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My artwork for nearly the past ten years has been largely environmentally driven and is focused on how past species, rituals, and objects can shape our environmental future. Many of my recent projects specifically look at sentinel species—or plants and animals that are among the first in an environment to show the effects of climate change and can be used to gauge the overall health of an ecosystem.

I'm based in NYC where we experienced some major climate extremes this past summer. In June, the sky darkened to a dark rust-orange from the intense wildfires in Canada and we had to cope with the recorded worst air pollution in the world. Then in September, we experienced record flooding and a near shutdown of the subway system from heavy rains. Along the east coast, it's getting hotter and wetter and weather events are becoming more extreme. I was interested in traveling to an area of the American landscape that is experiencing the opposite—much of the west is experiencing drought,

Rewilding the Prairie at Franconia Sculpture Park, Performance still with ceramic rhyton vessel, 2022



Bird, ink, spray paint, and mica pigments on paper, 15 x 11 in, 2023

the nearby Salt Lake is drying up, and many areas are running out of water.

When I arrived at Montello, I was immediately surprised at the quietness of the landscape. Sometimes the loudest noises would be my feet brushing against the dry fall sagebrush or the sounds of a raven's wings flapping overhead. I organized my studio time between many walks and soon discovered the rhythms of activity tied to the extreme jumps in temperature in the desert. Some early mornings, I would see short-eared owls flying low across the open plain headed back to roost. As the sun rose, songbirds or kestrels could be heard hunting outside the cabin. In the afternoon heat, the smells of sagebrush would perfume my walks and as the desert got cooler by sunset, I would see plump Jerusalem crickets emerging from their burrows. At night the stars were phenomenal and sometimes I would hear coyotes.

Being in such a quiet remote area was great for my work. I used the wind twisted branches of the local Juniper trees as a reference for imagining the inner skeletal structure in a series of drawings of wading bird's feet. I made two or three ink drawings per day, worked on finishing some small bronze pieces, read several books, and expanded a lot of sculptural ideas through writing. I look forward to seeing how this beautiful experience will continue to shape my work.