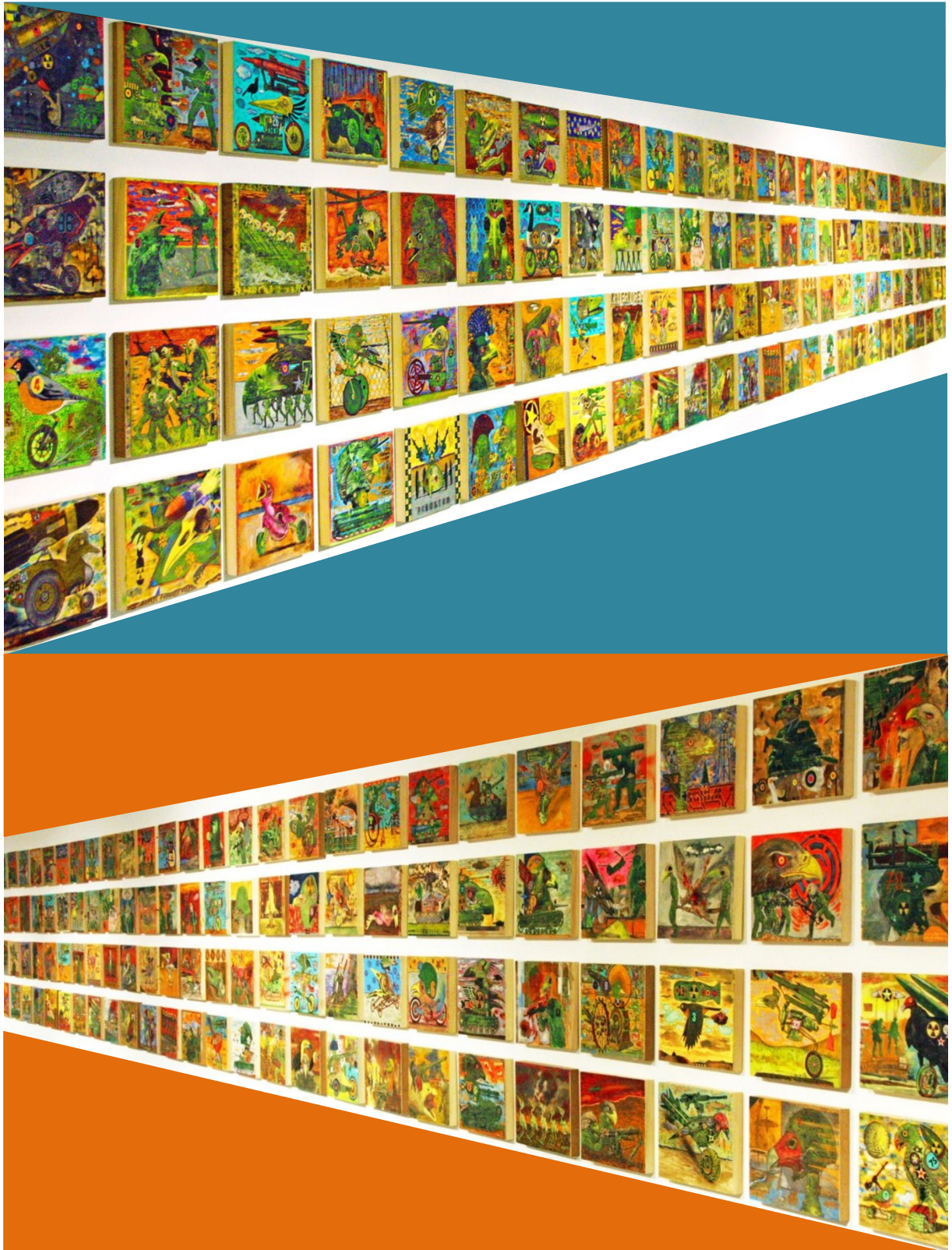


# FEATHERS AND FLAK

## The Inextricable Link Between Birds and War

Terry Graff



---

And what do the birds say? All there is to say about a massacre, things like "Poo-tee-weet?"  
— Kurt Vonnegut, *Slaughterhouse-Five*

---

**T**he relationship between birds and war is a richly intriguing dimension of avian mythology and symbology deeply embedded in military culture and extending back thousands of years in human history. Along with adoption of fierce birds of prey as symbols of imperial power by many of the world's great military empires, such as the myriad eagle



*Wingspan, 2016* ©Terry Graff

motifs incorporated into helmets, banners, flags and aquila standards, and the numerous bird monikers attached to fighter aircraft and combat weapons, is a vast range of bird-and-battlefield intersections that have contributed to both effective military strategies and the production of considerable ornithological knowledge.

