

For Immediate Release

Rare Birds

Rare Birds at Luise Ross Gallery presents work by thirty-one contemporary artists in which bird imagery or references are integral elements. The exhibition is replete with a stunning variety of media, styles and treatments. It is of "rare" birds in the sense that our feathered friends play supporting roles—to a greater or lesser degree--in the artists' overall creative intentions and are not, nor meant to be, lifelike reproductions of species à la Audubon. In fact, some are pure invention. Even among apparent exceptions to this, as in Walter Anderson's faithful watercolor rendering of "Baby Birds," the viewer sees the importunate vulnerability of all fledglings—of any species. In Roger Ricco's photographic capture of a hummingbird in flight, we not only hear whirring wings, but feel the racing heartbeat of life. And surely, Toc Fetch's pencil crow is artfully "real," and for that, only more complementary to what "Crow Says." Humor abounds. Gladys Nilsson pays off her expert watercolor caricature of two self-important matrons with equally puffed-up pigeons. TL Solien's divining dodo, complete with strap-on wings, satirically portends the götterdämmerung of the Pequod's voyage. Victor Faccinto's very modern digital assemblage of a contemporary "Shiva" includes the almost casual presence of two songbirds out of the classic South Asian miniature genre, wryly confirming that the battle of the sexes is an age-old tale. Several artists tellingly employ bird imagery that is more enigmatic, even ominous, in its allegorical reference. Ferdinand Pleines's "Memory Unravels the Truth" is almost Hitchcockian and it rivets the eye. A brace of pheasants, suddenly flushed into flight in a stark, wintry Kansas landscape, serve as a mnemonic for Doug Martin's "Brain Storm"—a poignant, dreamlike, beautifully painted narrative of a past Christmas memory. Rare birds, indeed.

Participating Artists

Walter Anderson	Victor Faccinto	Doug Martin	Frank Rivera
Willie Birch	Lawrence Fane	Willie Massey	Samuel Rothbort
Thomas Burleson	Toc Fetch	Justin McCarthy	Raymond Saunders
Tricia Cline	Gail Gregg	Louis Monza	TL Solien
Johnny Culver	James Harrison	Gladys Nilsson	Sabyna Sterrett
John Dilg	John Himmelfarb	Ferdinand Pleines	Bill Traylor
John Evans	Michael Madore	Jeroen Pomp	Carlo Zinelli
Minnie Evans	China Marks	Roger Ricco	

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Exhibition Title: *Rare Birds*
Dates: 5 June – 27 July 2007