



## Raven Victoria Erebus

Beauty is all around us, it's ordinary and stunning, secretive and fleeting, cold and struggling, singing down the sun. One must just open up and let it in.

In *The Language Of Birds* I look at what is around me with fresh curious eyes. Because I struggle with a chronic disability, it's hard to get out there and get the shot. As a result, my work concentrates on the everyday world surrounding me, much of it not beyond my driveway. The little birds are regulars in my yard. I watch them and, as I get to know them, I capture them in my spirit box. As I lie and watch them in their struggles, I listen to their songs and wonder what they are saying. I toss out seed and watch the frenzy ensue. I admire their ability to move through an urban landscape but still be wild and free.

I began working with a photogravure process because it provides a beautiful tonal range and texture. Like my study of the world around me, the process of creating a print forces me to slow down and think. Each print is an hour long meditation as I ink the plates, then slowly wipe off the ink, add in new colors, and wipe most of it away again. At the end, I put dampened paper and the carefully inked plate through an etching press. The intense pressure of the press moulds the paper into the surface of the plate, transferring ink from plate to paper. The process is very labor intensive but results in beautiful archival prints—each with slight variations due to the handmade nature of the process.