For British military officers, it was standard practice to study, sketch and collect bird specimens as an important part of surveying, mapping and surveillance operations essential for acquiring geographical awareness for military campaigning, war and imperial domination. The Military Macaw, a species of parrot, received its name when military personnel imported the birds into Europe, and the word "sniper" was coined in the 1770s by British soldiers in India who hunted

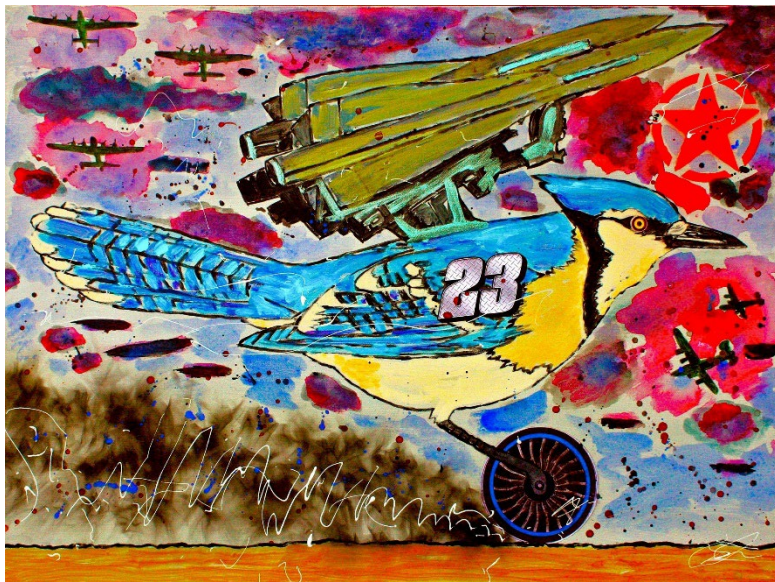


*Four Trojan Warbirds, 2018* ©Terry Graff

snipe as game. McCown's Longspur was named after its discoverer John P. McCown, a Major General in the Confederate States Army, while Williamson's Sapsucker was named after Robert Stockton Williamson, a Lieutenant Colonel in the Union Army.

Colonel Edgar Erskine Hume documented the biographies of thirty-six members of the United States Army Medical Corps who were also ornithologists, including Major Charles Bendire, author of *Life Histories of North American Birds* and discoverer of the Bendire's Thrasher. During World War II at Auschwitz, the German ornithologist Günther Niethammer, who served with the Nazi Waffen-SS and held the post of security at the main gate of the concentration camp, was given the special duty of studying bird life in the Auschwitz region. Niethammer wrote one of the most important handbooks on European birds and several subspecies of birds are named after him.

Today, the longstanding relationship between birds and the military continues through the Army Ornithological Society (AOS), an organization for members of the British Army, including ex-Army personnel, who have a special interest in birds and participate in birdwatching, assisting with overseas and UK-wide bird expeditions and surveys. Similarly, birdwatching and the study of military history are integrally linked in an annual "Birding the Battlefields" bird count at Civil War parks in the United States. Further, in 2015, Germany made the decision to turn more than sixty



*Bluejay, 2016* ©Terry Graff

former military bases into sanctuaries for rare species of birds and, in Alaska, the US Air Force has integrated protection of the peregrine falcon into its training program by designating their nests as surface-to-air missile sites, areas that pilots must avoid.

