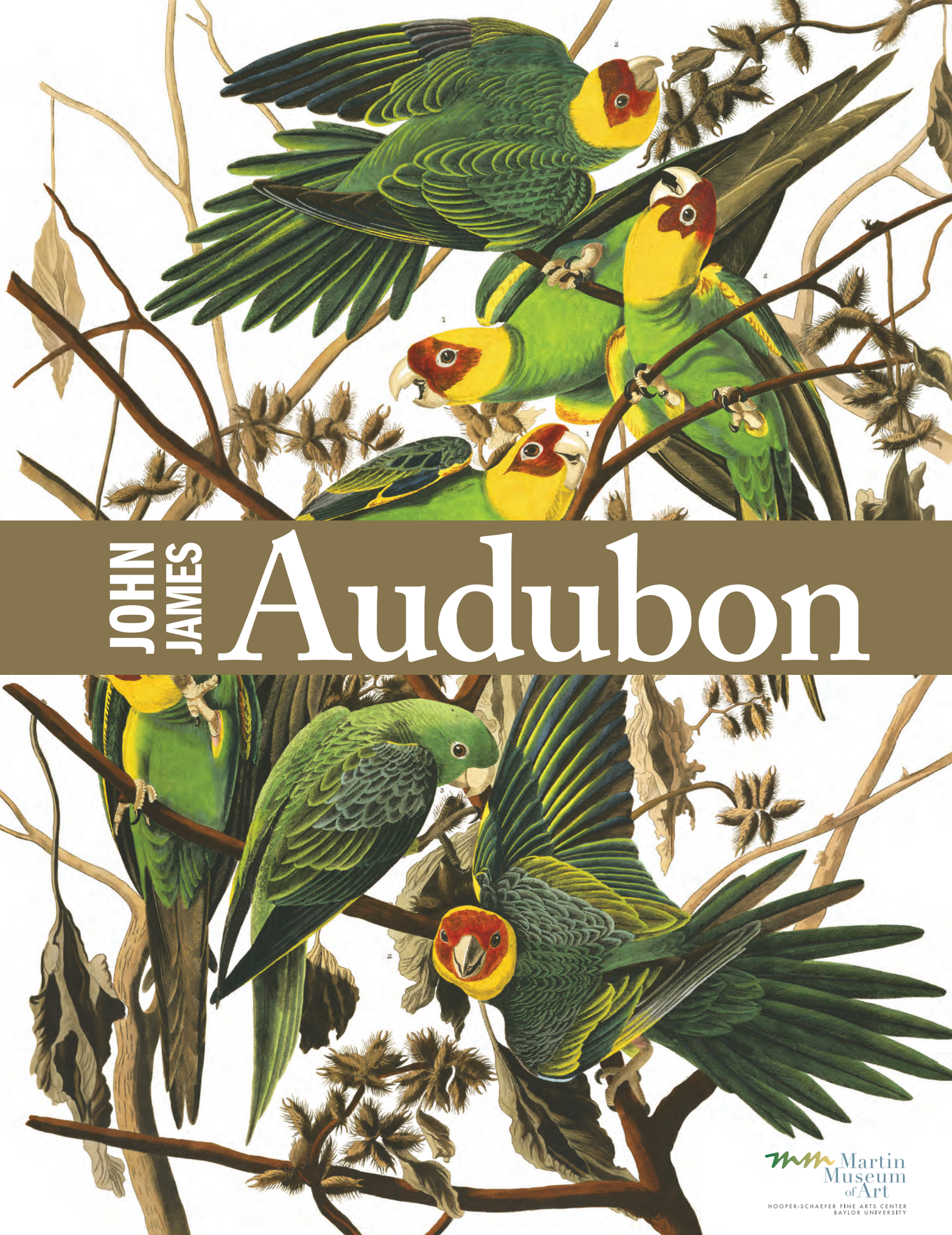

JOHN JAMES Audubon

Martin Museum of Art
HOOPER-SCHAEFER FINE ARTS CENTER
BAYLOR UNIVERSITY

Published on the occasion of the exhibition,
John James Audubon: Life, Work & Legacy
September 29 to November 11, 2018.

Organized by the Martin Museum of Art.

Museum exhibitions and programs are funded in part by the generous support of the Martin Museum Art Angels, the Ted and Sue Getterman Endowed Fund, and the Virginia Webb Endowed Fund. Thanks are also due to Dr. Ron Tyler, Director of the Amon Carter Museum of American Art, Retired; David Christie, Print Specialist of the New York Public Library; Dr. Sean DeLouche, Lecturer of Art History at Baylor University; Alex Hampton and Evangeline Eilers, Graduate Students; Baylor Museum Studies as well as the Department of Art and Art History. and Baylor University.

The Martin Museum's Image Collection made possible by the Riley Digitization Center, Baylor University

Editing: Reagan Beck, Allison Chew and Chani Jones
Exhibit Design: Alex Hampton, Allison Chew and Chani Jones
Catalogue Design: Krista Latendresse
Printing: Integ, Waco, TX

COVER:
*Carolina Parro*t
John James Audubon
The Birds of America, Plate 26
Image courtesy of the National Audubon Society

INSIDE:
Brown Pelican
John James Audubon
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Image courtesy of the National Audubon Society

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Image courtesy of the National Audubon Society

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Foreword

The Martin Museum of Art is delighted to present *John James Audubon: Life, Work & Legacy*, which is comprised of a selection of double elephant folio engravings and lithographs from Audubon's *The Birds of America* and *The Viviparous Quadrupeds of North Americ*a, accompanied by published works from his ornithologist and naturalist contemporaries. Together, this collection of works tells a story of 19th-century ornithology and the relationships that contributed to the success of Audubon and his greatest artistic achievement, *The Birds of America*, commonly referred to as his "Great Work".

The Museum's unique collection of Audubon prints inspired the staff to share it in an exhibition celebrating Audubon's lifelong journey in creating *The Birds of America* and his lasting influence in the art and natural history communities. The images represented from *The Birds of America* offer viewers a deeper understanding of the intent of the publication, the process of creating it, and how the work fits contextually into its time period, as well as today. *Life, Work & Legacy* also offers a glimpse into the curious life of John James Audubon. Through an examination of his journals and letters, this exhibition attempts to demystify the persona and explore the true man underneath.

This catalogue serves as a guide to the exhibition with high resolution images of the works presented. This allows visitors an opportunity to explore the intricacies of Audubon's work, as well as those of his contemporaries and predecessors. Scholarly essays provide further enrichment with contributions by Dr. Sean DeLouche, Lecturer of Art History at Baylor University; Dr. Ron Tyler, retired Director of the Amon Carter Museum of American Art; and David G. Christie, Print Specialist of the New York Public Library.

Dr. DeLouche introduces *The Birds of America* through the lens of the classroom. Through exploration of analyses, he introduces the viewer to ways of interpreting Audubon's work. Through historical context, the use of Audubon's writings to contextualize the publication, and conceptual and formal analyses through closely viewing his work, patrons develop a deeper understanding of a complex artist and his significant work.

Dr. Tyler's essay provides an overview of Audubon's life and experiences while creating his three most significant works: *The Birds of America*, its Royal Octavo Edition, and *The Viviparous Quadrupeds of North America*. Readers are introduced to a plethora of characters that surround Audubon on his quest to record his birds, and the trials he faced along the way.

Mr. Christie's writing situates *The Birds of America* in a historical context of illustrated natural histories, progressing to Audubon's influence on present-day art. Christie sheds light on what sets Audubon's ornithological publication apart from the rest, such as his unprecedented life-size drawings, exceptional artistic quality of illustrations combined with the traditional presentation of scientific data in a publication, and most enduring of all, his lifelong passion for the subject matter of his work.

John James Audubon: Life, Work & Legacy offers an opportunity to explore, learn, and enjoy the significant work of a master artist and his lasting impact. We encourage you to interpret the work for yourself, discover its complexity, and treasure this exhibition as we do.

Chani Jones
Collections Manager, Martin Museum of Art, Baylor University

As I grew up, I was fervently desirous of becoming acquainted with nature.

– John James Audubon

Learning from Audubon

Dr. Sean DeLouche
Lecturer of Art History, Baylor University

When artist and naturalist John James Audubon (1785-1851) declared his intent to depict all of the birds of America in a hugely ambitious publication, the concept was thought to be too grandiose by many contemporaries. The result, however, would bring a wealth of visual information to a wide audience, one that would be celebrated as a monumental success. From the outset, Audubon's impressive project had an educational component. Today, Audubon's *The Birds of America* continues to inform and inspire students, scholars, and novices alike, with a variety of interests ranging from fine art and history to naturalism and ornithology. The Martin Museum of Art at Baylor University is fortunate to have a remarkable collection of works by Audubon that is used to educate and engage viewers. This essay serves as a guide to the "student"—whether an undergraduate art student or a general visitor—who wishes to learn about and fully experience Audubon. Through analysis, we can begin to understand the complexity of Audubon, his work, and truly appreciate his contributions to artistic and scientific communities.

Baylor's Department of Art & Art History, the Allbritton Art Institute, and the Martin Museum of Art are committed to offering our students the valuable opportunity to study, in-person, original works of art whenever possible. Direct access to art allows us to understand the work in a way that textbooks and projections cannot convey. Standing in front of a work gives the viewer an opportunity to actively analyze and interpret—to see brush strokes, examine details, and absorb meaning. The first-hand examination of art is important for students and visitors alike because it builds our knowledge from a personal, tangible experience. Through formal, contextual, and conceptual analysis of each work of art, a fuller understanding of its significance can be attained. In my classroom, the visual and critical appraisal of original works from direct study provides students with a significant sense of mastery and competence. This goal aligns with that of the Martin, dedicated to the facilitation of learning through close interaction with its collection of some 1,500 objects. One exciting area of the Museum's holdings is its permanent collection of engravings and lithographs by John James Audubon. Students of my introductory and advanced art history classes are afforded the special opportunity to study Audubon's works in-person from various perspectives.

This close evaluation of Audubon's work allows the viewer to learn about a number of historical issues and challenges that contextualize his work in a larger scope. Understanding Audubon's background is central to interpreting his artwork. In the following essay, Dr. Ron Tyler expertly lays out Audubon's biography and artistic endeavors. We learn that the self-taught artist and failed businessman embraced his love of ornithology and created one of the most important compendia of natural illustrations. A discussion of historical context is critical.

In the early nineteenth century, the American republic was expanding from the densely urban eastern seaboard toward the western frontier. This westward

progression brought American settlers in contact with wild, new places and species, many hitherto unknown. This spurred an interest in documenting these newly accessible American lands. While this expansion saw the advancement of American civilization, with it came serious challenges to the native environment and its inhabitants. Many Americans recognized the terrible threat to the western frontier. Landscape painter Thomas Cole lamented the depredation of the wilderness in the face of progress, while resigning himself to its unavoidability.[1] The artist George Catlin, as mentioned later in both Tyler and Mr. David Christie's essays, explored the Plains in the 1830s to record the native tribes before they were lost forever to inevitable corruption and extinction.[2] Indeed, Audubon's publication depicts several birds that have since gone extinct, such as the magnificent *Carolina Parrot* (see pg. 52), included in the exhibition. The nineteenth-century fascination with Audubon's brilliant illustrations registers both the excitement of discovering new species of the then unknown American frontier, as well as the resigned recognition of the threat posed by human encroachment. Perhaps our modern-day fascination with Audubon's illustrations still elicit those same conflicted feelings.

To conceptualize his work, it is necessary to consider the nineteenth-century audience for Audubon's prints. As Tyler notes, *The Birds of America* was an extremely expensive and luxurious item. Subscribers included European royals like King Charles X and the Duke of Orléans, as well as wealthy, city-dwelling Americans.[3] In other words, his audience was predominantly elite, urban, international, educated, and affluent. Why might these people have chosen to subscribe to Audubon's ambitious project? Some subscribers collected *The Birds of America* to enhance their learning, others to enhance their social status. Some were even donated by generous patrons to educational institutions as a public display of charity to support the arts and sciences.

Audubon was a prolific writer, recording his thoughts and activities in copious correspondences and journals. Audubon's own writings can be used to further interpret the meaning behind his work. First and foremost, Audubon was interested in recording scientific data with the utmost accuracy, particularly when based

FIG. 1

1 Thomas Cole, "Essays on American Scenery," *American Monthly Magazine* (January 1836), 1-12.
2 Kathryn S. Hight, "'Doomed to Perish:' George Catlin's Depictions of the Mandan," *Art Journal* 49, no. 2 (Summer 1990), 119-24.
3 Margaret Welch, "'Gentlemen of Fortune and Liberality:' The Original Subscribers to the Audubon Folios," *Imprint* 16, no. 1 (Spring 1991): 11-19.
FIG. 1: John James Audubon, *The Birds of America*. Plate 35, *Children's Warbler or Yellow Warbler*. 1828. Image courtesy of The National Audubon Society.

on his own experiences. In his field notes recorded on August 4, 1821, along the Mississippi River, Audubon carefully described his observations of a Louisiana Warbler.[4] Following a "chase" in which he witnessed the bird in flight, Audubon killed and then inspected it clinically. He measured the warbler's dimensions and meticulously detailed its plumage, beak, claws, legs, and wings. He even recorded every partially digested caterpillar and fly found in the bird's gizzard. This passage exemplifies Audubon's systematic empiricism. Such observations in the field proved essential to Audubon in depicting his lifelike illustrations once he returned to his studio. (FIG 2).[5]

In January 1828, Audubon penned an article for a Scottish scientific review as a means of advertising his ongoing project.[6] He methodically described his working process in the field and in the studio. Audubon also detailed the way he sketched his freshly killed specimens "put up before me by means of wires"—piercing the carcasses with wires inside of an armature to hold them in natural, realistic poses as he observed in the wild. Though the idea of a lifeless bird being pierced with wires seems upsetting today, this passage demonstrates Audubon's commitment to his craft. He goes on to note the incompleteness of other ornithological studies and the phoniness of museum taxidermy. "I have never drawn from a stuffed specimen," Audubon adamantly stated. He insisted that taxidermy animals reflected neither accurate anatomy nor natural positions.

As Christie explains in his essay, Audubon's ground-breaking approach to the depiction of birds comes to life when juxtaposed with illustrations of his contemporaries and predecessors. Works on-loan, as well as from the Martin's permanent collection, provide an opportunity to compare and contrast images by Audubon with those of his fellow ornithological artists in the exhibition. For instance, illustrations of Edward Lear and Prideaux John Selby appear hopelessly wooden and stiff compared to the animated, lively depictions by Audubon.

When considering Audubon's writings, his accounts should be deciphered with an attitude of impartiality. In his vivid descriptions, Audubon often passed moral judgments on wild birds. In his 1831 entries of the *Ornithological Biography*, the accompanying text to *The Birds of America*, Audubon richly portrayed the behavior of birds, including the Bald Eagle.[7] Audubon described the eagle pursuing a swan in hauntingly poetic terms. The eagle waits perched on the highest summit until its "glistening but stern eye" spots an unfortunate swan. The eagle plunges "with an awful scream" and "glides through the air like a falling star." The swan "in agony and despair, seeks, by various maneuvers to elude the grasp of his cruel talons," but soon surrenders. The eagle "shrieks with delight, as he feels the last convulsions of his prey, which has now sunk under his unceasing efforts to render death as painfully felt as it possibly can be." Audubon concluded that "he is a bird of bad moral character," one that cruelly kills and steals. Following this

4 John James Audubon, entry of August 4, 1821, Mississippi River journals, Ernest Mayr Library, Museum of Comparative Zoology Archives, Harvard University; published in Sarah Burns and John Davis, eds., *American Art to 1900: A Documentary History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009), 260-61.

5 Renamed the Children's Warbler after the secretary of the Royal Society in London, the bird appeared in plate 35 of Audubon's *Birds of America*. Audubon later removed the Children's Warbler from the octavo edition, suggesting he realized that this was not a new species but rather was an immature Yellow Warbler. See Roger Tory Peterson, "On Audubon and Those Confusing Warblers," in *All Things Considered: My Birding Adventures* (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2007), 2.

6 John James Audubon, "Account of the Method of Drawing Birds Employed by J.J. Audubon, Esq. F.R.S.E. In a Letter to a Friend," *Edinburgh Journal of Science* 8, no. 1 (January 1828): 48-54.

