



Captive Companions

Anne Smerdon and Corinne Lewis
The Boyd Gallery

Friday 21 February – Sunday 3 May 2020

For decades, the intelligence of birds has been greatly underestimated and they have been thought of as 'easy pets'. However, recent ornithological studies have shed light on just how intelligent birds actually are. Some species of birds even rival humans in certain aspects of intelligence and social skills. These findings challenge the way we as humans have been keeping pet birds in captivity and it provides insight into how we can become more supportive and ethical bird owners.

In an attempt to highlight this, artists and friends Corinne Lewis and Anne Smerdon, brought together over 30 highly trained free-flight birds of different species, to document their personalities and plumage.

For Anne, taking references from live birds that are free to fly and express themselves offers the rare opportunity to closely encounter and document the true personalities of each bird.

For Corinne, the focus rests on the intimate bond between highly trained 'birds' and their 'dedicated humans'. Eschewing traditional portraiture, the females in Corinne's paintings are anonymous. Sumptuous garments emulate the vivid plumage of the birds they hold. The exotic bird denotes the feminine, the intuitive and the multi-hued resonance that is nature itself.

An outcome of the Community Access Exhibitions Program.

Image left: **Anne Smerdon**
Raikou (juvenile Blue-throated conure,
Pyrrhura cruentata) 2019
oil on board, 30 × 20cm
Image courtesy the artist

Image right: **Corinne Lewis**
Pascal, Pascal 2019
oil on linen, 200 × 86cm
Image courtesy the artist