The avian world has long inspired various military tactics, including the use of deception with camouflage and decoys, which can be traced to the sport of duck hunting. Just as wooden or plastic replications of waterfowl are used to trap ducks, the military has employed low-cost decoys



*Canadian Loon, 2016* ©Terry Graff

in the form of cardboard, wooden or inflatable dummy tanks and aircraft designed to fool enemy forces. In fact, it was from studying and copying birds that the military learned about camouflage. A 1909 book titled *Concealing-Coloration in the Animal Kingdom* by the American zoologist Abbott Thayer was widely read by military leaders to assist in camouflaging both war machines and troops.

The study of birds prompted fighter pilots to adopt the migratory V flight pattern of a flock

of geese, having recognized how it gives each bird an unobstructed field of vision, allowing them to see each other and to communicate while in flight. More recently, for the purpose of gaining combat advantages by enhancing military navigation, army-funded research has been directed at learning how birds detect the Earth's magnetic



*Bomb Squad, 2018* ©Terry Graff

field and navigate their migration. Cryptochrome protein in the retinas of birds, which they share with humans, has been shown to be sensitive to magnetic fields and would be useful to the military where GPS is unavailable, compromised or denied by enemy action.

During times of war, the language of birds in the form of whistling was used by indigenous Berber populations (also known as the Amazigh) in the Atlas Mountains to send messages to further their resistance against French colonial forces and also by the Australian army, which recruited Wam speakers from Papua New Guinea to whistle messages by radio to confuse Japanese eavesdroppers. When under attack during World War II, the Japanese were also fooled by an actual bird, the Brown Sicklebill (Bird-of-Paradise), which makes the uncanny sound of a machine gun.

As an indispensable part of war communication, birds have been responsible for saving thousands of human lives. In fact, over 100,000 carrier pigeons were deployed in World War I with an astonishing success rate of 95% of them getting through to their destination with their message. For their service in both world wars, thirty-two carrier pigeons received the Dickin Medal

(the Victoria Cross for animals), a bronze medallion awarded to animals for "conspicuous gallantry or devotion to duty while serving in military conflict." Cher Ami, the heroic female homing pigeon who delivered twelve important messages during the Battle of Verdun, was awarded the French



*Hope is that thing with Feathers, 2019* ©Terry Graff

"Croix de Guerre with Palm" medal and a gold medal from the Organized Bodies of American Racing Pigeon Fanciers in recognition of her service during World War I. While in direct line of fire as she carried out her mission, she lost both her foot and one eye, and finally died from wounds received in battle. Her preserved body is on display at the Smithsonian Institution.

Like the carrier pigeon, the falcon holds a distinguished place in the history of warfare.

The Russian ornithologist G.P. Dementiev in his book *The Gyrfalcon* (Moscow, 1960) referred to falconry, the harnessing of the natural predatory ability of birds, as "the sister of war." Genghis Khan, one of the most notorious warriors in human history, is reputed to have owned 800 falcons, his bodyguard was made up of falconers, and he had the image of his favourite falcon cast in gold. Hunting with falcons was part of his army's training regimen and was overseen by his Ministry of War. During the Hundred Years' War, King Edward III took 30 falconers with him when he crossed the English Channel with over 1,000 ships. Falconry was also one of the primary outlets for the militaristic energies of the Japanese samurai class, and World War II German officers were trained in falconry and developed its Falcon Corp as

a means of stopping British carrier pigeons returning from Europe with vital information. Today, the falcon is the flying mascot of the U.S. Air Force Academy, trained and handled by cadet



*Nuthatch, 2018* ©Terry Graff

falconers and performing aerobatics at public events.

The falcon derives its name from the Latin word 'falco' meaning scimitar-shaped, and was worshipped as a deity of war by the Egyptians. Capturing its prey with powerful talons, falcons are the consummate hunters of the avian world and the

fastest recorded animal in the world. With remarkable flying agility, precision in its attacks, and vision that is eight times better than human beings, the peregrine falcon inspired the design of the Northrop Grumman B-2 Spirit, one of the original stealth bombers, and the US Air Force named their guided quarter-kiloton nuclear-armed air-to-air missile the AIM-26 Falcon. Today, in several countries, peregrine falcons are being used to defend aircraft from flocking birds that could be sucked into jet intakes, and to hunt down and intercept unauthorized drones that threaten airspace.