7 John James Audubon, "The White-Headed Eagle," in *Ornithological Biography*, vol. 1 (Edinburgh, 1831), 160-69.

FIG. 2

encounter with the bald eagle, he decided that it was an unsuitable emblem for the nation.

In addition to moral judgments, he often imposed contemporary social standards onto the animal kingdom. His passage on the courting rituals of the Ruby-Throated Hummingbird is particularly suggestive.[8] Audubon's writing portrays the male hummingbird as aggressive, the female delicate and passive. Their mating seals a "blissful compact" in which the male promises faithfully to care for and bravely defend his mate. Audubon imagined the courting habits of these birds in terms of Victorian gender norms. He implicitly naturalizes the nineteenth-century social order by projecting his own values and anthropomorphizing animal behavior. This serves as a reminder that such accounts by Audubon, as with other historic figures, must always be viewed within a historical context.

Audubon's brilliant illustrations of birds afford many opportunities for formal analysis through discussions related to the art of printmaking. Christie details a wide variety of printmaking methods in his essay. Similarly, in my Introduction to Art class, I dedicate several lectures to familiarizing students with printmaking and the myriad of ways to make a reproducible image.

Audubon's printers employed a diversity of printmaking methods to create *The Birds of America* including engraving, aquatint, and lithography. Audubon's prints are masterful studies of the complex ways printmaking methods can be combined and

8 John James Audubon, "The Ruby-Throated Humming Bird," in *Ornithological Biography*, vol. 1 (Edinburgh, 1831), 248-54.
FIG. 2: John James Audubon, *The Birds of America*. Plate 31, White-headed Eagle. 1828. Image courtesy of The National Audubon Society.

refined. *The Birds of America*, and all its subsequent printings, provides an excellent opportunity to discuss the commercial way in which prints were created in the nineteenth century. As printing technologies improved, many more patrons were offered a means to participate in not only viewing work, but collecting it as well. The concept of mass-produced art, which was much less costly, allowed for the middle and lower classes to experience works of art in a way they had not previously been afforded.

The master artist Audubon produced sketches and watercolor illustrations which were then farmed out to teams of printmakers and watercolorists. William Lizars was Audubon's first engraver. He was very skilled in his craft, and became fast friends with Audubon. Lizars would create engravings and hire colorists to finish the prints. Very early on, there were several problematic issues. Audubon remained very involved and constantly checked up on the work of his team. Audubon grew concerned about the inconsistencies in color from print to print. An eventual strike of Lizars' colorists, after completing only the first ten plates, would force Audubon to seek out a new team. To his delight, he discovered that Robert Havell, Sr. and his son were extremely talented in incorporating the aquatint process into their engravings. This additional method made the colorists' job much easier, which resulted in more consistent work. The Havells would complete the remainder of the project, resulting in a monumental 435-plate publication.

In his 1828 article cited earlier, Audubon wrote, "I felt a great desire to… complete a collection not only valuable to the scientific class, but pleasing to every person."[9] Audubon hoped his illustrations would be accessible and interesting to everyone. He yearned to share his passion with society and convey a deeper understanding and appreciation for the birds he so carefully documented. Through formal, contextual, and conceptual analyses, we can begin to comprehend the intent of a master artist, eccentric character, and naturalist. It is the hope of Baylor's Department of Art & Art History and the Martin Museum of Art that this exhibition and catalogue have made Audubon and his world come to life for the "student" of art within us all, and that his wishes did, indeed, come true. §

FIG. 3

9 Audubon, 1828, 48-49.

FIG. 3 : John James Audubon, *The Birds of America.* Plate 47, *Ruby-throated Humming Birds.* 1828. Image courtesy of The National Audubon Society.

During all these years there existed within me a tendency to follow Nature in her walks.

– John James Audubon

John James Audubon

Dr. Ron Tyler
Director, Amon Carter Museum of American Art, Retired

In 1839, John James Audubon put the finishing touches on the final of four volumes of *The Birds of America*, one of the most remarkable ornithological books ever published. It consisted of 435 brilliantly colored aquatint-engravings, each measuring 39½ x 26½ inches, accompanied by five volumes of text in the *Ornithological Biography, or an Account of the Habits of the Birds of the United States of America* (Edinburgh, 1831-1839) and *A Synopsis of The Birds of North America* (Edinburgh, 1839). The folios were "each large enough to require two stout arms to raise it from the ground," as he explained. They cost about $1,000 dollars to own, roughly $23,528 in today's economy—clearly not a book for the growing middle class.[1] In it he depicted 1,065 birds (444 species) in life-size, along with hundreds of botanical illustrations and scores of insects, shells, and assorted detritus. He painted dozens of birds unknown to the scientific community, at the time, many shown in recognizable landscapes, which in themselves constituted a virtual catalog of American vistas and ecological settings, and established new standards for ornithological illustration. The "Great Work," as Audubon called it, required twelve years for production and is the largest ornithological book ever published. It immediately became a natural history and artistic landmark, influencing forever the ways in which birds are perceived and natural history artists see the world. Audubon produced "a work that must remain to the end of time a monument of unexampled perseverance, worthy of an ardent lover of Nature," wrote a critic for the London *Monthly Chronicle*. "It is the only work that represents birds as they are."[2]

His perseverance is key to understanding Audubon and his amazing accomplishments, for he was thirty-five years old (at a time when the average life span of Americans was in the mid-30s) when he finally yielded to his calling, following the failure of his mercantile business, personal bankruptcy, debtors'

FIG. 1

1 Audubon called the book the "double elephant folio." The largest sheet of paper commonly in use at the time was called the elephant folio (about 23 to 25 inches tall), but Audubon wanted his birds reproduced the size of life and ordered the largest sheet that the papermakers could supply, which he called the double elephant folio. The quotation is in "Small-Headed Flycatcher," in John James Audubon, *Ornithological Biography, Or An Account of the Habits of the Birds of the United States of America: Accompanied by Descriptions of the Objects Represented in the Work Entitled* The Birds of America (5 vols.; Edinburgh, 1831-1839), 5: 291. ; "Consumer Price Index (Estimate) 1800-", Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis. www.minneapolisfed.org/community/financial-and economic-education/cpi-calculator-information/consumer-price-index-1800. The estimated 2018 CPI is based on the change in the CPI from first quarter 2017 to first quarter 2018. This is divided by the CPI of the given comparison year, and finally multiplied by the total paid in the same comparison year to determine the 2018 price/dollar value.

2 London *Monthly Chronicle* (September 1840), quoted in Albion (New York), September 26, 1846, 318, col. 1. Waldemar H. Fries, *The Double Elephant Folio: The Story of Audubon's Birds of America* (Chicago: American Library Association, 1973), is the standard work on Audubon's book, but several copies of the book have surfaced since Fries' work, and others have changed owners.

prison, and the deaths of his infant daughters in 1817 and 1819. Born on April 26, 1785, at his father's sugar plantation in the French colony of Santo Domingo, present-day Haiti, the illegitimate son of French Navy Lieutenant Jean Audubon and Jeanne Rabine, a French chambermaid, he grew up in France under the doting care of his stepmother, Anne. His earliest memories were of nature, and his first demonstrated talent was the ability to draw. Anne allowed young Audubon leisurely walks through the countryside, where he sketched birds and animals, hunted, and otherwise came to love nature. His father, who lamented his son's lack of navigational and mathematical ability, tolerated his lack of discipline, but also encouraged his artistic bent. Audubon would later claim that his father had sent him to Paris sometime during 1802-1803 to study painting with the famous Jacques-Louis David, Napoleon's court painter, but this was likely one of the many strands in the complex web of half-truths and creative recollections that he wove around his early years throughout his life.[3]

To avoid conscription in the Napoleonic military, Lieutenant Audubon sent his son, with a falsified passport, to manage a family property at Mill Grove, just outside Philadelphia, Pennsylvania in 1803. His hope was that the teen would learn English and acquire working knowledge of management and farming. Instead, young Audubon continued to sketch birds and added a new enthusiasm for Lucy Bakewell, the daughter of neighbor William Bakewell. While at Mill Grove, Audubon also developed a unique method of setting up his specimens to sketch. He used thin wires like an armature to position freshly killed birds, setting them in lifelike poses. He then set them against a grid background drawn on a soft board, a common technique to transfer imagery. With an identical grid on his sketchpad, Audubon was able to overcome the problems of perspective, foreshortening, and scale. He could then paint life-size figures in intimate detail, adding characteristic attitudes that he observed in nature.[4]

Audubon was introduced to the idea of creating a large book of birds shortly after his marriage in 1808 to Lucy. Living in Louisville, Kentucky, Audubon was partner in a mercantile business with Ferdinand Rozier, a family friend from France. In March of 1810, they were approached at their store by Alexander Wilson, a dour Scottish naturalist, who was canvassing the country selling subscriptions for his handsomely illustrated and pioneering *American Ornithology* (Philadelphia, 1808-1814). Wilson showed them two volumes of his large-scale color-plate book, the first of its kind printed in America. The engravings fascinated Audubon. He was about to subscribe to Wilson's book when Rozier interrupted him, in French, insisting that not only did he not have the money to spare, but that Audubon's paintings were superior. Audubon showed Wilson his work, and they would spend the next few days bonding while hunting in the nearby woods.[5]

3 The details of Audubon's early life are chronicled in many biographies, the latest of which include Alice Ford, *John James Audubon: A Biography* (New York: Abbeville Press, 1988) and Richard Rhodes, *John James Audubon: The Making of an American* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2004). Audubon's earlier biographers, such as Francis Hobart Herrick, *Audubon the Naturalist: A History of His Life and Time* (2 vols.; New York and London: D. Appleton and Co., 1917), accept that he studied with David, but later authors, such as Rhodes, 314, conclude that the story is a fabrication; https://ourworldindata.org/life-expectancy; http://legacy.com/life-and-death/the-antebellum-era.html

4 John James Audubon, *My Style of Drawing Birds*, Intro. by Michael Zinman (Ardsley, N.Y.: Overland Press, 1979), 16-17, 22. Audubon also published a similar essay in *Edinburg Journal of Science* in 1828, and Maria Audubon (ed.) included a version of it in *Audubon and His Journals*, 2: 524-525. If Audubon had studied with David as he claimed, he probably would have been taught—or at least would have observed—a similar technique with the horizontal/vertical grid in front of the subject. Gloria K. Fiero, "Audubon the Artist," in James H. Dorman (ed.), *Audubon: A Retrospective* (Lafayette, La.: Center for Louisiana Studies, University of Southwestern Louisiana, 1990), 34-60.

FIG. 1: John James Audubon, *Self Portrait*, 1826. Audubon drew this pencil and black chalk portrait (5 ⅜ x 4 ¼ in.) for Mrs. Rathbone in gratitude for the family's support and hospitality. Image courtesy of the University of Liverpool Art Gallery & Collections, UK. Ref. No. RPXXV.8.30.

The effects of the War of 1812 and the ensuing depression of 1819 devastated Audubon, bankrupting him and causing him to be briefly jailed for unpaid debts. To generate income, Audubon turned to drawing black chalk portraits of what he referred to as the "head divine" for $5 each, about $82 today. Even during this dark period, he recalled that, "I never for a day gave up listening to the songs of our birds, or watching their peculiar habits, or delineating them in the best way that I could..."[6]

Still hesitant to professionally pursue his fascination with birds, he took a job as a taxidermist at the Western Museum of Cincinnati in 1820. There, Dr. Daniel Drake, the founder of the museum, recognized his innate artistic talent and gave him his first public exhibition showcasing his drawings. Audubon reportedly met and received encouragement from Major Stephen H. Long and his expedition party, on their way back from their highly-acclaimed journey to the Great Plains. Newly motivated, he decided that it was his duty to document all the birds of North America in a book that would be larger than Wilson's in both format and number of birds represented. "Without any Money My Talents are to be My Support and My enthusiasm my Guide in My Dificulties, the whole of which I am ready to exert to keep, and to surmount," he wrote as he embarked.[7]

After receiving positive feedback in Cincinnati, Audubon commenced what would become his life's most important work—to depict and document the birds of

FIG. 2

North America. He enlisted the help of a talented eighteen-year-old assistant, Joseph Mason, whom he had tutored at the museum. Audubon painted the birds, while Mason painted the luscious floral backgrounds.[8] They floated down the Ohio and Mississippi rivers to New Orleans, then trekked to Saint Francisville, where Lucy had taken a teaching job to provide for her husband and two young sons, John Woodhouse and Victor. In between drawing and painting birds, Audubon continued creating black chalk portraits, painted signs and murals for steamboats, and taught drawing, dancing, fencing, swimming, and arithmetic wherever he could gain employment.

His years in and around Louisiana saw Audubon's greatest development as an artist. He seemed

5 Ron Tyler, *Audubon's Great National Work: The Royal Octavo Edition of* The Birds of America (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1993), pp. 3-4. Audubon later claimed that Wilson had used some of the information gained during these days in his book without acknowledging its source. Audubon, "Whooping Crane," *Ornithological Biography*, 3: 203-204.

6 Maria R. Audubon, *Audubon and His Journals* (2 vols.; New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1897), I: 36, 38; "CPI 1800-", Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis.

7 "Audubon Journal," in Howard Corning (ed.), *Journal of John James Audubon, Made during His Trip to New Orleans in 1820-1821* (Cambridge: Business Historical Society, 1939), 3. It is questionable whether Audubon met the members of Long's expedition, for the dates of Audubon's residence in Cincinnati and the expedition's return from the Plains do not seem to correspond.

8 Rhodes, Audubon, 152, 157-171, 454. Recently discovered census records show that Mason was eighteen years of age when he set out with Audubon, rather than just entering his teens, as was published by Stanley Clisby Arthur, *Audubon: An Intimate Life of the American Woodsman* (New Orleans: Harmanson, Publisher, 1937), 99, and others

9 Michael Harwood, *Audubon Demythologized* (New York: National Audubon Society, n.d.), 10; Ford, *Audubon*, 137-8.

to draw inspiration from the woods of Bayou Sara and Saint Francisville, and his style matured. He began to depict more details, such as eyes, bills, and feet, with watercolor added to his pastels and drawings, until 1824, when he employed watercolor almost exclusively, with only occasional use of pastels that characterized his earlier work. He sought out birds and usually observed them for days in their natural environment before shooting them. He would quickly draw them on the spot and make extensive notes. He had learned that much of their brilliance and color faded soon after death. By the summer of 1822, his assistant Mason had added more than fifty vivid habitats to Audubon's growing collection of birds. Shortly thereafter, Audubon gave Mason a double-barreled shotgun, and materials to earn his way back to Cincinnati, as a way to thank him for his efforts, and they parted ways.

When Audubon set out for Philadelphia, in March 1824, to find a publisher for his book, he carried more than two hundred paintings and drawings of birds in his portfolio. He was confident that his finished works were superior to those of Wilson and the "closet naturalists" who sketched their stuffed museum models against plain white backgrounds.[9]

Illustrated books had been the favored method of disseminating scientific and technical information throughout Europe, from the time of publication of Conrad Gesner's *Historia Animalium* (4 vols.; Zurich, 1551-1558), an 800-page volume which was devoted to descriptions of birds and illustrated with more than two hundred woodcuts. Dozens of books appeared during the ensuing decades, with early explorers of the New World collecting information on birds. French artist Jaques le Moyne produced the first illustration of a North American bird in 1564 (wild turkeys, published in Theodore De Bry's *Brevis narratorio eorum quae in Florida Americae Provicia Gallsi acciderunt*…(Frankfurt, 1591)). The first illustrated book of American birds to reach the European market was Mark Catesby's *Natural History of Carolina, Florida, and the Bahama Islands* (London, 1731-43).[10] A thorough collection of illustrated natural history books became the mark of a gentleman's library, and the authors who produced such works were lionized

FIG. 3

10 Elsa Guerdrum Allen, "History of American Ornithology Before Audubon," *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*, 41 (1951), 402-404, 411, 426-442, 463-478.
11 Robert Henry Welker, *Birds and Men: American Birds in Science, Art, Literature, and Conservation, 1800-1900* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1955), 77; Sacheverell Sitwell, Handasyde Buchanan, and James Fisher, Fine Bird Books, 1700-1900 (London and New York: Collins and Van Nostrand, 1953), 9.
FIG. 2: Robert Havell, Jr., after John James Audubon, *Mocking Bird*, hand-colored aquatint engraving, 39 3⁄16 x 26 3⁄16 in., from Audubon, *The Birds of America*, plate 21. Image courtesy of The National Audubon Society. Audubon's painting proved to be controversial because he confused a blacksnake with a rattlesnake.
FIG. 3: Mark Catesby, *The Bastard Baltimore*, 1754, hand-colored engraving, 20 ¼ x 14 ¼ in. from Catesby, *The Natural History of Carolina, Florida and the Bahama Islands*… (2 vols.; London: The Author, 1731-1743), 1: plate 49. Image courtesy of The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

in the Old World and the New.[11] Audubon sought to join this company of prestigious authors.

