



*Creativity on the Fly*  
*Reflections of the Natural World*



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# *About Creativity on the Fly*

A collaborative partnership between Ironwood Tree Experience and the Sonoran Joint Venture brought birding, nature walks, art, and experiential learning programs to youth across Tucson, AZ. The first inaugural *Creativity on the Fly* exhibition invited students to paint, write, and draw about their experiences in the Youth Outdoors Program. With a focus on the connections between humans and birds, the themes of *Creativity on the Fly* centered around migration and immigration, nests and homes, and kinship and community.

Events culminated with the *Creativity on the Fly* gallery showcase held at the Historic Y building on May 13, 2022. It was a celebration of shared connections, personal reflections from the program, as well as insights from students own lived experiences. Please enjoy these special works of art.



*Artist statement: "For me, painting is a lot about presence and acceptance. I often remind myself to be present and accept my art for what it is rather than how I judge it to be. I also believe that we can learn a lot from nature and how well it demonstrates these traits. When I saw a picture of this quail, I felt the content appreciation of its beautiful environment and I hope to have conveyed its nature in this piece."*

**By Josh Heath**

Artist statement: *"This drawing is of any empty nest on a tree branch.*

*The reason why I made this to go with the theme of migration is because most people like myself migrate somewhere else and their home/nest where they grew up and made memories to go to a "better" nest. Then, they get lost in the path and have no way of going back to the original place where you remember your memories from. So I think that an empty nest is a great representation of what migrating means to me in a way."*

By Jay Cruz





Artist statement: *"This piece is of my late father and brother when he was an infant. It was originally a silhouette photo taken in Mexico before my family immigrated to the U.S. My father loved the desert and dedicated his life to our home and our family."*

By Angela Marcos





*Artist statement: "My artwork shows the relationship between the three birds. As you can see in the artwork there is three birds and the blacked out or faded bird represents what those birds reactions would be to a third bird, as the bird is either killed or fought for dominance."*

**By Michaelle Vega**



Artist statement: *"Drawing is about the outcome and how you never give up on it. The masterpiece is not how it looks but what you want it to represent and what it really means to you. A drawing is also a type of inspiration that gives hope and courage. My drawing represents effort, hope and strength. The eagle explores migration through groups going to twenty to thirty miles."*

By Anthonello Mendoza-Viella





*Artist statement: "I drew this picture because I enjoy watching these multicolored birds at Sweetwater Wetlands and other ponds in Tucson. They are very entertaining because of their surprising behaviors like fluffing up their feathers, mating, and chasing their mates, and nesting in cavities of dead trees. Their habitat is threatened by lack of open water, lack of adequate vegetation, pesticide use, and sometimes they are still hunted by humans. We need to continue to provide safe spaces for these animals to live in our community."*

**By Jasper Konrad**



*Artist Statement: "My piece of art falls under the theme of nest and home. My "art" shows a drawing of the birds, plants and the environment being covered up by my building, cars, and other harmful things destroying our home."*

**By Julia Tzul-Ortiz**



Artist statement: "I live in the city, so I am around city birds like pigeons a lot. I recently learned that pigeons evolved alongside humans from our early days as cavemen all the way up until now. I wonder what the pigeons think of our rapid progression in technology, and how they view our world from a different perspective. The buildings in this drawing are warped because I wanted to show that our outlook on life is not the only one."

By Anand Karra



# The Hummingbird

## Hummingbird

Who flies as silent as the wind

Whos wings travel from flower to flower

Drinking the nectar and spreading pollen

It is the hummingbird who basks in the sun, a morning shower

Its feathers as colorful as the rainbow in the sky

A beauty so intense, it catches the eye

The sheins of the longing summer light

Reflecting-oh so-brilliant so bright

It is the hummingbird that hides in the trees

Small enough for the eye to barely see

Their figure so fragile

Their wings so agile

A heart that beats one hundred times a second

That is the Hummingbird

*Artist statement: "To me Poetry is another language but at the same time it's not hard to make because you can do it in every language you speak. Poetry has another way of expressing your thoughts and feelings. In this poem I describe how the hummingbird is a majestic and unique bird."*

**By Jesús Mendoza-Villela**



# Memory

The air is thick and heavy

There is a breeze from a fan and also from outside

It's moving the sheets just a little

The bodies of my mom and aunts and female cousins stir in  
the giant bed

I am the only one who actually wakes all the way up out of  
fog of heat

I crawl out from under the wet sheets

careful not to wake anyone and gently step on the floor.

Even the floor is warm here and offers no relief from this  
heat

I can hear my grandfather talking to my great uncle as they  
fix cars drinking colas to stay cool

the birds never stop singing or maybe a better word talking  
back and forth

Macaos macoyando en el patyo

Chismiando como tías

Even in this desert

My casita

In a cold winter my heart longs for my other home.



Artist statement: "In the poem, I talk about how birds talk to each other and they're macoyando (having a conversation). Bird calls are a way of talking to one another like people do. It's how they communicate like how we communicate with one another. I've always thought bird calls are some of the most beautiful sounds. And when we learn how to listen to one another, to the world around us, we can make more space for the people, the places, life, the birds. It's not just about birds, it's about my tías, my family and finding the sound and finding my family through sound. Finding a memory through sound."

By Alegría Gray



## Birds Eye View

I look out my window a lot  
My mind tied up in a knot  
Gazing at the olive green trees,  
With all of their shifting green leaves,  
Hearing the morning doves coo,  
Seeing the sparrow's bronze hue  
I wonder about these birds I view  
What's life like from a bird's eye view?  
From the barn owl's outlook  
A nest in a dark, cramped nook  
From the hawk's flying stance,  
So high up the skyscrapers are ants  
From the lowly pigeon's perspective  
Dirty cities, little crumbs for breakfast  
Brilliant hummingbirds drinking flower's nectar  
Stygian ravens wailing like flying specters  
Towering herons wading in sapphire rivers  
Swans so beautiful they give you shivers  
All of these things from the bird's eye view  
Something they'll naught share with me and you  
The very best that I can do  
Is appreciate these birds I view

Artist statement: *"Birds are quite strange and beautiful creatures, who often share oddly similar traits and behaviors to humans. I sometimes relate to birds, and wonder what their lives would be like. My poem is about life from a bird's perspective, and the diversity and range of different birds and their habitats. Birds, just like humans, come in all different shapes and sizes, and live in different places all over the world."*

By Anand Karra

Artist statement:





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