Many types of birds have played important roles during times of war. Canaries were used to detect the presence of poisonous gases in the trenches; parrots were employed on the Eiffel Tower to give warning of the approach of enemy aircraft; and seagulls alerted sailors to the presence of submarines and mines. In addition, flocks of birds have been used as weapons to destroy entire cities. Under the rule of the medieval King of Norway, Harald Hardrada ("hard



ruler”), resinous wood was smeared with wax and brimstone, attached to the backs of birds, and set on fire. When the birds were released, they returned to their nests in the thatched roofs of buildings inside the walled cities, which were immediately set ablaze.

In more modern times, birds have been equipped with surveillance cameras for the purpose of spying on enemies, and have been used by the military to carry bombs or explosives or for suicide missions. In Qingdao, China, scientists are able to order pigeons to perform many complicated acts, such as turning right or left during flight, by attaching electrodes to their brain and applying electric stimulation controlled by computer programs. During World War II, the National Defense Research Committee invested in research by behaviorist B.F. Skinner for the development of a pigeon-controlled guided bomb. It was called “Project Pigeon” and involved



*Saint Sebastian (three versions), 2016* ©Terry Graff

training pigeons to recognize a target using operant conditioning, a type of learning pioneered by Skinner in 1937 where behavior is modified by reward and punishment.

Although the military cancelled the initiative, the simulation involving placing pigeons inside a specially designed nosecone where they would peck a projected image of the missile’s flight path and steer it towards an

enemy battleship was endorsed by physicists and psychologists.

Recent research into bird behaviour from the University of Bristol reveals that birds demonstrate solidarity in situations of conflict just as soldiers do when entering combat zones,



*Warbirds on Wheels, 2018* ©Terry Graff

and suggests that they are capable of anticipation and future planning. Indeed, birds have proven to be exceptionally resilient and tactically brilliant adversaries in times of war. In 1932, Australian and British veterans who had fought the Kaiser were deployed with machine guns in the Great Emu War of Western Australia, but ended up losing the battle to the large, flightless birds. Major G.P.W. Meredith of the Seventh Heavy Battery of the Royal Australian Artillery observed that even

when the emus had been shot, they remained incredibly fast and maneuverable, noting that "if we had a military division with the bullet-carrying capacity of these birds it would face any army in the world. . . . They can face machine guns with the invulnerability of tanks. They are like Zulus whom even dum-dum bullets could not stop" (*The Sun Herald*, 5 July 1953).

Other notable warriors in the bird kingdom include the Steamer Duck, which is known for its brutality, battling and killing other steamers and species in scums lasting as long as twenty minutes; the Shrike, a predatory songbird that impales its prey, which includes snakes, rodents and



*Warheads, 2019* ©Terry Graff

other birds, on thorns or barbed wire; the Great Tit, which ruthlessly pecks the skulls of bats, voles and songbirds to eat their brains; the Ostrich, which has kicked people to death with its powerful legs and is also known to kill hyenas and lions; and the Cassowary, one of the most dangerous birds in the world capable of delivering fatal blows with its feet and dagger-like claws.

The pre-historic flightless *Xenicibus xymptithecus* is the only known bird to have evolved

wings solely as weapons for use in battle, and there are several examples of terrorizing mythological birds, such as the gigantic Roc (or Rukh, Arabic Rukhkh) in Arabian fairy tales, and the man-eating Stymphalian birds, which were raised by the Greek god of war Ares and have beaks of bronze and sharp metallic feathers that they can fire at their victims. Perhaps the notorious Japanese war criminal and abusive prison guard Mutsuhiro Watanabe was nicknamed "The Bird" in reference to such badass creatures.

