

# ALDE VALLEY SPRING FESTIVAL EXHIBITION 2020

## *On a Turning Wing : A Celebration of Birds, Flight & Migration*

ILLUSTRATED CATALOGUE : PERIENNE CHRISTIAN

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It is a great pleasure to be able to welcome Perienne Christian's beautiful drawings, paintings and etchings back to the farm for the 2020 Festival Exhibition *On a Turning Wing*. The overarching theme for the exhibition was inspired by the title of a collection of poetry by the Irish poet Paddy Bushe and, in particular, from the final few lines of one poem in the collection, *Swallows*

*"I say that poetry also jinks,  
As through a portal into and out of itself;  
That it inscribes the sky with patterns whose migrant meanings  
Are caught sometimes only, and only on a turning wing."*

Much of Perienne's work is closely connected to the landscape along the Suffolk coast near Bawdsey, south of Orford and Aldeburgh. The coastline here is soft and constantly shifting. In the words of the writer Ronald Blythe, it is "an indefinite shore".

Where the land rises high in the form of sandy cliffs, the sea works hard to pull it down; and where the land is low lying, the tides often do the reverse, adding to the shoreline with shingle spits and sandbanks. Inland from the tide lines, agriculture tries to work the land, wringing root crops, cereals and vegetables from the light free-draining soil; but the sea is always waiting at the field edges to bring the crops, hedges and bordering trees down on to the beach below. In consequence, where there was once swamp and marsh and heath and forest, there is now a mixture of hard-worked arable land, hedges, lanes, irrigation lakes, bulwarked cliffs, sandy slumps and abandoned military installations. Sea birds venture onshore during storms or to feed on ploughed land, but are otherwise content to ride the tides and wind in search of food and nesting grounds.

Meanwhile, quietly, this stretch of coastline is the first point of arrival and last place of departure for many thousands of migrating songbirds and raptors. We tend to think of the birds in our gardens or countryside as *our own* – but almost all, from the largest raptors down to the smallest blue tit, traverse hundreds or thousands of miles to be here each spring to feed and breed and then slip away in the autumn to over-winter in warmer climes. Others seabirds, geese, swans, ducks and waders, do the reverse. They head north to breed in the spring, whilst staying here to feed and fatten during the late autumn and winter months.

Perhaps we should be more mindful of the mobility of birds and of the needs that they have : for food, warmth and shelter; and places in which to breed and rear their young. Their presence in our landscape and their movement through it is subtle but filled with meaning, some much more profound than we begin to fully understand or appreciate. And the same is very much true for Perienne's etchings, drawings and paintings in the way that they capture the subtle presence of birds in, above and beyond Suffolk's indefinite shores; but hint also in their line, colour and content of deeper meanings.

**For all sales, larger images and more details : [enquiries@aldevalleyspringfestival.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@aldevalleyspringfestival.co.uk)**



1. *Whispering Stories, 2020.*

Watercolour, pencil and collage on 600gsm Fabriano paper  
H650mm W850mm  
£1,200



2. *Murmur*, 2020.

Watercolour, pencil and collage on 600gsm Fabriano paper

H650mm W850mm

£1200



3. *Earthing*, 2020.

Watercolour, pencil and collage on 600gsm Fabriano paper  
H370mm W470mm  
£600



4. *Camouflage, 2020.*

Watercolour, pencil and collage on 600gsm Fabriano paper  
H370mm W470mm  
£600



5. *Reflect, 2020.*

Watercolour, pencil and collage on 600gsm Fabriano paper  
H370mm W470mm  
£600

[IMAGE to FOLLOW]

6. *Watching Intently, 2020.*

Watercolour, pencil and collage on 600gsm Fabriano paper  
H370mm W470mm  
£600



7. *Hedgerow Chatter*, 2020

Watercolour, pencil and collage on 600gsm Fabriano paper

H150mm W170mm

£190 (framed)



8. *Sustenance*, 2020.

Watercolour, pencil and collage on 600gsm Fabriano paper  
H150mm W150mm  
£180 (framed)





9. *Murmuration I, 2020.*

Etching

Edition of 25. 23 available

Framed size H200mm W245mm

Unframed size H150mm W190mm

£130 [framed] ; £110 (unframed)



10. *Murmuration II*, 2020

Etching

Edition of 5. 4 available

Framed size H200mm W245mm

Unframed size H150mm W190mm

£130 (framed) ; £110 (unframed)



11. *Above the Pines, 2020*

Etching with sugar-lift aquatint  
Edition of 5. / 4 available  
Framed size H210mm W245mm  
Unframed size H150mm W160mm  
£130 (framed) ; £110 (unframed)



12. *Swoop*, 2020.