In 1824, Audubon arrived in Philadelphia, which had been the cultural and publishing center of the new United States for a generation and still boasted noted scholars, talented artists, and publishers. He was a handsome man with shoulder-length hair but his new black suit betrayed his obvious and recent emergence from the forest. He called on an old friend from Mill Grove, Dr. James Mease, a geologist, encyclopedist, and one of the founders of the Philadelphia Athenaeum, who introduced him to twenty-one-year-old Charles-Lucien-Jules-Laurent Bonaparte, the prince of Canino and Musignano, who was also a student of ornithology.

Wilson died in 1813 before completing his book, and Bonaparte was preparing a supplement to it, *American Ornithology; or, The Natural History of Birds Inhabiting the United States, Not Given by Wilson* (Philadelphia, 1825-1833). Impressed with Audubon's work, the prince invited the artist to a meeting of the Academy of Natural Sciences and, later, to submit a painting for inclusion in his book. However, Audubon's claim to have eclipsed Wilson's scope, style, and accuracy of publication was not well-received by the Philadelphia savants. Bonaparte's printer, Alexander Lawson, rejected Audubon's paintings as "too soft, too much like oil painting" to be engraved. When Bonaparte commissioned Audubon to paint *A Pair of Boat-Tailed Grackles* and insisted that it be included in his book, the engraver had Alexander Rider redraw the picture. To Audubon's chagrin, the edited version was published as Plate 4 in Bonaparte's *American Ornithology*.[12]

Spurned in his adopted country, America, Audubon sailed for England in May of 1826, to find a printer for his massive double elephant folio publication. "I had finally determined to break through all bonds, and pursue my ornithological pursuits," he later wrote. "My best friends solemnly regarded me as a madman, and my wife and family alone gave me encouragement."[13] Among the sheaf of letters of introduction that he carried

FIG. 4

FIG. 5

12 Charles Lucian Bonaparte, *American Ornithology; or, The Natural History of Birds Inhabiting the United States, Not Given by Wilson* (Philadelphia: Carey, Lea & Carey, 1825), I: plate 4 (opp. p.35). There is an amazing coincidence associated with this painting. In 1984, when the Fort Worth artists Stuart and Scott Gentling were at work on their tribute to Audubon, *Of Birds and Texas* (Fort Worth: Gentling Editions, 1986, containing fifty-three color plates printed on 22 x 28-inch folio sheets), they spotted the painting, attributed to Audubon, for sale at a Philadelphia gallery. They convinced themselves that it was Audubon's long-lost painting and purchased it. Their hunch proved to be correct, and they used the funds from its sale to complete their massive book. Stuart Gentling, "Of Birds and Texas, Audubon and Us," in Stuart Gentling and Scott Gentling, *Of Birds and Texas* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2001), 23-26.

13 Lucy Audubon (ed.), *The Life of John James Audubon, the Naturalist*, Intro. by Jas. Grant Wilson (New York: G. P. Putnam & Son, 1869), 93-94.

14 John James Audubon, *John James Audubon's Journal of 1826: The Voyage to* The Birds of America, ed. by Daniel Patterson (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 2011), 65, 309.

15 Audubon (ed.), *Audubon and His Journals*, I: 153; http://www.legacy.com/life-and-death/the-antebellum-era.html.

was one addressed to the prominent Rathbone family in Liverpool, the first importers of American cotton to England. This letter permitted Audubon an audience with the family. In front of this sophisticated and influential family and their friends, a nervous Audubon showed his portfolio of bird paintings. "These *Friends* praised *my* Birds, and I felt the praise," he joyfully recorded in his journal. It was the first of many compliments and encouragement that he received.[14] A trip to Edinburgh, Scotland later that year, where he met with one of Britain's foremost engravers, William H. Lizars, was even more rewarding: Audubon opened his portfolio, as the printmaker saw the turkey cock and exclaimed, "My God! I never saw anything like this before." He immediately agreed to engrave Audubon's birds, and the "Great Work" was finally underway.[15]

FIG. 6

"It is now a month since my work has been begun by Mr. W. H. Lizars of this City," Audubon wrote on December 10, 1826. "It is to come out in numbers of 5 prints, all the size of life and one the same size Paper of my largest drawings, that is called double elephant."[16] Even with a page of that size, Audubon had to construe the poses of several larger birds to make them fit. The whooping crane (Havell 226), for example, is depicted stooping down to nip at a newborn alligator, and the great blue heron (Havell 211) bends in a similar manner as it approaches the water, as both birds can naturally be as tall as 60 inches compared to the 39.5-inch length of the largest of the double elephant pages.

Audubon was painfully shy, but his reception in Scotland helped him gain confidence.[17] With the first five of Lizars' prints in hand, and letters of introduction gathered from many of his new friends, he set out on his quest for subscribers in April 1827 with London, then the center of the natural history world, as his destination. He paused at Newcastle upon Tyne to visit with well-known engraver Thomas Bewick, then passed through York, Leeds, Manchester, and Liverpool,

16 Audubon, *Journal of 1826*, 339.

17 Audubon (ed.), *Audubon and His Journals*, 1: 211; Ford, *Audubon*, 219.

18 Audubon to Victor Audubon, Liverpool, Sept. 1, 1826, in Howard Corning (ed.), *Letters of John James Audubon, 1826-1840* (2 vols.; Boston: Club of Odd Volumes, 1930), 4; Audubon (ed.), *Audubon and His Journals*, 1: 221 and opposite page.

FIG. 4: John James Audubon, *Boat Tailed Grackles*, 1826, watercolor, ink, pencil and pastel on paper, 10 ⅝ x 14 in. Image courtesy of Christies, New York. Audubon submitted this painting to Bonaparte.

FIG. 5: Alexander Rider after John James Audubon, *Great Crow Blackbird & Female*, 1826, hand-colored aquatint engraving, approx. 12 x 13 ½ in., by Alexander Lawson, from Charles Lucien Bonaparte, *American Ornithology*; or, *The Natural History of Birds Inhabiting the United States, Not Given by Wilson* (4 vols.; Philadelphia: [Vol. 1] Samuel Augustus Mitchell, [Vols. 2, 3, and 4] Carey & Lea, 1825-1833), 1: plate 4 opp. p. 35. Image courtesy of the John Carter Brown Library at Brown University. Lawson and Rider redraw Audubon's image.

again, showing his prints and selling subscriptions. As he approached London, his friends urged the importance of cutting his "flowing, curling locks" in hopes of making him more presentable to the cognoscenti, those with superior knowledge and understanding of the fine arts, literature, and fashion. Audubon yielded: "This day my Hairs were sacrificed, and the will of god usurped by the will of Man," he lamented in his journal.[18] His visit to the city was truly succesful when King George IV subscribed, giving Audubon the right to claim patronage from the king.[19]

Audubon's perseverance was tested again shortly after his arrival to London, when he received a letter from Lizars telling him that the colorists had gone on strike, with only ten plates printed and most still uncolored. Desperate to find a replacement, Audubon sought out Robert Havell, Sr., whose natural history gallery was on the path to and from his lodging and studio space on Great Russell Street. Impressed with the engravings that Havell displayed, Audubon offered him the job. The fifty-eight-year-old printer recognized Audubon's boldness and immense potential, but was reluctant to take on what he realized would be a multi-year commitment. Only when his son, Robert Jr., agreed to join him in the work did he agree to take on the task.[20]

With the publication now in good hands, Audubon departed for Paris to continue selling subscriptions. There, the Baron Georges Léopold Chrétien Frédéric Dagobert Cuvier, preeminent naturalist and zoologist of the duke of Orléans' Museum of Natural History, was so taken with his prints that he made an immediate appointment with the Duke (later King Louis Phillipe I, ruling until 1848), who promptly signed his name to Audubon's subscription list. Audubon exchanged prints with the noted flower painter Pierre Joseph Redouté, and at a meeting of the French Royal Academy of Sciences, Cuvier pronounced Audubon's work "the greatest monument yet erected by Art to Nature."[21]

Audubon returned home in April 1829 to convince Lucy to join him and to continue his search for new birds to paint.[22] He found that his positive reception in Europe had not noticeably changed how his

FIG. 7

19 Fries, Double Elephant Folio, 17-19.
20 Audubon to Lucy Audubon, London, August 6, 1827, in Corning (ed.), Letters, I: 29-34; and Fries, *Double Elephant Folio*, 23-26.
21 Herrick, *Audubon*, I: 1, 410-412; Ford, *Audubon*, 243, 487.
22 Carolyn E. Delatte, *Lucy Audubon: A Biography* (Baton Rouge and London: Louisiana State University Press, 1982), 203.
FIG. 6: Robert Havell, Jr., after John James Audubon, *Hooping [sic] Crane*, 1834, hand-colored aquatint engraving, 38 ⅛ x 25 ⁷⁄₁₆ in., from Audubon, *The Birds of America*, plate 226. Image courtesy of The National Audubon Society.
FIG. 7: Robert Havell, Jr., after John James Audubon, *Great Blue Heron*, 1834, hand-colored aquatint engraving, 36 ½ x 24 in., from Audubon, *The Birds of America*, plate 211. Image courtesy of The National Audubon Society.
FIG. 8: Havell's Zoological Gallery at 77 Oxford Street, London, ca. 1834. The print of Audubon's turkey cock is on the table at the right center. Image courtesy of Wikimedia Commons.

own countrymen responded. His article on rattlesnakes had been published in the *Journal of the Franklin Institute* the previous year, causing such a furor that the editor admitted that he had not read it. Audubon exhibited his "immense book" at the Lyceum of Natural History in New York, currently the New York Academy of Sciences, and received an enthusiastic review, but sold no subscriptions. During several months of working along the Atlantic coast, then in Philadelphia, Audubon employed a landscape painter, George Lehman, to provide landscape backgrounds for his birds. After working in Pennsylvania, in the Great Pine Forest near Mauch Chunk, and in New Jersey, Audubon finally went to Louisiana to join Lucy. He had painted ninety-five superb watercolors of birds and sixty different eggs, which he originally intended to include in his book but finally abandoned the idea. As he and Lucy departed for England in early January 1830, he wrote Havell that, "I will carry with me some Drawings that I know will make the *graver* and the *Acid* Grin again.[23]

Audubon had not originally planned any text to accompany the engravings, for his unlettered comments were the result of long and intense observations rather than a scientific understanding of species, as his other papers before various learned societies had shown. The natural history world was also undergoing change. The gentleman naturalist was being replaced by trained specialists, and his days were numbered. Still, Audubon became convinced that his notes were primary sources and full of useful observations. "I know that I am not a scholar," he wrote, but "…I can at least put down plain truths, which may be useful and perhaps interesting." To protect himself against futher blunders, he enlisted

FIG. 8

professional assistance in the person of William MacGillivray of Edinburgh, a talented naturalist and an able writer and teacher. Their collaboration lasted until the final volume of the *Ornithological Biography* and the *Synopsos*, a systematic index, were completed in 1839.[24]

A number of Audubon's subscribers fell by the wayside as the years passed and the project suffered delays. He had not yet completed his research, and he made three trips back to the United States to paint more birds. He was even arrested in Philadelphia on charges of debt from his Henderson, Kentucky days. Havell's coloring also varied. Audubon initially had depended upon friends to oversee the work in his absence, but when his sons joined the family, he promptly tasked everyone

23 Audubon to Lucy, New York, May 10, 1829, in Corning (ed.), *Letters*, I: 81-86; Audubon to Havell, Beech Grove, La., Dec. 16, 1829, in Herrick, *Audubon*, 1: 432-433; and *New York American*, quoted in *The Hillsborough Recorder* (North Carolina), May 27, 1829, 3, col. 1.

24 Herrick, *Audubon*, 1: 438; Fries, *Double Elephant Folio*, 47-55. Audubon published his text separate from his prints because, if the folios had contained text, he would have been obligated under the British Copyright Act of 1709 to deposit a copy in each of nine libraries throughout the United Kingdom.

25 Tyler, *Audubon's Great National Work*, 35; Herrick, *Audubon*, 1: 384; Fries, *Double Elephant Folio*, 18-19, 44, 54; Peter B. Logan, *Audubon: America's Greatest Naturalist and His Voyage of Discovery to Labrador* (San Francisco: Ashbryn Press, 2016); Audubon to Henslow, London, April 28, 1831, in John James Audubon, *Three Letters of John James Audubon to John Stevens Henslow* (San Francisco: Grabhorn Press for the Members of the Roxburghe Club, 1943), [5].

26 Audubon to Victor Audubon, Charleston, January 14, 1834, in Corning (ed.), *Letters*, 2: 6.

27 Audubon to Victor Audubon, Charleston, January 14, 1834, in Corning, (ed.), *Letters* 2: 6; Gary A. Reynolds, *Audubon and His Sons* (New York: Grey Art Gallery and Study Center, New York University, 1982), 45-47; Waldemar H. Fries, "Joseph Bartholomew Kidd and the Oil Paintings of Audubon's *Birds of America*," *Art Quarterly* 26

with jobs. Lucy aided him with copying the text, and twenty-one-year-old son, Victor, learned to supervise Havell's work. Some subscribers grew tired of waiting and dropped their subscriptions. King George died in 1830, and King Charles X of France, also a subscriber, was driven from the throne in the same year and fled to England. Havell Sr. virtually retired from the project that same year and died in 1832. His son, Robert Jr., who was

FIG. 9

perhaps an even better printer, took over the project.[25]

The "Great Work" was a collaborative achievement, organized in the manner of the old master studio. Audubon had employed several assistants along the way—Joseph Mason, George Lehman, Maria Martin, Havell, and, later, his son Victor—to paint the backgrounds. Meanwhile, Joseph Kidd produced perhaps one hundred oil copies of his bird paintings, which he sold to collectors who preferred oil paintings to watercolor.

Havell's feat of engraving, printing, and coloring the *Birds* is a major achievement in itself. The rush to finish the project required him to supply increasingly complex parts of the picture when Audubon did not have time to finish the composition. The 1832 print of the *Northern Goshawk* (Havell, plate 141) is an example of what could go wrong. To save time, Audubon cut two birds, the adult goshawk (left) and Cooper's hawk (right) (see pg. 26) from his earlier pastel drawings and pasted them on the same page with an immature goshawk that he had painted in 1830. He left it to Havell to supply the landscape. Audubon did not want his subscribers to know that he worked in this manner and cautioned his son Victor to "take great care of those Drawings and show them to a *very few* of your friends." In the case of the goshawk, however, he paid a severe price, for Havell confused the perspective, and the resulting image must be the worst composition in the book.[26] Fortunately, there are better examples of Havell's contributions, such as the plate of the *Barn Owl* (Havell 171).

The Birds of America was the last and greatest bird book to be produced by aquatint engraving in Great Britain, for in September 1839, Havell sold his business and, with his wife and daughter, moved to New York.[27]

(Autumn1967): 339-346. Ford, *Audubon*, 437-445, lists all Kidd bird portraits copied after Audubon.

28 Ford, Audubon, 358; Suzanne M. Low, *An Index and Guide to Audubon's Birds of America* (New York: Abbeville Press and the American Museum of Natural History, 1988), 16, 82, 186-191; Christine E. Jackson, *Bird Engravings: The Illustrators and Their Books, 1655-1855* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1985), 32, 245, 254; and "Ornithology," *North American Review*, 50 (April 1840), 388.

