

Antonia Munroe

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Rare Bird Paintings 2015

Antonia Munroe's Rare Bird Paintings are directly inspired by the English naturalist, Mark Catesby (1683-1749) and the Indian artist Ustad Mansur (flourished 1590-1624).

Catesby, an explorer and scientist traveled extensively throughout the Carolinas and Virginia painting birds, plants and animals. His "Natural History of America" was the first published work illustrated in detailed watercolor and describing the birds of North America. Ustad Mansur was a court painter to the Mughal emperor Jahangir and it was under Jahangir's patronage that Mansur created many exquisite albums of bird, animal and flower studies.

In the winter of 2014 Munroe traveled to Jaipur, India to study the techniques of Indian miniature painting with artist Ajay Sharma. In keeping with the traditional process Munroe uses hand-ground pure pigment dispersions which are blended with a binder to create gouache, the original medium used by Ustad Mansur. While paintings of this period were always on heavy manuscript paper, Munroe paints on panels prepared with gesso and pigmented clay. Her avian subjects are embellished with flowers, vines and borders with repeating motifs, often in pure gold or silver pigment.

Mark Catesby's birds were observed and recorded as scientific research for a continent as yet unexplored. He declared that the "Birds of America excelled those of Europe in the beauty of their plumage but were much inferior to them in their melodious notes."

Ustad Mansur's birds were made as natural history subjects and he was bestowed by the emperor the title of 'Wonder of the Age.' While his birds were for the most part carefully depicted, at times Mansur strayed from the recording of history and created birds which were imaginary or entirely inaccurate!



*The Blue Grosbeak and Sweet Flowering Bay, 2015*  
pigment dispersion on panel, 8 x 6 in.



*A Pair of Common Mynas, green, 2015*  
pigment dispersion on panel, 8 x 6 in.



*The Siberian Crane*, 2015  
pigment dispersion on panel, 8 x 6 in.



*The Red Curlew*, 2015  
pigment dispersion on panel, 8 x 6 in.



*The Red Start and the Black Walnut, vermilion, 2015  
pigment dispersion on panel, 8 x 6 in.*



*The Painted Finch, the Blue Linnet and the Sweet Flowering Bay, 2015*  
pigment dispersion on panel, 8 x 6 in.

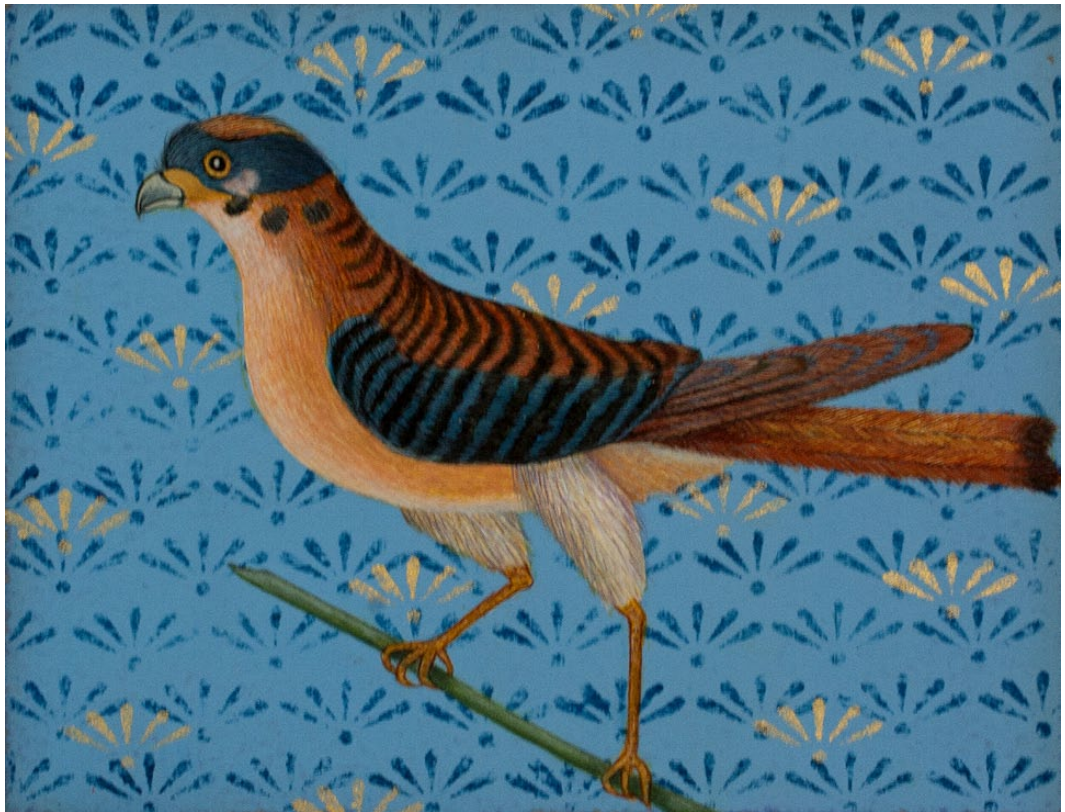




*The American Goldfinch and Acacia with Black Berries*, 2015  
pigment dispersion on panel, 8 x 6 in.



