highly sensitive personality traits to design works which explore her passions and spark enthusiasm in others.

When she isn't breaking glass in her (Baltimore, Maryland) basement studio, Sue can be found knitting, reading, learning new crafting techniques, or hiking and birding locally.



Susan Humphrey  
*The Deadly Sins of the Carolina Parakeet: Gluttony, 2017*

# WILLIAM RHODES

William Rhodes is a sculptural artist trained in traditional woodworking and joinery with a fine arts background. Rhodes blends fine art, craft and design with meaning and function. His work explores themes of hidden knowledge, iconographic imagery and forms and how they can change meaning depending on the cultural context.

The catalyst for constant evolution in Rhodes' art has been his travels, including Africa, Asia and Central and South America. The people, art and cultures of these societies have challenged him to integrate non-Western approaches to sculpture, furniture and art. Explorations into the contrast between these traditional cultures and our modern one have also added depth to the narrative quality of his work.

The salient themes raised in *Birdland and the Anthropocene* of the unique interplay between birds and humans and the possible extinction of birds in our modern time have important parallels to the people of the African diaspora and their own declining numbers in many large American cities (e.g., San Francisco, Washington DC, New York City). Given the symbolism of birds in African-American culture, Rhodes chose to explore a comparison between a caged bird and a caged man in his piece, *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*. Instead of a bird, Rhodes places a portrait of his family member taken in the 1800's, yet with the word "GONE" in neon glass, in the cage. While the cage has no door or bottom floor, the cage continues to evoke feelings of confinement. The strong forces of urbanization, gentrification and exploitation place significant restrictions on the growth and viability of many "free" animals and people alike. In the modern era, how can we move forward to support these threatened groups?

Rhodes received a BA in Furniture Building and Design from the University of the Arts in Philadelphia and a MFA from the University of Massachusetts at Dartmouth. Rhodes' creative works are in the collections of various galleries and museums and featured in several major publications. Rhodes currently dedicates part of his time to art education, including a recent collaboration between schools in San Francisco and South Africa. Rhodes is the co-founder of a Black art collective in San Francisco. The 3.9 Art Collective was formed in 2011 in response to the declining Black population in San Francisco.



William Rhodes  
*I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings, 2017*

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