29 Margaret Curzon Welch, "John James Audubon and His American Audience: Art, Science, and Nature, 1830-1860" (Ph.D. Dissertation, Univ. of Pennsylvania, 1988), 163.

30 "Audubon's Gallery," *Morning Herald* (New York), October 5, 1839, 2, col. 3; Audubon to Harlan, in Ford, *Audubon*, 364 (quoting from a manuscript in the Yale Audubon collections that cannot now be located). See also Tyler, *Audubon's Great National Work*, 46; and H. E. Scudder (ed.), *Recollections of Samuel Breck with Passages from His Note-Books* (1771-1862) (Philadelphia: Porter and Coates, 1877), 260-261.

FIG. 9: Robert Havell, Jr., after John James Audubon, *Barn Owl*, 1833, hand-colored aquatint engraving, etching, approx. 39 x 26 in., from Audubon, *The Birds of America*, plate 171. Image courtesy of The National Audubon Society.

Audubon returned home as a conquering hero. While some of the Philadelphia circle still criticized him, the *North American Review* called his book an "imperishable monument," and a writer for the *New York Mirror* concluded, "Audubon is a man of genius, and he has done more for the science of ornithology than any man since the days of Wilson. He deserves well at the hands of this country."[28]

History would have forgiven Audubon if he had retired to the simple life upon completion of this massive project. He had given the world a masterpiece and could have found a peaceful niche in the forests of Louisiana, the Carolinas, or Pennsylvania, where he could have enjoyed his celebrity. Lucy could have returned to teaching, and their sons would have made their own way. But Audubon never sat idle. The fifty-four-year-old naturalist turned his "holy zeal" toward two other huge projects as soon as he got back to the United States, promising his subscribers that if he was unable to complete the publications, his sons would do so. One became *The Viviparous Quadrupeds of North America*, envisioned as a publication on mammals on the same order as *Birds*. The other was the fulfillment of his "Great Work", the Royal Octavo Edition of the birds.[29]

Audubon had finished *The Birds of America* with approximately 165 subscribers, many fewer than he had hoped. He still had fifteen copies of the book to sell, and American subscribers owed him more than $10,000. However, he owed Havell several thousand dollars for extra plates that he had printed before leaving England. Immediately upon his return, he exhibited about five hundred of his bird paintings at the New York Lyceum of Natural History, evoking an enthusiastic review in the New York *Morning Herald*, but was unable to sell any additional copies of his book.

"If I had an extraordinary fat hog to pedestal, with a comfortable bed of straw, I could draw thousands from far and near," he complained to a friend, "but paintings, however beautiful or well done, will not attract enough people to cover the expense." He wrote longtime friend, Dr. Richard Harlan that, "I find myself very little the better in point of recompense for the vast amount of expedition I have been at to accomplish the task."[30]

Victor had preceded Audubon and Lucy to New York and began laying the groundwork for what they called the "Little Work." Audubon had been planning a smaller version of *The Birds of America* for years, because it was an obvious use of the images and text that he had on-hand. Priced at $100, equal to about $2,510 today, for 500 images and text, bound in seven volumes, it would reach a growing middle class of merchants and professionals.[31] As with the double elephant folio, it was a family affair. Victor managed the project and the family business. John Woodhouse, Audubon's younger son, reduced Havell's copper plates into 10 x 7-inch drawings with the aid of a camera lucida, and Audubon set out again on the road to sell subscriptions. When Havell declined to print the plates, Audubon turned to lithography and to J.T.

31"CPI 1800-", Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis.

32 "Audubon's Birds of America," *The Atlas* (Boston), Dec. 17, 1839, 2, col. 2. John Woodhouse produced the small drawings until his wife became sick and died. Audubon took over production of the small drawings in addition to his sales trips and work on the *Quadrupeds*. At one point, Audubon had more than 1,200 subscribers on his list, but not all of them completed their subscriptions. Tyler, *Audubon's Great National Work*, 47-72.

33 Yarrell to Audubon, March 10, 1841, quoted in Herrick, *Audubon*, 2: 223-234.

34 Audubon announced the *Quadrupeds* publication in July 1839 and did not receive the first number of the octavo *Birds* until November. Victor learned of the decision, if he did not already know of it, in a letter from Lucy, June 30, 1839, John James Audubon Papers, Princeton University Library, quoted in Shirley Streshinsky, *Audubon: Life and Art in the American Wilderness* (New York: Villard Books, 1993), 327. Early articles announcing the *Quadrupeds* publication appeared in the *New-York Whig*, Sept. 14, 1839, 4, col. 2; the *Alexandria Gazette* (Virginia), Sept. 16, 1839, 6, col. 2; New York *Evening Post*, Sept. 18, 1839, 2, col. 1; and *New York Herald*, Sept. 20, 1839, 2, col. 3; Charleston *Southern Patriot*, Sept. 20, 1839, 2, col. 3, quoting the *Baltimore American*. *The Albion* (New York), Sept. 4, 1841, 7, col. 3, is the first paper to mention that Audubon had the

Bowen in Philadelphia, who had attracted his attention with the production of Thomas L. McKenney and James Hall's *History of the Indian Tribes of North America with Biographical Sketches and Anecdotes of the Principal Chiefs* (3 vols.; Philadelphia, 1833-44).

The Royal Octavo Edition, as it became known, was a huge success, with Audubon selling more than a thousand subscriptions for $100 each.[32] One of Audubon's English friends, William Yarrell, author of *A History of British Fishes* and *A History of British Birds*, spoke for many when he wrote that, "I like them much– as I could not afford to have the large work I make myself content with the small one..."[33]

During one of the worst depressions the country has ever seen, Audubon announced his second project, *The Viviparous Quadrupeds of North America*. He did so even before the first number of the Royal Octavo Edition of *The Birds of America* came off the press.[34] He initially envisioned it as a much smaller work than the double elephant folio, but it ultimately grew to 150 plates, at approximately 22 x 20 inches, bound in two volumes, and sold for $300, equal to $7,530 today.[35] It is accompanied by three volumes of text by Rev. John Bachman of Charleston, South Carolina, pastor of St. John's Lutheran Church and one of the foremost naturalists in the country. Audubon had met Bachman during his 1832 trip to Charleston, and the two immediately became friends, sharing a bond that was strengthened years later when his two sons married two of Bachman's daughters.[36]

FIG. 10

Audubon made a heralded trip into the West as a part of his quadruped research. With Victor providing timely information to friendly newspaper editors, the naturalist spent the summer of 1843 at Fort Union, a trading post near the confluence of the Yellowstone River and the Missouri River, following a 48-day, 7-hour steamboat trip. The results were disappointing insofar as numerous new species were concerned, but he returned with spirited tales of buffalo hunts, as well as accounts of a genuinely new species, the black-footed ferret (Quadrupeds 93).[37]

An encounter in Philadelphia, as Audubon was returning from his trip west, suggests the celebrity and respect that most Americans felt for him. While walking down the street, he encountered a reporter from the Philadelphia *Mercury*. The reporter wrote: "Time has set his finger lightly on him since we saw him last. He was clothed in a white blanket hunting coat, and undressed otter skin cap; his beard was grizzled, and,

"assistance" of Bachman. See also Lester D. Stephens, "Overshadowed: John Bachman's Contribution to 'The Viviparous Quadrupeds of North America,'" *South Carolina Historical Magazine*, 115 (No. 4, Oct. 2014), 282-303.

35 "CPI 1800-", Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis.

36 See Jay Shuler, *Had I the Wings: The Friendship of Bachman & Audubon* (Athens and London: University of Georgia Press, 1995); Charles T. Butler (ed.), *Audubon's Last Wilderness Journey: The Viviparous Quadrupeds of North America*, Intro. by Ron Tyler (Auburn, AL: Julie Collins Smith Museum of Fine Art, Auburn University, in Association with D Giles Limited, London, 2018).

FIG. 10: J. T. Bowen after John Woodhouse Audubon, *Nine-Banded Armadillo*. Male. 1848, hand-colored lithograph, 21 13/16 x 27 15/16 in., from Audubon and Bachman, *The Viviparous Quadrupeds of North America* (Philadelphia, 1846-1848), plate 146. Image courtesy of the Amon Carter Museum of American Art, Fort Worth.

with his moustache, had been suffered to grow very long. On his shoulder, Natty Bumpo-fashion, he carried his rifle, in a deer-skin cover; and his whole appearance was characteristic of his character for wild enterprise and untiring energy. He went immediately to Sanderson's; and there he was quite the lion of the afternoon."[38]

Audubon brought the "Little Work" to conclusion in the spring of 1844 and issued the first volume of *Quadrupeds* in late January 1845. With the second volume near completion in March of 1846, Victor informed Bachman that Audubon was withdrawing from the project because of failing eyesight.[39] Victor and John Woodhouse completed the third folio volume in 1848. Audubon died in 1851, before the final volume of Bachman's text was published in 1854. The sons continued to publish both works in octavo editions and eventually sold the rights to Roe Lockwood & Sons, who continued to publish them, including a full-size edition of the folio *Quadrupeds* in 1855. The family had maintained the copper engraving plates of the double elephant folio for years, and in 1859 John Woodhouse signed contracts with New York chromolithographer Julius Bien and Company and Roe Lockwood to print, sell, and distribute a full-size reprint. Unfortunately, only about half of the edition was completed by the time the Civil War broke out in 1861.[40] However, many editions of both *The Birds of America* and *The Viviparous Quadrupeds of North America* were issued subsequently, and continue to be produced today.

FIG. 11

Despite his stunning contributions to the natural history and literature of our country, Audubon is not usually granted equal recognition as a great American artist. Perhaps as the painter George Catlin observed, Audubon's "works would seem to hold a rank between living nature and art." In fact, one reason for his continuing popularity is his paintings combine elements of contemporary portrait, genre, and landscape painting that any romantic would have recognized, and his writings elaborate upon and deepen that context. By intuitively imbuing each image with his Romantic proclivities, he moved beyond illustration and confronted his audience with the spirit, energy, and violence of nature, earning an as yet unrecognized place among nineteenth-century American artists. §

37 Sarah E. Boehme, "Omega: John James Audubon's Final Artistic Journey," in Boehme, *John James Audubon in the West: The Last Expedition; Mammals of North America* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., Publishers, in association with the Buffalo Bill Historical Center, 2000), 35-69.

38 Philadelphia *Mercury* quoted in the *Philadelphia Saturday Courier,* November 11, 1843, 2, col. 2.

39 Philadelphia *Mercury* quoted in the *Philadelphia Saturday Courier*, November 11, 1843, 2, col. 2.

40 Joseph Sabin, *A Dictionary of Books Relating to America, From its Discovery to the Present Time* (29 vols.; New York: Joseph Sabin and various publishers, 1868-1936, 1: 316. The seven-volume octavo text was bound in five volumes to accompany the chromolithographed edition. Tyler, *Audubon's Great National Work*, 127. See also "George Roe Lockwood," in *The Publisher's Weekly*, 70 (August 18, 1906), 368. The octavo edition of *Birds* was reprinted six times during the nineteenth century and continues in print today.

FIG. 11: Unidentified artist, copy after John Woodhouse Audubon, *John James Audubon*, 1812-1862, ca. 1841. Oil on canvas, 28 1⁄16 x 21 7⁄8 Image courtesy of the National Portrait Gallery

I never for a day gave up listening to the songs of our birds, or watching their peculiar habits, or delineating them in the best way I could.

– John James Audubon

John James Audubon, *The Birds of America*
Plate 1: *Wild Turkey, Meleagris Gallopavo, Male. American Cane. Mugia macrosperma*
Offset lithograph, photomechanical reproduction, 15 ½ x 11 ⅛ in.
Printed by the New York Graphic Society, ca. 1950
Gift of Mr. Max N. Bodine
Martin Museum of Art, 1985.01.001

Wild Turkey. MELEAGRIS GALLOPAVO. Linn. *Male. American Cane. Arundinaria macrosperma.*

Drawn from nature by J.J.Audubon, F.R.S. F.L.S.

Engraved by W.H.Lizars Edin.r
Retouched by R.Havell Jun.r

May all the Abundance of America be yours to enjoy throughout the Coming Year.

Life

The life of John James Audubon is full of tall tales that have created a larger-than-life persona, often perpetuated by Audubon himself. From rumors of his lineage, to half-truths of his background, and even fanciful stories of his travels, the man behind the myth is often hard to find, and even harder to understand at times. Through examination of his personal journals and letters, it is obvious he loved his family, the beauty of nature and birds, as well as his adopted country, America. As a young man, he struggled to find his place, repeatedly failing to find success in his business ventures. After many years of these and other difficulties, he finally answered the call to create *The Birds of America*. Through this ambitious work, Audubon found his passion and his purpose.

John James Audubon, *The Birds of America*
Plate 141: *Goshawk, Stanley Hawk. Falco Palumbarius. Adult Male. 1. Young. 2, Falco Stanleii. Adult. 3.* 1827
Hand-colored engraving and aquatint, 37 ½ x 25 ½ in.
Engraved, printed, and colored by Robert Havell
Gift of Mr. Max N. Bodine
Martin Museum of Art, 1985.01.011

John James Audubon, *The Birds of America*
Plate 251: *Brown Pelican. Pelecanus Fuscus, Male Adult*. 1860
Chromolithograph, 40 x 27 ¼ in.
Chromolithographed by J. Bien

Gift of Mr. Max N. Bodine
Martin Museum of Art, 1985.01.015

John James Audubon, *The Birds of America*
Plate 151: *Turkey Buzzard. Cathartes Aura, Male. 1. Young. 2.* 1832
Hand-colored Engraving and Aquatint, 38 x 26 in.
Engraved, printed, and colored by Robert Havell

Gift of Mr. Max N. Bodine
Martin Museum of Art, 1985.01.013

John James Audubon, *The Birds of America*
Plate 6: *Great American Hen and Young. Vulgo, Meleagris Gallopavo, Female Wild Turkey*. 1827
Hand-colored Engraving and Aquatint, 25 ¾ x 38 in.

Engraved by William Home Lizars, Printed and colored by Robert Havell Sr.
Gift of Mr. Max N. Bodine
Martin Museum of Art, 1985.01.007

John Gould, *A Monograph of Trochilidae, or Family of Hummingbirds*
Docimastes Ensiferus. 1849-1861
Hand-colored Lithograph, 22 ¼ x 15 in.
Lithographed by H.C. Richter, Printed by Hullmandel and Walton Imp.

Martin Museum of Art, 1991.67.001

John Gould, *A Monograph of Trochilidae, or Family of Hummingbirds*
Calothorax Mulsanti. ca. 1860
Hand-colored Lithograph, 22 x 15 in.
Lithographed by Elizabeth Gould, Printed by Hullmandel and Walton Imp.

Martin Museum of Art, 1991.64.001

John and Elizabeth Gould, *The Birds of Europe*
Plate 435: *Kittiwake Gull. Larus Rifsa*. 1832-1837
Hand-colored Lithograph, 14 ¾ x 21 ½ in.
Lithographed by Elizabeth Gould, Printed by C. Hullmandel

Martin Museum of Art, 1991.62.001

John and Elizabeth Gould, *The Birds of Europe*
Plate 416: *Gull Billed Tern. Sterna Anglica (Montagu).* 1862-1873
Hand-colored Lithograph, 14 ½ x 21 ½ in.
Lithographed by Elizabeth Gould, Printed by C. Hullmandel

Martin Museum of Art, 1991.63.001

Prideaux John Selby, *Illustrations of British Ornithology*
Plate 3: *Purple Heron.* 1854
Hand-colored Engraving, 27 x 21 in.
Printed by J. Whatman

Martin Museum of Art, 1991.83.001

Prideaux John Selby, *Illustrations of British Ornithology*
Plate 1: *Common Cinereous Crane.* 1854
Hand-colored Engraving, 27 x 21 ¼ in.
Printed by J. Whatman

Martin Museum of Art, 1991.82.001

Priscilla Susan Bury, British, 1799–1872, artist
Robert Havell, Jr., American (born England), 1793–1878, engraver and publisher
Hemerocallis caerulea (Common Hosta), Plate 50 from *A Selection of Hexandrian Plants*, London, 1831–34
Color aquatint with hand-coloring
15 ¾ × 16 ¾ in. (40.01 × 42.55 cm) (plate)

Priscilla Susan Bury, British, 1799–1872, artist
Robert Havell, Jr., American (born England), 1793–1878, engraver and publisher
Crinum augustum (Giant Spider Lily, Queen Emma Lily), Plate 4 from *A Selection of Hexandrian Plants*, London, 1831–34
Color aquatint with hand-coloring
18 ¼ × 23 in. (46.36 × 58.42 cm) (plate)

Minneapolis Institute of Art, The Minnich Collection, The Ethel Morrison Van Derlip Fund P.18,627
Image courtesy of the Minneapolis Institute of Art

Edward Lear
Plate 26: *Pale Headed Broad-Tail. Platycercus Palliceps.* 1860
From Sir William Jardine's *The Naturalist's Library*
Hand-colored Engraving, 4 ¼ x 6 ½ in.
Engraved by William Home Lizars

Martin Museum of Art, 2018.02.001

Hunting, fishing, drawing, and music occupied my every moment. Cares I knew not, and cared naught about them.