Although reductive representations often emphasize nature as placid and harmonious, nature has an equally brutal side and may hold clues as to whether the impulse towards violence is etched into the DNA of human beings as a species. We may think of small birds as gentle and

endearing, but many are fierce warriors with formidable fighting capabilities, especially when they defend their nest, or are bent on taking over another bird's nest site. During breeding season, male red-winged blackbirds become fiercely territorial. With red epaulets raised, they will not only attack larger birds perceived as nest



*WAR-BLER, 2016* ©Terry Graff

predators, such as crows, hawks, egrets, herons,

bitterns, ospreys and eagles, by landing on their back and pulling at their tail feathers, but also horses and people. Acorn woodpeckers engage in spectacularly violent wars in which up to fifty birds fight in coalitions to take over breeding grounds, bashing enemies with their wings, holding each other's legs, drawing blood, and gouging out eyes. The Shrike, a carnivorous predator aptly called the butcherbird for impaling its prey on spikes, inspired the nickname Würger (meaning Shrike) for the German fighter aircraft the Focke-Wulf Fw 190. Even house sparrows exhibit

aggressive behaviour and have been known to enter the nest box of a bluebird and not only peck and remove its eggs and nestlings, but also decapitate it and build its nest on top of the corpse.

The military's association with the fierce fighting power of birds is by no means confined to raptors, although there are numerous fighter aircraft and missiles named after them (F-15 Eagle, F-16 Fighting Falcon, F-117A Nighthawk Stealth Fighter, UH-60 Black Hawk, P-40 Warhawk, the AV-8 Harrier, Bell Boeing V-22 Osprey, F-22 Raptor, AGM-76 Falcon, AGM-53 Condor, AGM-45 Shrike, MIM-23 Hawk, BAe Sea Eagle, etc.), but extends to many other bird species. For example, the Grumman Martlet is a British fighter aircraft named after a stylized heraldic bird similar to a swift or a house martin, and the AIM-7 Sparrow and AAM-N-4 Oriole are American air-to-air missiles. The German Messerschmitt Me 262 A-1a Swallow (Schwalbe) was a formidable weapon that surpassed the performance of every other World War II fighter aircraft by virtue of its speed; the American EF-111A Raven is an electronic warfare aircraft; the German Focke-Wulf Fw 200 Condor was used with the Luftwaffe as long-range reconnaissance and transport aircraft; and the "Blue Jay", code name for the de Havilland Firestreak, is a British infrared homing air-to-air missile developed in the early 1950s.

In WWII, the names of the vehicles of the command group in the British Coldstreams Guards were named after birds. The battalion commander's tank was called "Eagle;" an armoured command vehicle was "Vulture;" scout cars were named "Pigeon", "Wren" and "Owlet;" and a captured German Panther tank was renamed "Cuckoo." Other bird names adopted by the military include "Duck," the colloquial name for the DUKW, a six-wheel-drive amphibious vehicle used by the US military during World War II and the Korean War to carry goods and troops over land and water; the Bird-class minesweeper, a naval trawler built for the Royal New Zealand Navy that served in World War II; the HMS Vulture, a 14 to 16-gun ship sloop of the Swan class, which was

launched for the Royal Navy in 1776; and the Robin, which refers to the common design nuclear fission bomb core for several Cold War designs for American nuclear and thermonuclear weapons.



*Eastcoast Suicide Bomber, 2016* ©Terry Graff

There is also Operation Redwing, which was a series of 17 nuclear test detonations by the USA in 1956; Operation Mallard, which was the codename for an airborne forces operation conducted by the British Army on June 6, 1944 as part of the Normandy landings

during World War II; and CHICKEN, which is the military code word for Low Fuel State Requiring Urgent Tanker Support. The American nuclear test of an operational ballistic missile with a live warhead conducted near Christmas Island in 1962 was called the Frigate Bird, which is a type of seabird also known as the "man-o-war" bird; the PFM-1, a scatterable anti-personnel land mine produced by the Russians, was given the name Green Parrot; and the featherless Oozlefinch, a fictional bird that flies backwards at supersonic speeds and carries a Nile-Hercules Missile, is the historic mascot of the Air Defense Artillery and formerly of the U.S. Army Coast Artillery Corps.

