

JOCELYN PURDIE

Bird Life

Window Gallery

***Bird Life* (arrangement #1),
2022-ongoing
Birdsong embroideries on fabric,
heron nests, photograph**

**Cover image: Jocelyn Purdie, Blue Jay, 2022-23, 14"x10".*

For the last few years, I have been working on embroidery projects and photography that reflect my observations and research into animal and plant life. Specifically, communication strategies that are mobilized for survival as threats to habitat and ecosystems persist.

In *Bird Life*, I present a series of embroidered drawings inspired by the language of birds and a photograph of heron nests taken in a local conservation area. The embroideries are a visual interpretation of the birdsong produced by a selection of birds that can be found in Kingston and the surrounding region. They are based on birdsong spectrograms, audio recordings where instead of notes, the songs are displayed as continuous lines based on their frequency at a given time. Used to identify birds by visualizing their songs, they help us to understand

the complexity and rhythm of their communication patterns. Each bird 'note' is represented by the different patterns in the spectrogram. The richness of this language becomes apparent through the diversity of songs associated with each bird in the species.

This project is a continuation of my ongoing interest in nature but like most people has also been shaped by personal life challenges brought on by the pandemic. As life events interrupted the flow of pre-pandemic life, the study of birds presented a path outward and forward, creating a space for new perspectives and understanding and an abundance of joy. I would like to thank Gord McRae and Judie Purdie-Elliott and of course the staff at Modern Fuel for their assistance with the exhibition.

Jocelyn Purdie (she/her) is a Kingston-based artist and curator. She has exhibited in solo, and group shows locally and extra-regionally since the mid-1980s. Recent exhibitions include Next Door, SPAF Public Art Project, Kingston, the Agnes Jamieson Gallery, Minden, ON, Modern Fuel Artist Run Centre, the Verb Gallery, and the

Agnes Etherington Art Centre in Kingston, ON. She has received support through the Ontario Arts Council and her work is in several private collections. She completed her MA at Queen's University, focusing on contemporary art practices in public spaces. She is the curator of the Swamp Ward Window Project, an alternative venue for contemporary art in the community, and has curated and exhibited in several other public art projects. Over the years she has been active on the Board of Directors of the Modern Fuel Artist Run Centre, the Arts Advisory Committee and the Public Art Working Group of the City of Kingston and is the former director of the Union Gallery at Queen's University.

Artist Statement

My art practice includes sculpture, photography, and installation and reflects my interest in exploring the relationship between the human world and the natural world and how this can be imagined within that context. I use a range of materials including concrete, wool, thread, pins, plastic resin, found and prefabricated objects, often in combination with each other.

The more I work within this framework, the more I find myself drawn into the science of the natural world, and the ecological connections that exist within, particularly the fragility of our ecosystems and the modes of communication; auditory, visual,

chemical, and tactile that are used to enhance survival and diversity in an ever-challenging time.

I am currently working on several different yet related embroidery projects that further reflect these interests. Specifically, communication strategies that plants and animals mobilize for survival as the impact on their habitat and ecosystems remain an ongoing threat.

Bird Guide

From left to right:

Upland sandpiper

Northern Cardinal (male & female duet)

Song Sparrow

American Goldfinch

Eastern Wood Pewee

Eastern Towhee

Eastern Winter Wren

Black Capped Chickadee

Blue Jay

Eastern Kingbird

Purple Finch