– John James Audubon

Work

Taking *The Birds of America* from idea to execution was no easy task for Audubon. The process, which took more than a decade, challenged the artist in many ways. Audubon spent countless hours tracking, sketching, and collecting specimens to create watercolor illustrations. After compiling all his imagery, Audubon headed to Europe to find printers, colorists, and other artisans to help him construct his subscription-based series. He employed the help of William Lizars to begin the series. While Lizars translated watercolors into copper-plate engravings, Audubon sought out the patronage of European society. As a very introverted and "frontier" gentleman, the constant barrage of people, parties, and superficial conversation became increasingly difficult for him to manage. This, coupled with a strike of artisans working on hand-coloring the engravings, created much difficulty for Audubon. He would eventually collect all his materials from Lizars, and hire Robert Havell Sr. and Jr. to complete the 435-image collection.

John James Audubon, *The Birds of America*
Plate 316: *Black-bellied Darter. Plotus Anhinga*. 1836
Hand-colored Engraving and Aquatint, 38 x 25 ¼ in.
Engraved, printed, and colored by Robert Havell
Gift of Mr. Max N. Bodine
Martin Museum of Art, 1985.01.012

John James Audubon, *The Birds of America*
Plate 186: *Pinnated Grous. Tetrao Cupido, Males. 1. 2. Female. 3. 1860.*
Lilium Superbum
Chromolithograph, 27 x 40 in.
Chromolithographed by J. Bien

Gift of Mr. Max N. Bodine
Martin Museum of Art, 1985.01.008

Robert Havell Jr., *A Collection of the Birds of Paradise*
Plate 20: *The Vie of Paradise, Female. 1835*
Hand-colored Engraving, 17 ⅛ x 11 ½ in.

Gift of Michael Kogan
McClung Museum of Natural History and Culture, The University of Tennessee, Knoxville, 2015.21.10

John Gould, *Birds of New Guinea*
Epimachus Ellioti. 1880
Pencil tracing, 20 x 15 in.

Special Collections, Kenneth Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas

John Gould, *Birds of New Guinea*
Epimachus Ellioti. 1880
Pencil tracing, blackened on verso, 20 x 15 in. (left)
Chalk, charcoal, pastel, 22 x 15 in. (right)

Special Collections, Kenneth Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas

John Gould, *Birds of New Guinea*
Epimachus Ellioti. 1880
Chalk, charcoal, pastel, 22 x 15 in. (top)
Watercolor, chalk, charcoal, pastel, 22 x 15 in. (bottom)

Special Collections, Kenneth Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas

John Gould, *Birds of New Guinea*
V.1, Plate 8, *Epimachus Ellioti*. 1880
Lithographic proof with watercolor, 22 x 15 in.
Lithography and coloring attributed to William Hart

Special Collections, Kenneth Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas

James Stewart
Plate 3: *Blackbird & Song Thrush*, ca. 1840
From Sir William Jardine's *The Naturalist's Library*
Hand-colored Engraving, 6 ½ x 4 ¼ in.
Engraved and printed by William Home Lizars

Martin Museum of Art, 1991.71.001

James Stewart
Plate 6: *Night Heron: Young & Adult*. ca. 1840
From Sir William Jardine's *The Naturalist's Library*
Hand-colored Engraving, 6 ¼ x 4 in.
Engraved and printed by William Home Lizars

Martin Museum of Art, 1991.72.001

Legacy

Audubon enjoyed a gentleman's welcome in Europe, and his "Great Work" had patronage from royalty. At the time, he would have several exhibitions of his works, and make many new friends. Once *The Birds of America* was completed, its success would lead to further editions that were even printed well into the 20th century. Audubon's sons, Victor and John Woodhouse, helped craft these editions, and assisted in the completion of *The Viviparous Quadrupeds of North America* after their father's death. Other artists, such as John Gould, would use Audubon's publication as a template for success in their own work. Today, *The Birds of America* holds little scientific merit, as further research and different classification systems are now in place. However, his publication was, and is still, an indelible artistic success. It is impossible to deny the beauty and craftsmanship of *The Birds of America*. It is celebrated and revered as much today as it was when created. His passion for illustrating nature and the birds dwelling within it, along with his lasting influence on modern-day conservation and preservation through dedicated efforts of Audubon Societies in most every community have helped solidify the everlasting legacy of John James Audubon.

John James Audubon, *The Birds of America*
Plate 26: *Carolina Parrot. Psittacus Carolinensis, Males. 1. Females. 2. Young. 3.* 1860
Cocklebur Xanthium Strumarium
Chromolithograph, 40 x 27 in
Chromolithographed by J. Bien
Gift of Mr. Max N. Bodine
Martin Museum of Art, 1985.01.009

John James Audubon, *The Birds of America*
Plate 426: *Californian Vulture. Cathartes Californianus, Old Male*. 1838
Hand-colored Engraving and Aquatint, 38 x 26 in.
Engraved, printed, and colored by Robert Havell

Gift of Mr. Max N. Bodine
Martin Museum of Art, 1985.01.014

John James Audubon, *The Birds of America*
Plate 246: *Eider Duck. Fuligula Mollissima. Male. 1. Female. 2.* 1860
Chromolithograph, 40 x 27 in.
Chromolithographed by J. Bien

Gift of Mr. Max N. Bodine
Martin Museum of Art, 1985.01.010

John James Audubon, *The Viviparous Quadrupeds of North America*
Plate 56: *American Bison or Buffalo. Bos Americanus, Male. 1845* (top); and Plate 21: *Grey Fox. Canis (Vulpes) Virginianus*. 1843 (bottom)
Hand-colored Lithograph 21 ¼ x 27 ¼ in. (top) and 22 x 28 in. (bottom)
Lithographed, printed, and colored by J.T. Bowen, Philadelphia

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Gift of Mr. Max N. Bodine
Martin Museum of Art, 1985.01.002 (top) 1985.01.005a (bottom)

John Woodhouse Audubon, *The Viviparous Quadrupeds of North America*
Plate 112: *Californian Hare. Lepus Californicus, Gray.* 1847
Hand-colored Lithograph, 21 ½ x 27 in.
Lithographed, printed, and colored by J.T. Bowen, Philadelphia

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Gift of Mr. Max N. Bodine
Martin Museum of Art, 1985.01.004

Prideaux John Selby, British, 1788 - 1867, artist; William Lizars, Scottish, 1788 - 1859, engraver
Great Crested Grebe, Plate LXXIII from *Illustrations of British Ornithology*, 2 vols., Edinburgh,1819-1834
Hand-colored engraving
15 7/8 × 21 5/8 in. (40.32 × 54.93 cm) (plate)

Minneapolis Institute of Art, The Minnich Collection, The Ethel Morrison Van Derlip Fund, 1966 P.19,762
Image courtesy of the Minneapolis Institute of Art

John James Audubon, *The Birds of America*
Plate 32: *Black billed Cuckoo. Coccyzus Erythrophthalmus, Male. 1. F. 2. Plant Magnolia Grandiflora*
Photolithographic reproduction, 18 x 22 ⅛ in.
Printed by A.P.P. Co. Inc. New York, 1937

Gift of Mr. Max N. Bodine
Martin Museum of Art, 1985.01.003

Printing Passion: Audubon's *Birds of America*

David G. Christie
Print Specialist, New York Public Library

The Birds of America, a monumental work of ornithological illustration published from 1827 to 1838 by John James Audubon (1785-1851), continues to astonish. This is due to many factors, one of which is the ambitious scope of Audubon's project itself: to catalog as many birds as he could literally get his hands on during his wilderness-wanderings throughout America. For Audubon in the early nineteenth century, this meant an area bounded by the Atlantic Ocean to the east, the Mississippi River to the west, south to the Florida Keys, and as far north as Labrador– an immense territory to tackle largely on foot, as he did. The end result was 435 large and brilliantly colored illustrations of birds native to that zone, issued in eighty-seven parts[1] of five prints each over the course of eleven years and intended, ultimately, to be bound into four volumes. No one had yet published such an impressive study of the subject.

Another factor in the astonishment of *The Birds of America*, surely more immediate, is the extravagant beauty of the illustrations. The birds are depicted in lively and characteristic activity, their plumage displayed in various animated poses, in full-page settings depicting their natural habitat and food sources. The lush and remarkably nuanced coloring is complemented by a narrative drama or exquisite grace to excite the viewer's attention. Subject and setting are given equal consideration, resulting in impressive pictorial works that transcend mere illustration to enter the realm of fine art.

Even reproduced as postcards, the *Birds* are dazzling, so it is all the more understandable that yet another factor in their enduring astonishment is the immense scale of the original plates. For Audubon, it was imperative that the birds be represented in actual size, which, for some of the larger birds, necessitated using some of the largest paper produced at the time. The sheets are about thirty by forty inches, a format designated "double elephant folio" by the papermakers.[2]

From a contemporary perspective, *The Birds of America* is something of an oddity. It is part scientific treatise, part luxury picture book, part novelty. It combines objective reportage with subjective embellishment, resulting in mostly accurate, informative portraits of each bird that are also beautiful works of art and, ultimately, the personal expressions of a passionate enthusiast. A review of Audubon's work in relation to other illustrated natural histories of birds aids in understanding this complexity by locating the book in a sprawling evolution of style. Examining Audubon's innovations in representation as well as the technology he used to reproduce it helps to explain how the *Birds* became an achievement so monumental that it stands

1 It was common in the nineteenth century to publish a large work in parts over the course of years and to fund the endeavor through subscriptions. Good-faith payments for the early parts supplied the funds needed to produce the latter parts, and ideally a profit could be made by the end of the publication

2 James Whatman of London. See, in general, Thomas Balston, James Whatman, Father & Son (London: Methuen, 1957). Regarding the term "folio" and the sizes of books, see fn. 8.

as the pivot on which the art of animal illustration inexorably turned.

Though passion is tricky to quantify, it is clear that Audubon's strong emotions regarding the birds were the impetus behind the extraordinary appearance of *The Birds of America*. In the opening lines of his autobiography, he explains, "the productions of Nature that lay spread all around...soon became my playmates… I felt that an intimacy with them, not consisting of friendship merely, but bordering on phrenzy, must accompany my steps through life." He later specified, "None but aërial companions suited my fancy."[3] Audubon never succeeded in his business ventures "doubtless because," he stated, "my whole mind was ever filled with my passion for rambling and admiring those objects of nature from which alone I reserved the purest gratifaction."[4] A brief comparison with other projects in the same vein suggests a category of work in which passion takes precedence over any other motivation–what one might call "passion projects."

Before Audubon

From the beginning of printmaking in the West, it was common for text to be associated with images, as was the case in playing cards, devotional prints, broadsides,[5] and the earliest printed books. Initially such imagery, and even the text, was created in the medium of woodcut, a type of relief printing accomplished by carving away the negative space around a desired image on the flat surface of a block of wood so that the image stands in relief. Although letterpress type is cast from metal, it also presents a raised surface, and could therefore be inked and printed simultaneously with woodcut in a relief press.

One of the earliest Western attempts to account for all history and knowledge in a printed format is the *Liber chronicarum* of Hartmann Schedel, commonly known as the *Nuremberg Chronicle*, after the city in which it was published in 1493. It is a copiously illustrated history of the world as it was known to Europeans at the time, beginning with the Christian account of the creation, wending through often fantastical descriptions of the physical environs and cultures of different places around the known world, and concluding with the Last Judgment and end of the world more or less as predicted in the book of Revelation.

The *Chronicle's* woodcut illustration to the fifth

FIG. 1

3 Audubon, *Ornithological Biography*, 5 vols. (Edinburgh: A. Black, 1831-39), I:v-vi.

4 Audubon, *Ornithological Biography,* I:x.

5 A broadside was a single sheet, often an announcement or advertisement, printed with both text and image on one side. Broadsides constituted the majority of printed ephemera in Europe and the Americas in the early modern period.

6 Genesis 1:20-23.

FIG. 1: Anonymous artist, *Liber Chronicarum*, *The fifth day of creation: birds and sea creatures,* ("Nuremberg Chronicle") [Nuremberg: Anton Koberger, 1493]. Image courtesy of Wikimedia Commons.

day of creation,[6] during which God called into being sea creatures and birds, is overwhelmingly dedicated to the latter. A lively and surprising array, with songbirds, an owl, and a peacock, is placed on and around a shared tree in a common landscape. Two seem to be mating in mid-air, and the owl is shown tending to its prey, a dove. In their poses and attitudes, in the delineation of their peculiar physical attributes, in the artist's choice to include dramatic and narrative elements, this work presages the concerns in representation that would be common to all bird illustrators in the coming centuries.

One early natural history text, with three volumes dedicated exclusively to birds, was that of Ulisse Aldrovandi (1522-1605). His *Ornithologiae hoc est de avibus historiae* was published in three volumes in Bologna from 1599-1603. The sources for Aldrovandi's printed birds were quite similar to what would be Audubon's: a large collection of skins and drawings. The result was an astounding 685 woodcuts with biological data on each bird plus commentary on cultural references in the human realm. In the illustrations, each bird is isolated and given a hint of physical environment such as a tree branch or patch of ground. Though most are depicted in static profile, some are shown actively engaging with a food source, such as the hawk with a dismembered songbird in its talons.[7] Some are full-page illustrations in these standard folio-sized books,[8] and others are smaller and interspersed with text on the same page. Despite admirable progress in naturalistic depiction since the earliest efforts in woodcut, the medium's thick lines and general lack of graphic nuance were inherent impediments to the detail necessary to distinguish hundreds of bird species from each other.

FIG. 2

Intaglio printmaking - from designs engraved or etched into metal (traditionally, copper) plates - was derived from the goldsmiths' and armorers' trades. It is generally a more costly method requiring a different kind of press and more skillful dexterity than woodcut, but allowed for greater detail and precision in the image. The collective judgment that intaglio printmaking, and engraving in particular, was a superior craft to woodcut generally persisted through the centuries, until modern sensibilities allowed for a reassessment.

The earliest intaglio method was engraving, developed most successfully in Germany and Italy in

7 Aldrovandi, Ulisse. *Ornithologiae hoc est de avibus historia*, 3 vols. (Bologna: Francesco de Franceschi, 1599-1603), I:341.

8 The following terms have been used to identify the sizes of antiquarian books. Dimensions are roughly approximate, depending on the size of the paper used. The term "folio" indicates the size when the sheet is folded once to produce two leaves, or four pages, approximately twenty inches high. "Quarto" is the size produced by folding the same sheet two times and cutting the top folds to produce four leaves, or eight pages, approximately twelve inches high. "Octavo" is the size produced by folding the sheet three times and cutting the top folds to produce eight leaves, or sixteen pages, approximately nine inches high. Audubon's *Birds* volumes are referred to as "double elephant folio" and are about forty inches high. Only Whatman's "Antiquarian" paper was larger, at fifty-three by thirty-one inches. See Balston (fn. 2), 28-37.

FIG. 2: Aldrovandi, Ulisse. *Ornithologiae hoc est de avibus historia*, 3 vols. *Hawk*, (Bologna: Francesco de Franceschi, 1599-1603), I:341. Image courtesy of the Wellcome Collection, Archive.org.

the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. An engraving is created from a design incised into a metal plate using a burin, or squared steel shaft which has been trimmed at an angle to produce a fine, sharp point capable of cutting clean and precise lines into the surface of the plate. The plate is then coated with ink, with attention being paid to force as much ink as possible into the incised lines which compose the image. After the excess ink has been wiped from the surface, the ink remaining in the incised lines is transferred to a sheet of paper when placed against it under the tremendous pressure of the printing press.