Firearms named after birds include the Ruger Blackhawk, the Beretta Silver Pigeon, the Beretta Gold Mallard, the Kimber Raptor, the ZVI Falcon and the Kolibri, which is the German word for hummingbird. The Japanese Type 92 Heavy Machine Gun was given the nickname "the woodpecker" by Western Allied soldiers because of the characteristic sound it made. As sports

have long been intertwined with military service and military training, mimics military operations and encourages warrior culture, bird names, such as Eagles, Falcons, Ravens, Cardinals, Blue Jays, Orioles, etc., have naturally been adopted by sports teams.

Given the multiple intersections between ornithology and war, it is hardly surprising that bird references also figure prominently in military jargon. For example, one who does not help a fellow soldier, or who intentionally gets a soldier in trouble is called a "blue falcon"; cold weather is referred to as "the Hawk"; "bird" refers to any aircraft, but usually to helicopters; "bird barn" refers to an aircraft carrier; "full-bird" is a U.S. Colonel whose insignia is a silver eagle, while "half-bird" refers to a Lieutenant Colonel; and "shit bird" is an insult denoting a lower ranking enlisted person whose uniformed appearance and/or job performance is substantially unsatisfactory.

The word "hawks" is often used to describe those who advocate an aggressive foreign policy based on strong military power; "doves" refers to those who try to resolve international conflicts without the threat of force; and "chicken hawks" describe those who are war hawks, but actively avoid military service. "Skylark" is an old naval word used to describe someone who takes excessive time to complete a task. "Bird, Ball & Fish Hook" is a derogatory term for the EGA emblem (Eagle Globe and Anchor) of the US Marine Corps, and the Honorable Service Lapel Patch, which was given to members of the U.S. military who were honorably discharged during World War II, was dubbed the "Ruptured Duck."

The phrase "sitting ducks", likely a reference to hunting dabbling ducks feeding in the middle of a wide-open lake, became popular in England and North America during World War II, when military personnel started using it to refer to targets that were hard to defend or easily killed, like foot soldiers unable to reach a trench. And the phrase "for the birds", which is often used to describe something that is useless or meaningless, was coined by US armed forces during

World War II, a derivation of the original "shit for birds", a reference to birds pecking at horse droppings for seeds.

During World War I, troops from New Zealand were given the nickname Kiwis, and New Zealand's national bird was featured on many of their military badges. Canadian nurses who volunteered their services were called "bluebirds" because of their blue dresses and white veils, and the Canadian military aerobatics teams of the Royal Canadian Air Force have been named the Golden Hawks and the Snowbirds. The Ukrainian aerobatic team was called the Ukrainian Falcons and comprised the elite of the Ukrainian Force's fight pilots.

Throughout military history, the close relationship between humans and birds revolved around the universal theme of life and death. During the American Civil War, Confederate troops marched to the fast tempo tune of "Listen to the Mocking Bird," an expression of war-torn love and loss, while crows and vultures fed on the corpses of fallen soldiers. Along with their many associations with the horror of armed conflict, birds have been cherished for their aesthetic beauty and inspiring message of hope, the white dove serving as a prominent symbol of peace and pacifism. In 2004, Thailand's air force dropped millions of paper origami birds over three of its southernmost provinces as a government-sponsored gesture of peace and goodwill following a brutal Muslim insurgency responsible for hundreds of deaths. During World War II, Vera Lynn's popular song "(There'll Be Bluebirds Over) The White Cliffs of Dover," a reference to Spitfire fighter planes that were painted blue on their undersides to provide camouflage when seen against the sky, gave hope to the British for an end to war. After the bombing of Pearl Harbor in 1941, Japanese-Americans, who were incarcerated in internment camps, took scraps of wood and wire mesh and made small bird pins as symbols of freedom. In 2013, Syrian refugee families who fled for their lives to Lebanon were not able to carry much with them but chose to smuggle their prize



pigeons over the mountains.

A visually prominent connection between birds and the battlefield is the incorporation of bird feathers in the headgear and uniforms of armed forces across diverse cultures. The eagle-feather war bonnets of the First Peoples of the Great Plains were originally worn only by warriors who had



*Buzzard, 2019* ©Terry Graff

displayed great bravery in battle. Zulu warriors in southern Africa hunted the turaco for their red flight feathers to adorn their heads when they went to war. In ancient Rome, a legionary's helmet was decorated with a plume with short feathers to make him look taller and more intimidating, so as to strike terror into the enemy. For Scottish highland regiments, the feather bonnet served as a highly practical piece of military gear, as its lightweight and internal cage offered protection from sword blows. While the black feather bonnet originated from the Scottish tradition of wearing a black feather in your hat to symbolize that you have an ongoing quarrel with someone, different hackle colours came to distinguish different fusilier regiments.

