

BIRD SHIFT

The New Birds of Long Island:
Recollect:
“I couldn’t stop... the sky from falling”

outside:

Homage to the Osprey:

BRIAN D. COLLIER
LIANNE EDWARDS
HOPE SANDROW

TONITO VALDERRAMA

July 24 – August 22, 2010
Reception: July 24 5-7 PM
at

art sites

651 W. Main Street, Riverhead, NY 11901 T 631 591 2401 www.artsitesgallery.com



1) Brian D. Collier, Quaker Parrot 2) Lianne Edwards, Precarious Perches, 2010 3) Hope Sandrow, October 17, 2008 Eustorgio Jr. with Shinnecock

This exhibition at Art Sites Gallery in Riverhead (July 24-August 22) brings together independent works of four eco-artists. These distinct exhibits explore our culture, its impact on nature, and nature’s resilience, through birds.

Brian D. Collier: The New Birds of Long Island

“The New Birds of Long Island” is a part of “Bird Shift: The Anthropogenic Ornithology of North America,” a series of drawings and maps which examines native birds that have become extinct or locally extirpated and non-native birds that have been introduced through human influence, thus changing our understanding of the term, “North American Birds”. The video “Teach the Starlings” and project “The New Parrots of North America,” not only investigate two North American bird histories that have been heavily influenced by human activities, but introduce Collier’s own interventions into nature’s course. Brian D. Collier is an artist, educator and re-naturalist. He has exhibited widely in the U.S. and abroad with reviews in *Art in America*, *The New York Times*, *Afterimage*, *Orion: Nature, Culture, Place, Domus*, and *Art Papers Magazine*. He is the founder and President of The Society for a Re-Natural Environment. He earned his MFA from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Lianne Edwards: Recollect

"We are the collectors and have made nature our collection. We reproduce images of our unique native creatures on stamps and other objects and handle them on a daily basis, but do we notice? The reproductions are endless. The sad irony is the real populations are not and if they cease will we then recollect them?" L. E.

Lianne Edwards takes us to New Zealand with her delicate webs formed from cancelled stamps, mostly of birds. Fine-art abstraction, social commentary and science merge in her compositions that entice viewers to see abstract pattern and shadows, as well as detailed references to contemporary values. Edwards started her career in the natural sciences, with a degree in Zoology and Cell Biology, before turning to art twenty-two years later. She is the winner of the Development Award of Wallace Art Trust, which included a residency at the Vermont Studio Center, where she studied with Lillian Ball.

Hope Sandrow: "I couldn't stop... the sky from falling

"...the problem about the egg and the hen, which of them came first, was dragged into our talk, a difficult problem which gives investigators much trouble. And Sulla my comrade said that with a small problem, as with a tool, we were rocking loose a great and heavy one, that of the creation of the world. " Plutarch, *Table Talk, Moralia* 120 AD

For Hope Sandrow it was the cockerel, who crossed her path while walking in a setting once painted by William Merritt Chase. The influence has been mutual since he made a home in her open air studio four years ago. Sandrow's work has investigated issues from behavioral science to environmental influences, from process to cultural contexts. This installation is selected from the study *The Sky is Falling* that documents the life and times of the white cockerel, now a rooster named Shinnecock and his family flock, who are members of an ancient breed of Paduan Fowls. Once celebrated as great egg layers, they are now categorized "strictly for ornamental use" by farmers favoring chickens genetically bred for maximum food production. And, because consumers prefer non-fertilized eggs, Cocks are merely considered a nuisance destined for the pot. However not long ago in Manhattan and Long Island, chickens lived in trees and roamed free alongside Native Americans, amidst bears, fox and deer. Sandrow and her work have been the subject of two recent New York Times articles: "An Artist Feathering Her Nest" by Penelope

Green http://www.nytimes.com/2009/07/16/garden/16chickens.html?_r=1; "Fowl but Photogenic" by Nicole Bengiveno <http://lens.blogs.nytimes.com/2009/11/10/assignment-12/?hp>. Her works establish a discourse around notions of nature, culture, art, identity, science and myth. A related installation is currently on view at Longhouse Reserve in Easthampton. Sandrow's work is included in public collections such as the Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Museum of Modern Art, and the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York City and Corcoran Gallery of Art in DC. Sandrow has been the recipient of awards, including two National Endowment for the Arts Fellowships: Artmatters Fellowship; Skowhegan Governors Award.

Tonito Valderrama: Homage to the Osprey

Tonito Valderrama, a sculptor and educator, deals with environmental subject matter. His Homage to the Osprey is part of "The Nests across Long Island," which are site specific creations of oversized nests built with students. They are about a change of perspective, as Valderrama fosters a sense of interconnectedness with nature instead of detachment. He seeks to increase awareness in children of environmental problems, so that future generations can witness the joys of nature firsthand. Tonito Valderrama, of Taino ancestry, studied at C.W. Post and taught at the Hillwood Art Museum. He has been a recipient of an Environmental Artist Grant from the Huntington Arts Council. His sculptures have appeared in a wide range of settings, including a hospital, beach, and Japanese garden.