Like all traditional printmaking processes, intaglio printing tended to be collaborative, especially for an ambitious project like a published series or an illustrated book like Audubon's. For such large-scale undertakings, it was common for the images to be designed by an artist, translated onto a printmaking matrix by - depending on the medium - a block cutter, engraver, or etcher, and printed by perhaps even another person. Prior to the advent of printed color, and sometimes even after it, an image printed in black ink might then be hand-colored by yet another worker or workers.

Though more of a hunting manual than an ornithological treatise, the 1622 *Uccelliera, overa della natura*, written by Giovanni Pietro Olina (1585 - c. 1645), and illustrated by Francesco Villamena (ca. 1566-1624) (printmaker) after designs by Antonio Tempesta (1555-1630) (artist), is a significant early publication with bird engravings. For this work, Villamena visually described at least sixty-six different birds by utilizing a broad vocabulary of marks with the burin to distinguish their outlines, and their varied feather textures, patterns, and markings. The plates are quite attractive, yet the by-now familiar stiffness prevails in these profile portraits, belying their derivation from taxidermied specimens. Due to the inherently difficult and disciplined character of the act of carving an image into metal, the engraving technique itself has a tendency to reinforce a quality of formal rigidity. This quality was often desired to elevate religious or mythological subjects with a moralizing theme, but did not so easily represent the appearance or dispositions of wild, living birds.

FIG. 3

A foretaste of the vivacity Audubon imparted to his *Birds* is evident in Francis Barlow's 1658 print series *Birds and Fowles of Various Species*.[9] The title continues, ...*Drawn after the Life in their Natural Attitudes*, indicating

9 Ultimately part of a larger work entitled *Various Birds and Beasts Drawn from Life* (London: John Bowles & Son, ca. 1671).

FIG. 3: Francis Barlow, *Birds and Fowles of Various Species. Owl heckled by songbirds,* [London: John Bowles & Son, c. 1671]. Image courtesy of the Wellcome Collection, Archive.org.

the conscious effort Barlow took to distinguish his illustrated birds from their precedents by showing them as living and active. Barlow did in fact make his drawings by observing living animals and birds, further enlivening his depictions of them by casting them as actors in little dramas that erupt before fully realized settings, replete with charming background details.[10] A perfect instance of this is the plate with an owl who gazes imploringly at the viewer while being heckled by a coterie of songbirds. In the background, a woodpecker ignores the entire affair as she dutifully attends to her business of seeking food in the bark of a tree.

Like Olina's *Uccelliera, Birds and Fowles* was not a work of ornithology per se; it was a print series, the purpose of which was perhaps closer to visual entertainment than biological erudition. Barlow also illustrated Aesop's *Fables* in 1666 and in so doing ventured far into the zone of what might be called interpretive animal illustration. There is no doubt that the imbuing of animals with human sentiment for the sake of illustrating the *Fables* inflected Barlow's more straightforward bird plates. Thus the accuracy expected of a scientific catalog of birds was somewhat sacrificed. As the degree of strict optical realism seems proportionate to the level of the artist's emotional detachment from the subject, it therefore becomes all the more apparent in comparing Barlow's plates with Audubon's how clever the later artist was in accomplishing a successful hybrid of scientific illustration with the more expressive qualities of fine art.

FIG. 4

Barlow, in collaboration with his printmakers,[11] heightened the sense of liveliness in his bird plates through the addition of etching to engraving. Whereas engraving might naturally tend toward the static– it is ideal for depicting statuary, objects, and figures, for instance, etching allows for a more pliable line, a more draftsmanly style, and more irregularity in general. This is because etching, another intaglio printing method, basically records an artist's free-form drawing in the copper printing plate.

Etching is an intaglio process that developed in early sixteenth-century Germany. A "ground," or waxy substance resistant to acid, is used to coat the surface of the copper plate. A design is drawn into the ground with a pointed steel etching needle, exposing the copper below. The plate is then submerged in an acid bath, the

10 It is important to note here the near-contemporary trend of decorative paintings produced by late seventeenth-century Dutch animaliers such as Melchior d'Hondecoeter (1636-1695) and Pieter Casteels III (1684-1749).

11 Barlow's printmakers included Wenceslaus Hollar (1607-77), Francis Place (1647-1728), and Pierce Tempest (1653-1717).

FIG. 4: George Edwards. *Natural History of Uncommon Birds. Brown-Throated Parakeet,* [London: the author, 1743-51], part IV. Image courtesy of the National Library Board, Singapore, Biodiversity Heritage Library.

acid "biting" into the copper where it has been exposed by the needle, thereby etching an image into the plate that corresponds to the drawing. Etching is then an alternative to engraving to create the recesses in the plate which hold ink for printing. The plate can then be inked and printed just like an engraving. But because an etching basically reproduces a free-hand drawing, it imparts a more fluid and free graphic sensibility than the more rigid and precise marks of engraving. Though still dependent on line, an etching allows for more distinctive textures, hatchings, curves, and other irregularities, and can therefore convey the spontaneity of a sketch. Barlow, like many artists after him, elaborated his etchings with some engraving to strengthen selected lines to achieve the desired graphic effects.

George Edwards (1694-1773), the so-called father of British ornithology, was particularly interested in enlivening the illustrations for his *Natural History of Uncommon Birds*, published in London between 1743 and 1751, and used etching as part of the solution. Whereas engraving might have lent a marmoreal stiffness to Edwards' parrot grasping at cherries, etching imparts a lighter and more fluid energy to the complicated pose. Treatises at the conclusion of the publication detail Edwards' process, from drawing to printing, making clear that etching was preferred as a means to best preserve the freshness of his drawings. It is at this point that etching gained traction as a truly viable means to illustrate natural histories.

FIG. 5

Edwards learned etching from Mark Catesby (1683-1749) who, at about the same time, used hand-colored etchings to illustrate the first monumental illustrated book of the flora and fauna of the North American colonies, his *Natural History of Carolina, Florida, and the Bahama Islands* (1729-47).[12] Catesby mixed various birds into a miscellany of plants, flowers, fish, reptiles, amphibians, and insects. The first eight plates present the bird alone, but all subsequent plates place the bird in an almost decorative arrangement of complementary foliage and other incidental details. Vibrant colors and innovative compositions distinguish Catesby's work from other illustrated natural histories

12 Self-published by Catesby in London.

FIG. 5: Mark Catesby. *Natural History of Carolina, Florida, and the Bahama Islands*. *Garrulus Carolinensis, The Chatterer*, [London: 1729-47], volume I. Image courtesy of the University of Wisconsin Digital Collections Center.

and set the stage for later publications focused specifically on American birds.

Wood engraving, another type of relief printing, only came into being near the end of the eighteenth century. As opposed to a woodcut, wherein negative areas around the image are cut away from the plank side of the wood with knives, planes, and chisels, a wood engraving is created by incising lines into the cross-section of the end grain of the wood[13] with the modified tools of the intaglio (metal plate) engraver, resulting in more graphic complexity and delicacy. Wood engraving eventually became the illustration technique of choice for mass-produced publications like newspapers, journals, and books due to the extreme durability of the blocks and the finer detail it afforded.

The Englishman Thomas Bewick (1753-1828) developed the wood engraving process, and though he produced copious illustrations for a variety of publications, he is perhaps best known for his *History of British Birds* (Vol. I, 1797; Vol. II, 1804), which set the standard format for non-specialist pictorial field guides throughout the following centuries. Deploying an incredible array of marks and textures to depict the birds and something of their habitats, Bewick positioned a dedicated illustration at the beginning of each text entry. Perhaps the practical nature of the book necessitated that the birds be portrayed in fairly stiff profile, but Bewick added great charm in the details such as frustrated hunters, pleasant landscapes, or witty vignettes at the end of each entry. One might therefore detect a delight, if not a passion, in Bewick's approach.

FIG. 6

Audubon

Audubon was surely aware of all the works mentioned thus far,[14] but no doubt one in particular presented itself as the standard to match, if not surpass. This was Alexander Wilson's[15] nine-volume, quarto-sized[16] *American Ornithology*, the first comprehensive book of American birds to be published in America itself, from 1808 to 1814. Like Audubon, Wilson had explored the American wilderness with courageous determination, though not as extensively. Unlike Audubon, however, and despite his aptitude for poetry, Wilson had imparted to his illustrations a late-Enlightenment sobriety that rendered his birds quite stale in comparison. Wilson's work crams 262 species into seventy-six plates by presenting multiple birds on one plate, sometimes in awkwardly cramped compositions, often in differing scales, and with no apparent relation to each other in

13 Imagine the surface produced by cutting a tree trunk horizontally or across the tree as it stands, rather than up and down, or from top to bottom. The former method presents the end-grain; the latter, the "plank" side. The end grain is used for wood engraving, and the plank side is used for woodcut.

14 See, in general, Robert J.M. Olson, "Audubon's Innovations and the Traditions of Ornithological Illustration," in *Audubon's Aviary: The Original Watercolors for The Birds of America* (New York: New-York Historical Society; Skira; Rizzoli, 2012), 41-106.

15 Alexander Wilson, 1766-1813.

16 See fn. 8.

FIG. 6: Thomas Bewick. *History of British Birds. The Black Ouzel. Blackbird* , [Newcastle: Beilby & Bewick, 1797-1804], volume I, page 94. Image courtesy of Smithsonian Libraries, Biodiversity Heritage Library.

setting or subject. Despite having been etched after "original drawings taken from nature,"[17] the birds are not life-like, posed most often in static profile. Perhaps Wilson's Romantic disposition was tempered by the sincerity of the scientific community in which he was firmly established in Philadelphia. Whatever the reason, the effect is that of a more purely scientific resource and reference work.

In contrast, Audubon was monomaniacally passionate about his work, his single-mindedness revealed in his biography from beginning to end. Audubon's Romantic sensibilities infused his endeavors, from field excursions to drawing to the procurement of subscriptions to the actual production of *The Birds of America*, with an enthusiasm that pushed each component to new extremes. His determination to portray the birds as accurately as possible in physical as well as behavioral form ultimately required some of the largest printing paper available at the time,[18] as well as the copper plates to match. Standard printmakers and colorists were rote practitioners, but Audubon would require exceptionally gifted and innovative printmakers and colorists capable of thoughtful nuance beyond their usual mechanical processes in order to realize his vision. His commitment to life-size portrayals, to giving each bird ample space in which to act out its characteristic traits, against fully-realized settings, and in sensitively-rendered color, meant that Audubon created monumental pictures after the manner of fine art in addition to, or even rather than, providing mere visual diagrams for practical reference. In this way, Audubon delighted scientists and aesthetes alike, as was his clear intention: "I felt a great desire to... complete a collection not only valuable to the scientific class, but pleasing to every person, by adopting a different course of representation from the mere profile-like cut figures, given usually in the works of that kind."[19]

The illustrations to Audubon's *The Birds of America* are etchings with aquatint, both of which are intaglio, or metal plate, processes.[20] This combination of techniques was the most dependable choice at the time for the most faithful replication of Audubon's drawings, which themselves were created by innovative combinations of graphite, pastel, chalk, wash, gouache, and watercolor.[21] The additional use of aquatint for shading was essential to replicate the realistic volume of the figures so carefully recorded by Audubon in his drawings.

Aquatint is a printing process used to create continuous areas of tone - without line - for purposes of shading. It was invented in Holland in the seventeenth century, and was fully developed in the eighteenth century as a means to reproduce wash drawings, which had become highly collectable by that time. To create an aquatint, the copper plate is coated evenly with a powdered rosin, which is then heated to adhere to the plate. This creates an all-over field of minute granules, around and between which remain open areas which can hold ink, capable of printing a continuous field

17 The whole title reads: A*merican Ornithology; or, The Natural History of the Birds of the United States: Illustrated with Plates Engraved and Colored from Original Drawings taken from Nature by Alexander Wilson* (Philadelphia: Bradford and Inskeep, 1808-14).

18 See fn. 8.

19 Audubon, "Account of the Method of Drawing Birds Employed by J.J. Audubon, Esq. F.R.S.E. In a Letter to a Friend," *Edinburgh Journal of Science* 8 (1828): 48-9.

20 Because of the confusion in common understanding between these and other types of intaglio printing, it is common for plates featuring mixed intaglio methods to be referred to simply as "engraving." For the Audubon plates, the predominant method is etching, with aquatint. Some references cite "engraving" as also used in Audubon's *Birds*. Though this is plausible, especially as a means of reinforcing key etched lines, its presence is significantly less than etching. It is likely that many have been fooled by Havell's virtuoso etching skills in some passages into believing they are seeing engraving instead of etching.

21 These are usually referred to as his "watercolors" despite the wide array of media used to make them. See, in general, Theodore E. Stebbins, Jr., "Audubon's Drawings of American Birds, 1805-38," in *John James Audubon: The Watercolors for The Birds of America* (New York: New-York Historical Society, 1993), 3-26.

of tone. If one looks closely, one can see an irregular pattern of "aquatint grain," not unlike the visual noise casually referred to as "snow" on a television screen when there is no transmission signal. Through masking or "stopping-out" selected areas of the plate in combination with multiple acid baths, the printer can create various gradations in tone on the same plate.

Catesby, Edwards, and Wilson exploited etching in order to achieve a greater degree of naturalism than might come naturally to an engraver or woodcutter, but their only option in creating areas of shadow, tone and texture was line itself. Though sensitive hand-coloring might assist, it was this fixed condition of the etching technique which could, in the case of bird illustration, lead to visual confusion in shaded areas or in feather patterns, or indeed to feathers looking more hairy than feathery.[22] To the pairing of etched line and hand-coloring, Audubon and his exceptionally gifted printmaker, Robert Havell, Jr. (1793-1878),[23] added aquatint and were thereby able to use areas of continuous tone to further articulate three-dimensional form and surface detail.

Audubon's choice of intaglio printing was surely due in part to the general aesthetic prejudice against woodcut and lithography (discussed later), but also because, of the printmaking techniques available, etching with aquatint allowed for the greatest refinement of line, form, and detail for a project whose ostensible practical objective was to facilitate the visual identification of real life forms in the wild. Even if, on the other hand, Audubon's ultimate objective was purely to pay homage to the birds by representing them in the most accurate yet lavish and aggrandizing way possible, the combination of etching, aquatint, and careful hand-coloring was the most sophisticated and appropriate combination of techniques to the task.

Audubon's Passion

Audubon is a pivotal figure because in his work there is a meeting of two impulses: the ages-old impulse to capture data and organize it for the advancement of collective knowledge, and the impulse to poeticize a subject about which one is exceptionally impassioned. But Audubon is not alone in monumentalizing his passion with a resultant blend of the objective and the subjective. In comparing his work with that of other impassioned enthusiasts working in other fields of inquiry, a subgenre of what might be called "passion projects" emerges. It is furthermore illuminating to note how the authors' underlying passion dictated the quality of their output by pushing them to think innovatively about medium, format, process, and presentation.

The qualitative difference between the illustrations of Audubon's *The Birds of America* and Wilson's *American Ornithology*, alluded to above, might be accounted for by this passion aspect, where an author is motivated above all by a personal, emotional enthusiasm for his subject, as opposed to something more

22 One advantage of printing *Birds* life-size was that it allowed for the linear aspects of etching to breathe, un-cramping them from smaller depictions, where the lines might compact so closely together as to obfuscate rather than clarify the details.

23 William Home Lizars (1788-1859) etched the first ten plates in Edinburgh before the operation was relocated to Havell in London in 1827.

pragmatic - for example, money, or even the more laudable goal of advancing science. Wilson and his colleagues in Philadelphia were gentlemen scientists of the Enlightenment tradition, following the model as it was practiced in the British Isles. One made field expeditions and returned to civilization to report his findings. Audubon was more at home in the wilderness and proudly identified himself as an American. His persona blended the ruggedness of the independent woodsman with the sensibilities of a Romantic poet, resulting in an almost religious reverence for the nearly pristine wilderness he encountered.[24] He developed a passionate affinity to the young country's distinctive natural environs and the creatures - especially birds - who lived within them, at one point writing, "How often have I longed to converse with the feathered inhabitants of the forest."[25]

A comparison of Audubon's and Wilson's respective treatments of the roseate spoonbill shows up their characteristic differences. Wilson's bird stands aloof, stiff and mute, whereas Audubon's lurches forward in mid-stride, head inclined toward its objective, and wings raised for balance. Its proximity to the viewer is intimate, and its bill is parted, as if whispering a secret.

