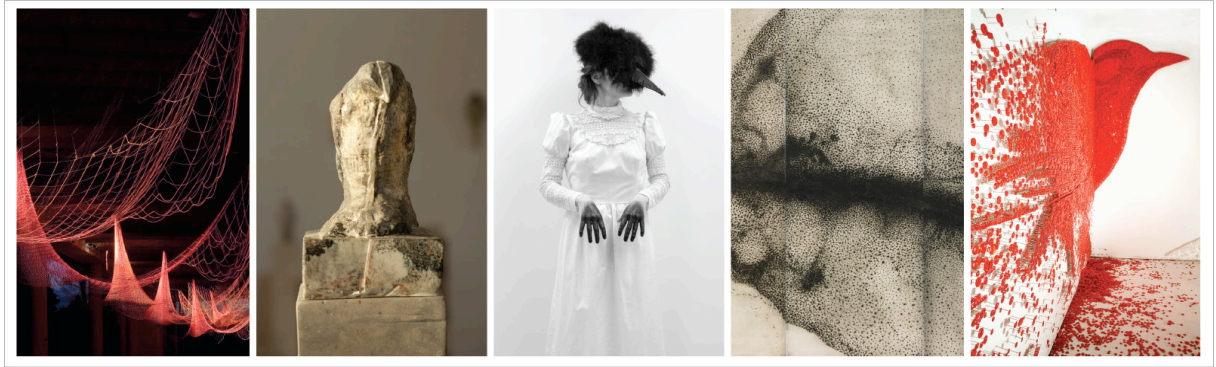


CYNTHIA-REEVES PROJECTS



CONFERENCE OF THE BIRDS

MAY 3 - JULY 31, 2012
On view at Mana Contemporary

CYNTHIA-REEVES Projects presents a curated exhibition entitled, “*Conference of the Birds*” on view at Mana Contemporary located at 888 Newark Avenue in Jersey City, NJ (Manafinearts.com), opening on May 3rd with a reception open to the public. The exhibition, which features artworks by thirty artists from around the world, explores our collective relationship to birdlife and the ramifications on their habitat and ours. Shuttle buses to Mana Contemporary will run from Milk Studios at 450 West 15th Street in Manhattan during the opening reception.

The title “*Conference of the Birds*” is taken from a Sufi text of the same name written in 1177. It is a parable about striving toward enlightenment: each bird in the story represents a failing of character that prevents him from persevering toward that goal, and one by one they fall away, never attaining an understanding of Selflessness and the true nature of God.

Eight centuries later, the birds are a metaphor on a different order, that of the earthly realm: their message is about our species’ relationship to our habitat, and by extension, the habitat of all living creatures.

Birds are the only complex species on the planet that inhabit the three realms: air, water and earth. They are, quite literally, the canary in the coalmine. In every instance, the birds are communicating by their numbers how successful we are in preserving habitat for all species, including our own. Where their numbers diminish, so do our opportunities for a successfully integrated environment where all species can thrive.

Birds often migrate hundreds, even thousands, of miles each year to nest. Below them, as they fly, we continue the headlong rush of our day-to-day life, spreading our species’ influence in ever-widening swaths of *our* habitat. Ours is a relatively new order of land use that has grown exponentially in the past 150 years, one that is most often hostile to birdlife.

“Conference of the Birds” is a meditation on our relationship to birdlife, as a further parable about our capacity to awaken, to gain the awareness needed to embrace our collective role as stewards of the earth. In the original poems, there are a small number of birds that do make it to the Valley of Enlightenment. When they arrive, they find only a lake – in which they see their own reflection.

“Conference of the Birds” is open Monday – Friday 9am – 5pm, or by appointment at Mana Contemporary, 888 Newark Avenue, Jersey City, NJ. Gallery personnel to be on site Fridays 11am - 4pm, weekly. To schedule an appointment, please contact Cynthia-Reeves at 212 714 0044 or email info@cynthia-reeves.com. The shuttle buses are available every 30 minutes from Milk Studios (450 West 15th Street, NY, NY) to Mana Contemporary during the opening reception. Subway directions to Mana Contemporary are available online, for use during the remainder of the exhibition (<http://www.manafinearts.com/directions/>).

As a way of expanding the gallery model, CYNTHIA-REEVES Projects has initiated a number of innovative, off-site projects, curating significant exhibitions that focus on specific and timely issues and/or artists’ works. *“Conference of the Birds”* is the third such effort, following the vanguard exhibition, *H2O: Film on Water*, and *Fabrications*, both of which were sited in a museum-scale 20,000 square foot facility in New England.

###

For more information, please call 212.714.0044
or visit our online gallery at CYNTHIA-REEVES.COM or
www.conferenceofthebirds.org