*A Red Bird*, 2015  
pigment dispersion on panel, 8 x 6 in.



*The Sparrow Hawk*, 2015  
pigment dispersion on panel, 6 x 8 in.



*A Pair of Common Mynas, vermilion, 2015  
pigment dispersion on panel, 8 x 6 in.*



*The Bluebird and smilax non spinosa*, 2015  
pigment dispersion on panel, 6 x 8 in.



*The Painted Finch and the Sweet Flowering Bay, 2015*  
pigment dispersion on panel, 6 x 8 in.



*The Summer Duck*, 2015  
pigment dispersion on panel, 6 x 8 in.



*The Great Hornbill*, 2015  
pigment dispersion on panel, 6 x 8 in.





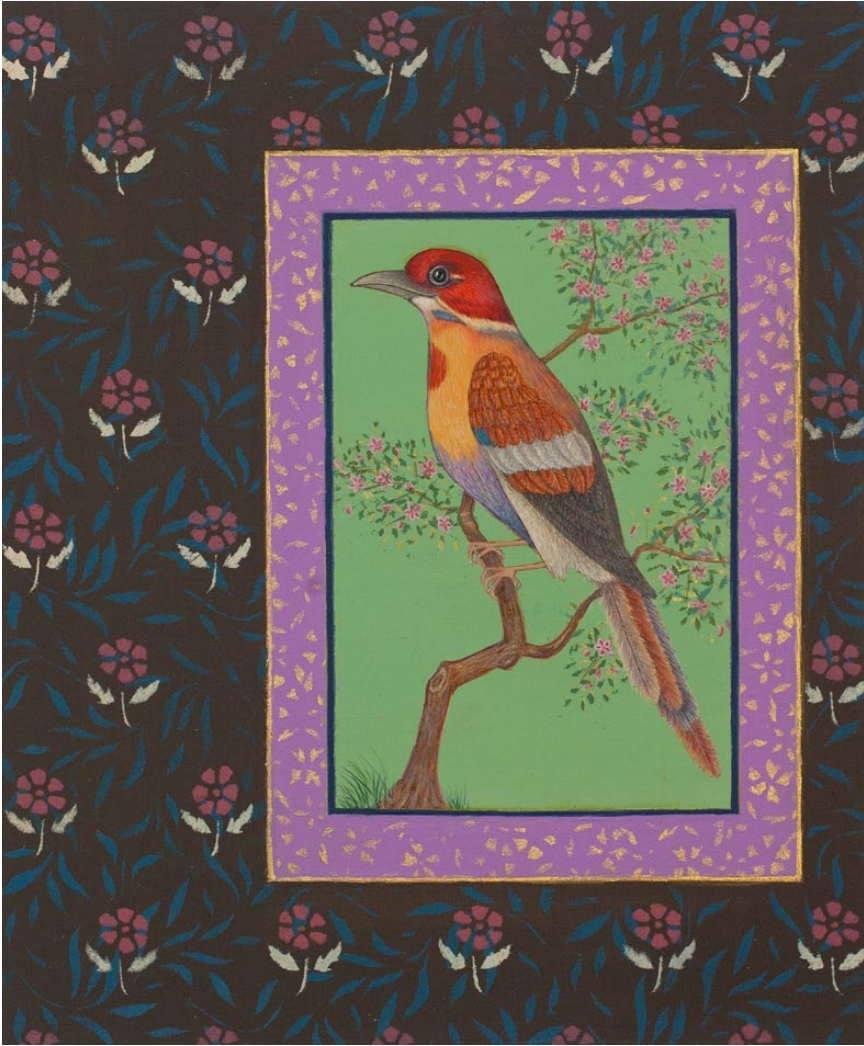
*The Cuckoo of Carolina and the Chinkapin*, 2015  
pigment dispersion on panel, 6 x 8 in.



*The Red Start and Black Walnut, chartreuse, 2015  
pigment dispersion on panel, 6 x 8 in.*



*A Nesting Hen*, 2015  
pigment dispersion on panel, 12 x 10 in.



*The Bee Eater*, 2015  
pigment dispersion on panel, 12 x 10 in.



*The American Goldfinch and Acacia, exotic border, 2015*  
pigment dispersion on panel, 12 x 10 in.



*An Imaginary Bird*, 2015  
pigment dispersion on panel, 16-1/2 x 12 in.

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