The Temple of Flora, published in 1807 by English botanist Robert Thornton,[26] is the result of another passion project comparable to Audubon's. After copious and fancy front matter, the book features thirty-three large color plates, each dedicated entirely to one species, as was the case with most of Audubon's 435 plates for the *Birds*. Thornton's plates are rendered by multiple printmakers after original drawings by multiple artists, in various combinations of etching, aquatint, mezzotint, and stipple.[27] The plates were printed mostly in color, with additional color and markings made by hand to each

FIG. 7

FIG. 8

24 Audubon recalled, "...the grandeur and beauty of these almost uninhabited shores...the dense and lofty summits of the forest...vast herds of elks, deer, and buffaloes..." "The Ohio," in *Ornithological Biography*, I:31-32.

25 Audubon, "The Bay of Fundy," *Ornithological Biography*, II:487.

26 The *Temple of Flora* was Part III of *A New Illustration of the Sexual System of Linnæus* (London: T. Bensley, 1797-1810).

27 Mezzotint and stipple are both intaglio printmaking techniques. Both are tonal processes, unlike engraving and etching which rely on line to describe an image. Mezzotint involves an evenly roughened plate surface that is then smoothed in selected passages to form the image, whereas with stipple this is accomplished by the practice of clustering dots created by pricks of the burin to the plate surface in varied proximity to each other.

FIG. 7: Alexander Wilson. *American Ornithology. Roseate Spoonbill, American Avoset, Ruddy Plover, Semipalmated Sandpiper*, hand-colored engraving, [Philadelphia: Bradford & Inskeep, 1808-14]. Image courtesy of Cornell University Library Digital Collections.

FIG. 8: J.J. Audubon. *The Birds of America. Roseate Spoonbill*, [London: the author, 1827-38]. Image courtesy of The National Audubon Society.

plate, on sheets measuring two feet on the long side (large folio). Progress proofs[28] suggest that arrival at the desired result was a laborious and costly process.[29] Thornton exhausted his inheritance producing this work, and his inability to attract further financial support meant that he never achieved the publication of seventy plates as originally planned.

Nonetheless, Thornton's *Temple of Flora* is regarded by many as containing the most remarkable flower illustrations ever to have been published in England. This is due not only to the extravagant display of complex printmaking techniques, but also to the sensational iconography they illuminate. The flowers are portrayed often larger than life-size, and - like Audubon's *Birds* - close to the picture plane and against grand and moody landscapes expanding on the supposed character of the subject. The accompanying texts not only describe the physical attributes and traits of each flower, but also incorporate anecdotes and miscellania from human culture related to it. For instance, the entries for the passion flowers relays the source for their common name as the story of the Passion of Jesus Christ - certain features of the flower were associated with the instruments of the Passion. The plates show each species of passion flower clinging to a fluted column, a reference to the column to which Jesus was presumably bound in order to be whipped. Like most of the entries, the passion flower texts are followed by poems elaborating on the symbolism attached to the flowers.

FIG. 9

Like Audubon, Thornton's passionate and grandiose vision propelled him to engage an unprecedented complex of scholars, artists, financial supporters, and printmakers in order to make his dream come true. In a fashion similar to Audubon, Thornton's *Flora* are aggrandized by scale and through complex and virtuosic printmaking techniques, resulting in often cinematic pictures that not only inform, but ravish the viewer. One might compare Thornton's "Night-Blowing Cereus" with one of Audubon's most famous plates, the "Mocking Bird." Thornton's cereus, a spectacular white night-blooming flower, looms gloriously before a moonlit riverscape which includes a church tower rising above the trees and displaying a clock face reporting midnight. It is

28 "States" are different stages of the same plate as evidenced by prints pulled from the plate at each stage of change. When such impressions are pulled to check how the changes translate to print, these impressions are referred to as "progress proofs."

29 "Almost at the outset of his career Thornton ruined himself by the lavish scale on which he published his 'New Illustration of the Sexual System of Linnæus.' For this sumptuous work in imperial folio he engaged the services of [at least seven painters, five engravers, and four poets]." George Simonds Boulger, "Thornton, Robert John," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (London: Smith, Elder & Co., 1855-1900), 56:305.

FIG. 9: Philip Reinagle, artist. William Pether, artist. Robert Dunkerton, 1738-1821, English, Engraver. Dr. Robert John Thornton, Publisher. *The Night-Blowing Cereus* from *New Illustration of the Sexual System of Linnaeus, Part Three. The Temple of Flora*, London, 1799-1807. Mezzotint, printed in color and hand-colored 19 x 14 ⅛ in. (48.26 x 35.88 cm) (plate). Minneapolis Institute of Art, The Minnich Collection The Ethel Morrison Van Derlip Fund, 1966, P.18,191. Photo: Minneapolis Institute of Art.

FIG. 10

a setting worthy of a Gothic novel. In Audubon's plate, a nest and its inhabitants are surprised by an attacking snake. The gestures and expressions of both the birds and the snake are exaggerated and oddly human.

Parallel to the symbolism and poetry Thornton brought together with the more objective descriptions of his flowers, Audubon often infused his observations of birds with an emotional resonance that many have interpreted as anthropomorphizing. An example is this passage from his write-up for the "Marsh Blackbird"[30]:

> *Now is the time, good-natured reader, to see and admire the courage and fidelity of the male, whilst assiduously watching over his beloved mate. He dives headlong towards every intruder that approaches his nest, vociferating his fears and maledictions with great vehemence, passing at times within a few yards of the person who has disturbed his peace, or alighting on a twig close to his nest, and uttering a plaintive note, which might well prevent any other than a mischievous person from interfering with the hopes and happiness of the mated Redwings.*[31]

Another passion project surprisingly comparable to Audubon's is the life-long work of the American explorer, artist, and writer, George Catlin, who was eleven years younger. In 1830, while *The Birds of America* was in production, Catlin initiated his five westward excursions to document the people and culture of fifty North American native tribes. The end result was over a thousand original paintings and a substantial collection of artifacts, and traveling exhibitions, lectures, and publications related to these objects. Catlin is most famous for his regal oil paint portraits of Native American chiefs and other tribespeople, but hundreds of prints were produced by him and others in order to reproduce his drawings and paintings, and to illustrate his writings.

Like Audubon, Catlin's entire life centered around his project. He first manifested his passion for the culture of native American people in childhood, and, like Audubon, later abandoned traditional occupations in order to pursue his real interests. Catlin, too, was an intrepid traveler and a rapt and sympathetic observer who at the same time often imbued his subjects with a measure of dignity beyond what might inform more

30 Now commonly known as the red-wing blackbird.
31 Audubon, *Ornithological Biography*, I:349.
FIG. 10: J.J. Audubon. *The Birds of America*. *Mocking-Bird*, [London: the author, 1827-38]. Image courtesy of The National Audubon Society.

dispassionate descriptions. Audubon and Catlin both received little artistic training and were mostly self-taught. In an effort to share their findings as much as possible with the rest of the world, both exhibited their original work in both American and European cities in hopes of securing support for publications based on those works. Both assumed the primacy of the visual in their projects and wrote separate commentary, and both had a tendency to exaggerate, both graphically and verbally.

Catlin's first publication in 1841, *Letters and Notes on Manners, Customs, and Condition of the North American Indians*, featured about three hundred steel engravings after his sketches and paintings. These were reproductions of crisp line drawings with little to no shading in the style of Neoclassical draftsmanship,[32] deemed appropriate to the task of clearly relaying the appearance and behavior of individuals as well as groups, landscapes, animals, and the like, in a handy quarto-sized format[33]. About these images, one reviewer wrote that their subjects "have nowhere else been so fully, and curiously, and graphically described."[34] One might imagine the same praise applied to Audubon's *Birds*.

His next project was *Catlin's North American Indian Portfolio* of 1844, which contained twenty-five hand-colored lithographic plates. Though smaller in scope than his earlier publication, the greater scale and color of the pictures ensured their fame in both America and Europe, and though Catlin may not have been as obsessive about the aesthetics of these plates as Audubon was about his, the shock of revelation to the public was similar in tone. Never before had the world seen these subjects take on such a life-like aspect, and this is in no small part due to the passionate and sympathetic perspectives of the authors, as well as the printmaking techniques chosen to complement them.

Critics have cast doubt on Catlin's moral integrity, citing his having portrayed Native Americans while incarcerated, displaying them along with his paintings on tour as though exotic objects of curiosity, and occasionally unwittingly stirring up trouble among his subjects.[35] Similar criticism has arisen around Audubon, who seemed, from a contemporary viewpoint, to disturb and destroy nature at the same time as he loved and lauded it. It is well known how Audubon trapped and killed hundreds of specimens in order to record their appearance. Regardless of the apparent contradictions, Audubon and Catlin stand apart as passionate lovers of their subjects who wanted to amplify what they had learned to the wider world, in hopes that by doing so, they might kindle the same passion in others.[36] Because the intensity of their emotions stimulated sympathy for their subjects, they both sought to observe them as much as possible in their natural state, so that their findings would be presented in a way that would bring the viewer closer to the subject, not the other way around.

Audubon's passion made of scientific observation a grand art that not only informed the mind, but thrilled the psyche as well. Though this discredited him as a

32 This style was popularized as an illustration method by Neoclassical artists such as John Flaxman (1755-1826), who's *Illiad* was published in London in 1795. Another example is the American illustrator F.O.C. Darley (1822-88), who published many illustrations in this style, for example those for *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow*, in 1849.

33 See fn. 8.

34 "Letters and Notes on the Manners, Customs, and Condition of the North American Indians. by George Catlin." *The Edinburgh Review* 74, no. 150 (1842): 430.

35 See, in general, John Hausdoerffer, *Catlin's Lament: Indians, Manifest Destiny, and the Ethics of Nature* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 2009).

36 At the outset of his *Ornithological Biography*, Audubon addresses the reader, "Should you derive from the perusal of the following pages, which I have written with no other wish than that of procuring one favourable thought from you, a portion of the pleasure which I have felt in collecting the materials for their composition, my gratification will be ample, and the compensation for all my labours will be more than, perhaps, I have a right to expect…" (I:v). The entirety of Catlin's introduction is an appeal to the reader's compassion: "I trust that the reader...will be disposed to join me in the conclusion that the North American Indian in his native state, is an honest, hospitable, faithful, brave, warlike, cruel, revengeful, relentless, -- yet honorable, contemplative and religious being." (8).

scientist or natural historian in some circles,[37] his legacy as an insightful observer and a shrewd interpreter of the character of birds stands firm. A transition from natural history illustration before Audubon up to his *Birds* might be seen as parallel to the transition in fine art from the coolness of Neoclassicism to the intensity and expressiveness of Romanticism. One might then surmise that John James Audubon is to Alexander Wilson, for instance, what Eugène Delacroix is to Jacques-Louis David, and conclude that both idioms reveal different aspects of the same truth.

After Audubon

Immediately after *The Birds of America* finished publication in 1838, Audubon sought to publish a smaller-scaled edition of the *Birds*. Referred to as the "octavo edition" due to its size of approximately eleven by seven inches,[38] it was issued in one hundred parts, from 1840 to 1844, and with an additional sixty-five plates, bringing the total number of plates to five hundred. This time, Audubon used lithography as his printing method and, like the intaglio plates for *The Birds of America*, they were also hand-colored after being printed in black ink.

Lithography, a method of printing images from a flat stone surface,[39] was invented in Germany near the end of the eighteenth century and relies on the mutual resistance of oil and water. Using the greasy lithographic crayon, the artist simply drew the design directly onto the printing matrix - a slab of Bavarian limestone with a smooth and even surface. It was the drawing itself that was reproduced, by applying a greasy printing ink which adhered to the drawing medium, washing the excess ink away with water, and running the stone through a press against a sheet of paper. Due to the durability of the stone, a copious amount of images could be printed before the matrix wore out, far more than a woodblock or intaglio plate could provide before having to be reinforced or repaired. Compared to woodcut or engraving, lithography ("stone writing") was quick and easy. As such, it was an ideal printmaking method to match the increase in expendable money, leisure time, and visual literacy of the burgeoning middle class in nineteenth-century Europe and the Americas.

There was the corresponding explosion of lithographic imagery in the popular press, though by conservative aesthetic standards, it was viewed as a cheap and inferior alternative to intaglio prints. Nevertheless, an immense wave of lithographed plate-books were published in Europe and America well into the third quarter of the nineteenth century, many detailing the flora, fauna, landscapes, peoples, and cultures of non-Western lands as they were explored by Westerners. And though lithography was eventually embraced as a means of illustrating such works, it struggled a long time for widespread recognition as a technique worthy of original printmaking,[40] or of fine art. Indeed, such a determination was not yet firmly established by the time Audubon first sought out publication of his work in the

37 See Stebbins, "Audubon's Drawings...," 28.

38 Audubon, *The Birds of America, from Drawings made in the United States and their Territories* (New York: Audubon, and Philadelphia: J.B. Chevalier, 1840-44). Regarding the sizes of books, see fn. 8.

39 Though stones are still used for (especially hand-drawn) lithography, plates of aluminum, polyester, and other materials are also now used, especially for photographic lithography.

40 In print historical jargon, a "reproductive print" is a print which replicates a work of art in another medium, usually painting or drawing. An "original print" is a design that was created for and always intended to be produced by printmaking, in multiple.

1820s. Apart from not being considered worthy of such an ambitious product as Audubon had in mind, it is also possible that he and his advisors at the time doubted the ability of lithography to adequately reproduce the linear sharpness that was intrinsic to Audubon's draftsmanship and essential to the recognition of the birds' silhouettes.

The brilliantly colored lithographs for Edward Lear's [41] *Illustrations of the Family of Psittacidae, or Parrots*, were published in London from 1830 to 1832, during the on-going publication, in the same city, of Audubon's *The Birds of America*. Due to costly overhead, Lear's forty-two *Parrots* were not a commercial, but rather an aesthetic success. Having been sketched from life, Lear's *Parrots* are animated, if not frisky–another quality that may have impressed Audubon. Lear's aesthetic strategy seems akin to that of his contemporary, the French artist J.-A.-D. Ingres (1780-1867), whose highly-prized pencil portraits were produced during the same period. Like Ingres, Lear concentrated his delicate draughtsmanship on the subject itself, allowing it to become more diffuse the further it gets from the subject, until it fades completely. The plates' rich coloring, applied only to the birds, but not to the branches or leaves that surround them, amplifies their impact and compensates for any lack of Audubonesque drama. The plates are roughly twenty-two inches long, or folio - a mid-size between Audubon's double elephant extravaganza, and his relatively modest octavo edition.

The balance of accuracy and beauty in Lear's illustrations may have helped to convince Audubon that lithography could be sufficient to reproduce the *Birds* on a smaller scale that, though reducing the grandeur of the original, would be more affordable and therefore available to a much broader audience. For the purposes of the octavo edition, lithography allowed Audubon to balance his concern for artistic integrity with the desire to disseminate his work as much as possible. Furthermore, lithographic printing had by this point become so refined that it was the most efficient means to publish a large edition as quickly as possible, with the most accurate reproductions of the plates from the larger, etched edition of the *Birds*.

FIG. 11

41 Edward Lear, 1812-1888.

FIG. 11: Edward Lear, *Illustrations of the Family of Psittacidae, or Parrots*. *Macrocercus Ararauna. Blue & Yellow Maccaw*, London: the author, 1830-32. Image courtesy of Project Gutenberg, Archive.org.