Other examples of military feather adornment include the headgear of the Bersaglieri, a specialised unit of the Italian Army's infantry corps, who wear the feathers of a particular wood grouse in their hats known as capercaillie, the emu plumes affixed to the slouch hats of the Royal Australian Armoured Corps, and the long ostrich feather that decorated the wide-brimmed hats of the style-conscious Cavaliers in the 1600s during the English Civil War.

For some tribal cultures, wearing the body parts of birds, such as those of eagles and hawks, bestows the wearer with their energy and special qualities. A headdress made from eagle feathers is believed to protect the wearer with the eagle's wisdom and power. For African Maasai boys, a rite of passage towards becoming a warrior (morán), which follows circumcision, involves killing small birds with clubs and arrows, gutting and skinning them with the feathers and tail left on, then stuffing and mounting them on a wooden rack that they wear as a headpiece.

The highest award given by the African National Congress is a blue crane feather (the Isitwalandwe Award), an honour that derived from Xhosa culture, which awarded the prized bird plume to those who showed outstanding bravery in war. Similarly, America's First Nations warriors were awarded a feather when they won a battle. In contrast, at the start of World War I, white feathers were used as a symbol of cowardice, and given by women to young men to shame them into enlisting in the British Army.

There is a colourful history of looking to birds for guidance during war and interpreting their actions as omens. Extending back to early Greek times (the Greek word for a bird, *ornis* or *oionos*, was also the word for an omen), the practice of ornithomancy is equivalent to the augury or bird divination employed by ancient Romans used to predict the outcome of events. An omen in the form of a bird was a sign that something either good or bad was about to happen, and ancient military leaders paid close attention to the flight patterns of birds for signs of how and when to make war, and if their battle would be a success or failure. Large birds of prey were considered divine messengers delivering guidance from prominent gods during war campaigns.

Ancient bird watchers were regarded as highly esteemed oracles or seers who could predict the outcome of military missions and battles by studying the behaviour of birds, by careful listening to their cries, and by interpreting their entrails. In Homer's *The Iliad*, there are numerous

references to bird divination. For example, if a bird appeared from the right and flew to the left, it was interpreted as a good omen; if it appeared from the left and flew to the right, or if it flew diagonally across a river or a creek, it was considered a negative or evil omen. If the fetish bird of a war god, such as a heron or an owl, flew ahead of an advancing party, it would be read as a victory, but if it flew toward the rear, it would be interpreted as a bad omen. The sighting of fighting birds always signalled a devastating outcome.

Sprinkling grain on the floor and then releasing a flock of chickens also provided prophetic information in ancient times. If the birds devoured the food, it would be a sign that the warriors had the favour of the gods, but if the birds were fearful and anxious, beat their wings, and refused to eat and tried to escape, such behaviour was viewed as a bad omen that portended defeat in battle.

Ancient cultures knew their fate was inextricably connected to the life of birds. Similarly, ecologists today look to birds as important bioindicators correlated to the health of the planet. In this age of ecological crisis and ever-growing conflicts around the world, birds are sounding the alarm, delivering a clear and deafening prophetic message about the fragility of human infrastructure and the greatest existential threat today: climate change.

