

“Bird Drawings”

Roger Munch

Somewhere along the line, I started to draw dead birds that I came across---birds dead because of our impact on the Natural World. I gathered dead birds: Hit by cars, illegally shot by hunters, poisoned by farmers trying to get rid of “nuisance” pigeons, by feeding them rat poison; birds who had flown into windows of houses and high-rise corporate buildings (Just window hits alone are responsible for the deaths of over a Billion birds a year in the USA alone.)

Every bird in every drawing you see here has been a victim of one of these events.

Unfortunately, through my lifetime I have witnessed the precipitous decline of many species, especially of Neo-tropical birds, due to other causes as well, such as: the elimination of habitats, fragmentation of lands, proliferation of introduced species etc.

Birds have mystified and amazed me since my earliest childhood days; they have weaved their way into the very core of my being.

I am always in awe about their beauty, their myriad forms, their adaptations, and their impossible journeys. I am in awe about their beauty of flight and of their seamless interdependent niche in the world at large.

Birds and their freedom of flight therefore have been an influencing thread in my poetry and art. Indeed, I am indebted to birds for their being a gifting that inspires deeply felt spiritual stirrings, meaning, and aspirations in my life.

Time spent observing these dead birds in great detail has been a profound experience for me. I have not only learned a lot more about birds that I already knew well in the wild, but my admiration for their beauty as beings deepened as well; there arose a heightened sense of awareness and appreciation of the living and conversely, these dead birds became objects of an absence as well.

I consider these drawings to be not my most creative and inventive artistic productions, rather, the act of this kind of intensive observational drawing becomes a deeply meditative experience for me; a reverent pause.

Some of the birds are drawn in black and white and are placed in the center of a blank page to emphasize the starkness of their state and to not distract from their beauty. The birds drawn in color are positioned two thirds of the way down, at a diagonal, on a large blank paper... as if only moments ago they were alive, but now are caught falling through space in their final, but lifeless, flight.

There is a beauty here

There is a sadness

There is the hope that mankind will very soon realize a huge paradigm shift that will lead to a radical change in the way we live on our Planet Earth... respectful of our holy inheritance.

Birds are only one of the many "Canaries in the coal mine" that are warning us of the careless and destructive impact we are having on our (And their!) Home.