Lear's lithographer was Charles Hullmandel (1789-1850), who was instrumental in bringing lithography from Germany to England. Hullmandel's press was firmly established in London when he died. By that time, however, he had begun the printing of John Gould's[42] *Monograph of the Trochilidae, or Family of Humming-Birds*, which continued under Hullmandel's name until 1861. Gould was the pre-eminent ornithologist of Victorian Britain and was well-published. The fame of Audubon's *Birds* had proven the appeal of visually stunning books with scientific information to an affluent market. Gould seized upon this approach as a means to raise funds for his ever-expanding research, eventually publishing over a dozen multi-volume folio editions.

Surely influenced by Audubon's *Birds*, Gould's hummingbird plates are twenty-two inches long, also folio, which, due to the diminutive scale of the hummingbirds, seems larger. Like Audubon's birds, Gould's are shown several to one page, in various natural poses, nesting, feeding, and cavorting in their natural habitat, sometimes with a sweeping landscape in the background. The most arresting feature of Gould's *Humming-Birds*, however, is the fantastic hand-coloring.[43] In order to represent the iridescent quality of a hummingbird's feathers, Gould and his colorists devised a method of applying gold leaf to the paper, over which were applied layers of transparent color, allowing the gleam of the gold to shine through. Audubon's hummingbirds, and a few others, had been treated with pigments containing metallic components in order to approach the birds' natural iridescence. No doubt this set a bar for Gould to pass.

Tiny yet magnificently colorful, hummingbirds were particularly fascinating to Europeans because they are endemic to the Americas. This fascination dovetailed with the American artist Martin Johnson Heade's[44] passion for hummingbirds, awakened as a youth in Pennsylvania.[45] Once well established as a landscape painter in the United States, Heade toured Brazil in the early 1860s to achieve a life-long goal of painting the plentiful hummingbird species that abound in the tropics. From these studies and with Gould and Audubon surely in mind, he hoped to publish a "grand and elegant Album...got up in the highest style of art."[46] Despite an initially promising subscription to the publication, including royal patronage under Brazil's Emperor Dom Pedro II (1825-91), the publication of Heade's book never came to pass. A few proofs exist, but plenteous retouching by hand indicate that Heade was none too pleased with any of them.[47] As perfectionistic as Audubon in regard to the reproduction of his paintings, it is assumed that Heade never found a suitable printmaker for his hummingbirds before his budget was depleted, and the project remained unfulfilled. Unfortunately in this case, it could be said that the exacting requirements of the creator's passion were greater than the resources to realize it.

42 John Gould, 1804-81.
43 Lear worked as a draughtsman for Gould in the 1830s.
44 Martin Johnson Heade, 1819-1904.
45 "From early boyhood I have been almost a monomaniac on hummingbirds…" Heade, under pseudonym "Didymus," "Natural History: Taming Hummingbirds," *Forest and Stream* 35 (April 14, 1892): 348.
46 "Art Enterprise," *Boston Transcript* (Aug. 12, 1863): 2.
47 Theodore E. Stebbins, Jr., *The Life and Works of Martin Johnson Heade: A Critical Analysis and Catalogue Raisonné* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2000): 74-5.

Heade had engaged at least two publishers who specialized in chromolithography, that is, lithographs in printed color. This meant that color applied by hand to an image printed in black ink was no longer necessary. Chromolithography developed when it was discovered that a full-color lithograph could be printed by layering different colored inks on the paper, one at a time, each from a different stone to which a different part of the same image had been copied. However, even the best lithographers were still wrestling with color consistency and registration (lining up the stones at the same place on the paper) up through the mid-century, and this surely led to Heade's dissatisfaction with the few proofs that were printed for him. Chromolithography was perfected and enjoyed its apex in America after the Civil War.

FIG. 12

Audubon died in 1851, but his wife and two sons[48] carried on the business of the octavo edition and, in general, continued to promote his work. By 1858, a plan was underway for a full-size replica of *The Birds of America* to be printed in New York by means of chromolithography, so that it might cost half the price of the intaglio-printed original. The primary lithographer for the project was Julius Bien (1826-1909), a German immigrant known foremost for printing maps and views during an important career that spanned the second half of the nineteenth century. Bien transferred Havell's original copper plate images directly to lithographic stones, and though he largely remained true to the original designs, he did alter details in several of the plates.

The so-called Bien edition was meant to be published in forty-four parts, each containing ten images. However, only fifteen parts with a total of one-hundred and fifty images were fully accomplished by the time production stopped around the commencement of the Civil War. The war is generally considered to have been the final blow to the project, which had also suffered from slow subscription payments and deceptive business partners. As the color varies from one set to the next, it is clear that technical difficulties with chromolithography had not yet been worked out, and it is likely that Audubon, had he been alive, would not have approved of the quality of the printing.

48 Lucy Bakewell Audubon, 1787-1874; Victor Gifford Audubon, 1809-60; John Woodhouse Audubon, 1812-62.

FIG. 12: Martin Johnson Heade, Retouched chromolithographic proof of the painting *Tufted Coquette*, from the series *Gems of Brazil*. ca. 1863. Image courtesy of the Amon Carter Museum of American Art.

Audubon Now

Like other passion projects in science during the long nineteenth century,[49] Audubon's *The Birds of America* is now of little scientific value, but has developed enormous aesthetic, cultural, and historical value. In our times, Audubon's *The Birds of America* has been firmly established as a touchstone–for natural history, for fine art, for printmaking, for publishing, for sensibility and policy regarding natural environments, for the history of human interaction with animals, for nationalism, and for countless other matters. As such, it has become a common historical reference point for contemporary artists. Particularly in strains of historical revisionism in the maturing phase of post-modernism, it has become a strategy for some to use Audubon's *Birds* as a starting point to comment on any of these or other topics.

FIG. 13

Perhaps most famously, the New York City-based artist Walton Ford paints sly, moralizing narratives into immense watercolor "illustrations" in the style of nineteenth-century natural histories, particularly Audubon's. He has depicted a broad array of animals, but birds feature heavily in his work, and resonance with Audubon, whether intentional or not, is abundant. Armed with anecdotes and legends, ages-old symbolic associations, and an exaggeration of the birds' bestial traits, Ford searches out the fraught details in Audubon's oeuvre and explodes them to satirize human cruelty and injustice.

In 2004, Ford published a print entitled *Benjamin's Emblem*, in which he recasts the majestic turkey, from Audubon's first plate for the *Birds*, as a vicious marauder. Ford retains the figural accuracy and magnificent coloring of his predecessor, but exaggerates the drama which enlivens Audubon's plates. Looming in the frame, Ford's turkey peers down malevolently at a hapless Carolina parakeet pinned under its iron-like foot. In the distant background, a large house with all windows lit stands firm in a slashed and burned landscape, still glowing an ominous red and echoing the frightening vigor of the turkey. Both birds are endemic to

49 A term coined by the Russian author and critic Ilya Ehrenburg, the "long nineteenth century" refers to the years between the French Revolution (1789) and the beginning of World War I (1914).

FIG. 13: Walton Ford. *Benjamin's Emblem*, [Hinsdale, NH: Wingate Studio, 2004]. Image courtesy of Wingate Studio ©Walton Ford.

America, but the parakeet died out in the early twentieth century in large part due to human interference with their habitat. In deference to Benjamin Franklin's preference for the turkey over the bald eagle as the nation's mascot, Ford makes of the turkey an allegory for the rapacious effects of American expansionism, industry, and "progress" on the natural environment, which is likewise represented by the parakeet. In deploying a bewildering mixture of intaglio techniques[50] as well as complex and sophisticated coloring on sheets equal in measure to those in *The Birds of America*, Ford pays homage to Audubon. Chiefly a painter, Ford's choice of printmaking for at least twelve bird pictures (thus far) is a further nod towards Audubon.

In 2015 and 2016, another New York-based artist, Matthew Day Jackson, published a portfolio of twelve etchings entitled *There Will Come Soft Rains*.[51] Starting from abandoned copper plates which had been etched in 1937 with reduced copies of Audubon's original *Birds*,[52] Jackson added backgrounds indexing the encroachment of human activity on the natural world: skyscrapers, a Ferris wheel, the 1986 Challenger space shuttle explosion, even a detail from Pieter Bruegel's 1562 painting *The Triumph of Death*. These were then printed using a kaleidoscope of acid colors. Across the bottom of each print in the portfolio, Jackson hand-stamped a line of text from Sara Teasdale's[53] 1920 twelve-line poem, *There Will Come Soft Rains*, an elegy of sorts for the passing of humankind on Earth. In combination with the imagery, the words take on a rueful or chastising aspect, indicting human error and the pride that often precedes it.

In 1851, Audubon's widow sold all 435 of the preparatory watercolors on which the illustrations in *The Birds of America* were based to the New-York Historical Society,[54] where they are displayed from time to time, most recently in three installments in 2013, 2014, and 2015. In the Historical Society's expansive upstairs gallery, the birds glowed off the walls like regal portraits. An actual published volume of *The Birds of America* was on view in an enormous display case and opened to a select plate, so that one might compare the model watercolors with at least one of the printed images derived from them.

The long, high-ceilinged gallery at the Historical Society encourages a hushed reverence, as though one were visiting a grand cathedral or distinguished mausoleum. Indeed, the watercolors are portraits of long-gone individuals. In contrast, just across the street in the ordered nature that is Central Park, living relatives of these bygone beauties stalked the greenery on foot and wing. If one listened closely, one could hear their calls within the gallery. Whether or not an enthusiast's effusive re-presentation of the birds enriched the viewers' actual experience of them once they left the gallery and crossed into the park is anyone's guess, but one may be certain that Audubon would have hoped to awaken in each of them a passion similar to his own. §

50 Walton Ford, *Benjamin's Emblem*, six-plate etching with aquatint, drypoint, hard-ground, soft-ground, spit-bite and sugar-lift (118 x 79 cm), (Hinsdale, NH: Wingate Studio, 2004).

51 Matthew Day Jackson, *There Will Come Soft Rains*, portfolio of twelve four-color etchings (St. Petersburg, Florida: Collaborative Art Editions, 2015-16).

52 The plates were posthumously created in 1937 by the History Institute of America and sanctioned by the Audubon Society. Ultimately, the plates were never used due to the onset of World War II. Through meticulous research and legal efforts, Jackson obtained the plates and worked with a master printer to create the new print series.

53 Sarah Teasdale, 1884-1933.

54 Thirty-four additional watercolors were purchased at the same time, bringing the total to 469 pieces.

The fact is I am growing old too fast, alas!
I feel it, and yet work I will, and may
God grant me life to see the last plate of
my mammoth work finished.

– John James Audubon

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John James Audubon, *The Birds of America*
Plate 6: *Great American Hen and Young. Vulgo, Meleagris Gallopava, Female Wild Turkey*. 1827
Hand-colored Engraving and Aquatint, 25 ¾ x 38 in.

John James Audubon, *The Birds of America*
Plate 6: *Great American Hen and Young. Vulgo, Meleagris Gallopava, Female Wild Turkey*. 1827
Hand-colored Engraving and Aquatint, 25 ¾ x 38 in. Image courtesy of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

Final Thoughts & Acknowledgements from the Director

An exhibition has countless moving parts, with people from many different fields working together, and more facets of planning than seemingly appears. *John James Audubon: Life, Work & Legacy* is no exception. The concept and work for this project have been churning just below the surface for almost three years.

It all began with a simple request from one of our Art Historians in the Department of Art and Art History. The request was to allow a class to view our collection of Audubon prints. At the time, I had only been employed at the Museum for about a year, so I had not yet laid eyes on these particular pieces, nor had most of the Museum staff. As is the custom when works from our collection are initially requested, we began to perform preliminary research to confirm our inventory records and facilitate the students' viewing.

The Education Coordinator at the time began studying one of Audubon's works, Plate 6, *The Great American Hen and Young*, and soon found a discrepancy. When compared to images of this plate in other museums' collections, there were obvious differences. Most notably, our print lacked characteristics of other imagery, specifically, a mountainous range in the background. We all held our breath, and feared the worst: a forgery was in our possession.

Frantic research ensued. Each of us focused on a different aspect of the work, and after many days of furrowed brows, countless hours of exploring and comparing notes, we had a new theory. Could this be something else, a rare and radiant diamond in the rough? Our detailed search showed that the work was likely an early version, one of very few created by Audubon's original engraver, William Lizars. After many disputes with Lizars, Audubon hired another engraver, Robert Havell Sr. and his son. The plate for *The Great American Hen and Young* was adjusted by this new team, adding more background details. Thus, the majority of images produced then- and found in many modern-day gallery collections, are of Havell's later, retouched plates.

One last test was needed to confirm our hopes. With a simple lift of one corner, the aid of a backlight, and the discovery of an elusive watermark, we had our answer… This was indeed an early plate of John James Audubon- authentic and rare! My heart pounded. For museum standards and best practices, we had the work appraised by experts to confirm our findings, and are happy to report that all parties are in agreement. We have a unique and unusual piece of cultural history! This remarkable find, along with the related research inspired the concept for this exhibition.

Since that discovery, many changes have taken place at the Martin. Most evident- in addition to the renovations, is my completely new staff. They have all taken such an interest and shown more excitement in

the exhibition than I could have even imagined. I am so thankful for their contributions to this endeavor. Chani Jones, Collections Manager, has worked tirelessly to organize our holdings, research Audubon's contemporaries to add valuable supplemental content, and coordinate with local, state, and national institutions to secure works on-loan. Krista Latendresse, Education Coordinator, has brilliantly connected with numerous community organizations to bring Audubon-related programs to life, in addition to designing this catalogue, and too many other "odds and ends" to even begin to count. Chani and Krista have taken on the demands of this project as if they had been here from day one, and I cannot thank them enough for their hard work, dedication, and perseverance! They have truly gone above and beyond!

I must also thank my Gallery Attendants, Reagan Beck and Elisa Crowder, for their contributions. Reagan has learned more about Audubon than she bargained! Her attention to detail has corrected my clumsy writing, fact-checked all our claims, and made sure no space was left unchecked! Elisa has kept me organized - which is no easy task, read her fair share of Audubon research, and created numerous arts and crafts projects for children of all ages! These two have been a huge resource for the Martin, and we could not have done this without them.

I cannot forget our amazing interns, Alex Hampton and Evangeline Eilers. Alex has taken on a leading role in exhibition planning and fabrication to make this a stand-out show. He has been involved in everything from hunting for pallets and piecing together parlors, to placing taxidermy. Evangeline has used her technical skills in countless hours spent digitizing the Martin's artwork and updating graphics on our inventory database with the Riley Digitization Center. Her efforts are reflected in the extraordinary images you see in this catalogue, as well as the Audubon pull-out poster found in the back.

I am so blessed to have a staff full of individuals that share my passion for art, education, and the preservation of both. It would be impossible to achieve anything without their efforts and dedication.

Beyond the Martin staff, I would like to thank the Department of Art and Art History at Baylor University. The faculty and staff have provided us with generous assistance and encouragement. It is one of our goals to continue in the support of their endeavors as well.

Our three knowledgeable essay writers, David Christie, Dr. Sean DeLouche, and Dr. Ron Tyler, deserve so many thanks from the Museum. Their work provides a rich and thorough examination of the exhibition, Audubon, and perspectives of his most famous works. I am humbled by their contributions!

Many thanks are due to the institutions that loaned works for the Martin's *John James Audubon: Life, Work & Legacy*, including the Minneapolis Institute of Art, the Amon Carter Museum of American Art, the McClung Museum of Natural History and Culture at the University of Tennessee, the Kenneth Spencer Research Library at the University of Kansas, as well as Baylor University's Armstrong Browning Library and the Mayborn Museum.

A debt of gratitude is owed to the printing staff at Integ for their assistance in producing this catalogue and other collateral related to the exhibition. They have produced beautiful work that wonderfully enhances this exhibition!

Finally, we are endlessly grateful to our donors, especially Max N. Bodine, whose generosity led to our possession of this priceless Audubon collection. And a special thanks is extended to our Art Angels for their continued dedication and support. Donors are such an integral part of the arts and museum communities, and the fundamental preservation of creative culture. I deeply encourage everyone to support the visual arts in any way possible, particularly in your own local community. We are responsible for the cultivation, preservation, and interpretation of the visual record of our civilization for future generations.

Thank you so much for your patronage to the Martin Museum of Art! We hope you enjoy *John James Audubon: Life, Work & Legacy*!

Allison Chew
Director, Martin Museum of Art, Baylor University

LIFE, WORK & LEGACY

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