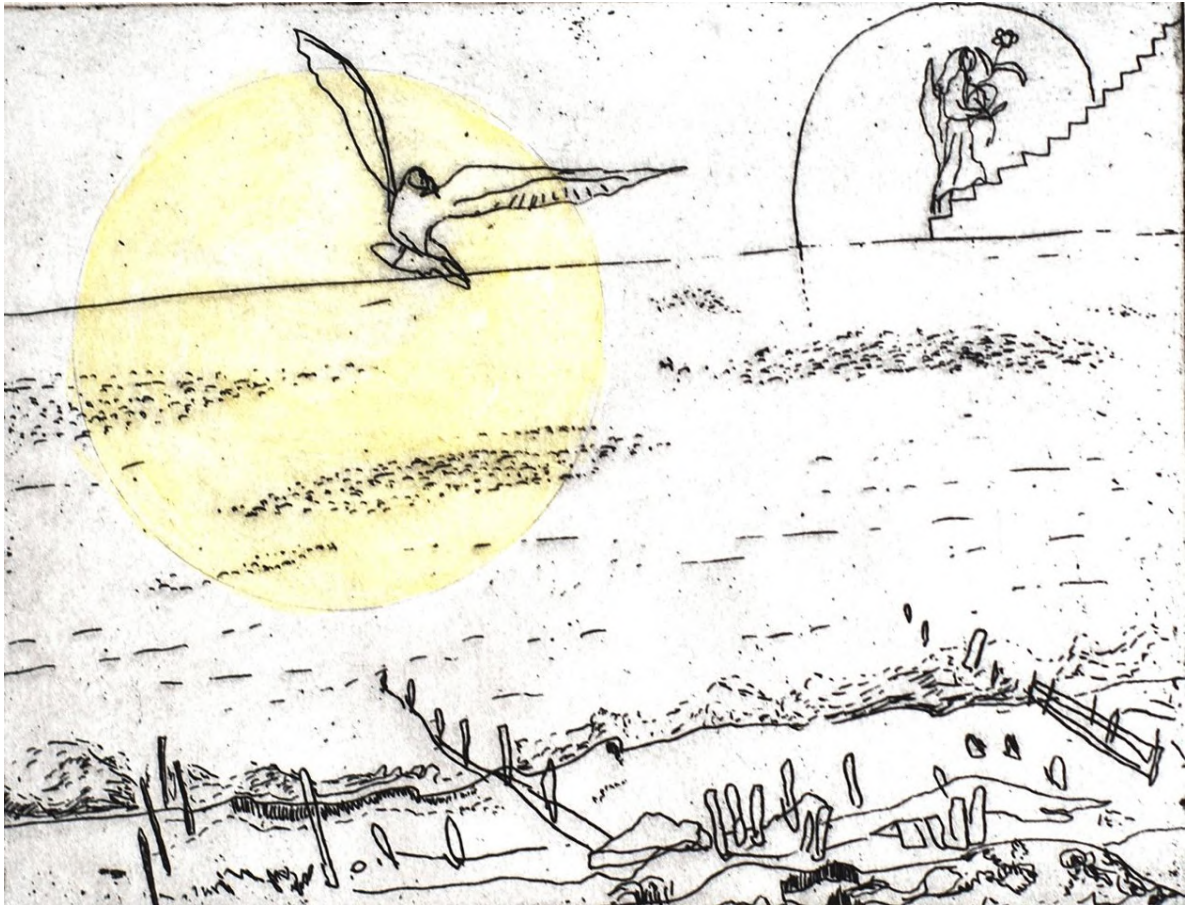
Etching with sugar-lift aquatint and hand colouring

Edition of 5. / 4 available

Framed size H210mm W245mm

Unframed size H150mm W160mm

£130 (framed) ; £110 (unframed)



13. *Ascent, 2020.*

Etching with hand colouring

Edition of 5. / 4 available

Framed size H240mm W290mm

Unframed size H220mm W270mm

£160 [framed] ; £140 (unframed)



14. *Sky Woman - Starling* 2020.

Edition of 5. / 4 available

Framed size H220mm W245mm

Unframed size H200mm W190mm

£135 (framed) ; £115 (unframed)



15. *Gathering*, 2020.

Etching with *chine colle*.

Edition of 5 / 4 available

Framed size H300mm W300mm

Unframed size H280mm W280mm

£180 [framed] ; £160 (unframed)

## ARTIST'S STATEMENT

These works are reflections on being rooted in the landscape around Bawdsey where I live, and watching the wild creatures and plants which inhabit it. I have drawn inspiration from observation, imagination, myth and story; observing birds in their different habitats and investigating old stories which contain wisdom relevant to our present times.

I walk this terrain every day, in all weathers and seasons. It can appear bare and uninviting in winter; the sea claiming back parts of the land each time the tide is high. A line of my favourite pine trees are being slowly reclaimed by the elements. One lies on the beach, bleached by the salty water; its roots crumbling back to dust. Another awaits her fate, teetering on the edge; roots already loosened and now visible above the bank.

This landscape does not appear to belong to humans at all. The beings at home here are the wild birds and plants. And whilst many different birds chatter away in my garden and the hedgerows, it is often only seagulls that are a constant in the skies above the shingle beaches. Wheeling and cavorting, taking delight in their windy unsheltered playground, I can't help but envy them their freedom.

At dusk however, other birds can be seen in the skies. A murmuration of starlings creates magic in front of my eyes. As I watch this incredible sight; the dance in unison, a body of many, moving as one, I can't help but wonder what we humans could learn from this. Could we learn to remember our own sacredness and the sacredness of the natural world? Could we become more cognizant of how our individual actions affect the whole? Could we learn to dance as one and begin to look after and protect this beautiful planet which we have the privilege to be visiting?

Perienne Christian. Bawdsey, Suffolk. April 2020

**For all sales or for more information about any works**

**Please contact :** [enquiries@aldevalleyspringfestival.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@aldevalleyspringfestival.co.uk)

**Website :** [www.aldevalleyspringfestival.co.uk](http://www.aldevalleyspringfestival.co.uk) **Instagram :** @aldevalleyfestival