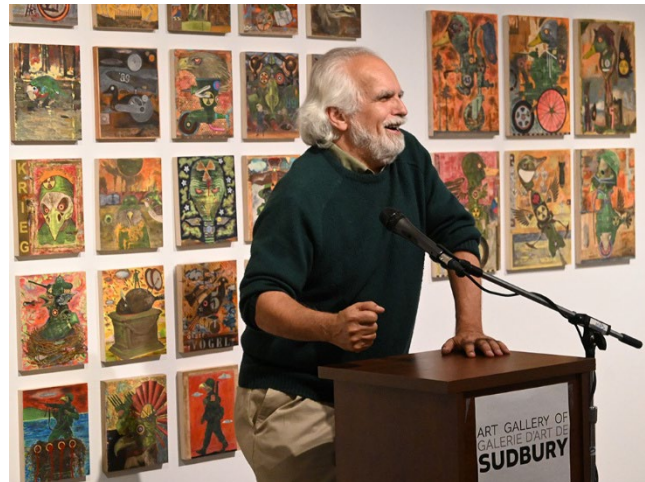
The cues that birds rely upon for survival are becoming more and more distorted by shifting global temperatures, changing ocean currents, acute weather extremes, and environmental degradation, disrupting migration patterns, breeding habitats, food sources, and life cycles. By their rapidly dwindling populations, they are literally the canaries in the coal mine

telling us that we must cease our relentless war on nature, that the world's nations need to come together to invest in the restoration of Earth's landscapes, many of which have been destroyed by the destructive activities of war. We are at a 'now-or-never' tipping point, and if we do not heed this dire warning, more and more wars over resources are inevitable and both birds and humankind are most assuredly doomed to go the way of the dodo.



*Brave New World, 2020* ©Terry Graff

**Terry Graff** is a multi-media visual artist who is best known for his evocative images of bird/machine hybrids armed with combat weaponry, a distinctive vision in contemporary art that speaks to the conflicted relationship between nature and technology. He presents a darkly absurd, phantasmagorical tableau that gives visual form to what it feels like to live in a time of existential crisis, of prevailing fears and anxieties brought on by real-life perils unfolding on the planet — climate change and ecological catastrophes, and the trauma and brutal carnage of war.



Graff's art, along with his article "Revenge of the Warbirds: The Impact of Armed Conflict on Nature," was featured in *War, Literature & the Arts* (Volume 34, 2022). A major exhibition of his work titled *Avian Cyborgs: The Art of Terry Graff* toured Canada in 2023 and 2024.

Born in Cambridge (Galt), Ontario, Canada, Graff studied Fine Art at the Doon School of Fine Arts, Doon, Ontario, and Fanshawe College of Applied Arts and Technology, London, Ontario. He received a B.A. in Fine Art from the University of Guelph, Guelph, Ontario, and a B.Ed in Visual Arts from the University of Western Ontario, London, Ontario. He also studied art history, philosophy of art, media arts, and art education at Wayne State University, Detroit, Michigan, received a postgraduate diploma in Fine Art (M.F.A. equivalent) from the Jan Van Eyck Academie, Maastricht, the Netherlands, and holds a M.A. in Art Education from the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, Halifax, Nova Scotia (Thesis: *Art and Ecological Vision*).

Along with his intensive studio practice, Graff has had a distinguished career as a curator, art educator, art writer, and gallery director. He has served as director of four public art galleries in four different provinces of Canada: the Beaverbrook Art Gallery, the Mendel Art Gallery, Rodman Hall Arts Centre, and Confederation Centre Art Gallery and, also, of the artist-run Struts Gallery in Sackville, New Brunswick. He has curated over 200 exhibitions, authored numerous articles, catalogues, and books on both contemporary and historical art, and taught drawing and sculpture at Mount Allison University. As a tireless advocate for the importance of art in people's lives and as an essential ingredient for the health and well-being of communities, Graff has served as a volunteer on numerous committees and boards in support of cultural activity, has provided public service as a consultant and arts juror at regional and national levels, and has supported countless artists in a variety of capacities. In recognition of his various cultural contributions across Canada, he has received many awards and honours, including the Fanshawe College Distinguished Alumni Award; The Commemorative Medal for the Centennial of Saskatchewan (Official Honour of the Crown recognizing individuals who have made a significant contribution to the Province of Saskatchewan); the Christina Sabat Award for Art Criticism in Atlantic Canada sponsored by the Sheila Hugh MacKay Foundation; and two eagle feathers from the Mi'kmaq First Nation for his work in promoting the art of First Nations artists.

Terry Graff lives in Island View, New Brunswick, Canada with his wife Kim and three Siamese cats.