



Laurel Roth, *Flight of the Dodo*
walnut, gold leaf, and silver leaf
40 in (diameter) x 3 in (depth) (103 x 8 cm)
2013

MEDIA ALERT:

**Laurel Roth: *Flight of the Dodo*
September 5– October 26, 2013**

Gallery Reception: Thursday, September 5, 2013, 6-8 pm
Gallery Wendi Norris
161 Jessie Street (at New Montgomery), San Francisco, CA 94105

SAN FRANCISCO, CA.

Gallery Wendi Norris is pleased to announce *Flight of the Dodo*, a solo exhibition of sculptures by San Francisco artist Laurel Roth. With extinct and endangered animals as subject matter Roth reformulates the

conceptual frameworks of interior design and religious artifacts to explore both the moral angst and the humorous ramifications of humanity's impact on the environment.

Inspired by recent travels in Europe, Roth's bas-relief wall piece, *Flight of the Dodo*, 2013 incorporates Renaissance altarpiece design elements and carving techniques to glorify the flightless bird hunted to extinction by sailors in the 17th Century. Cleverly positioning pigeons, a species still thriving on human contact, as seraphim, this work conjures ideas of Judeo-Christian glory but elevates humble and awkward species.

Pigeons also factor in Roth's ongoing series of *Biodiversity Reclamation Suits for Urban Pigeons*, in which intricately carved pigeon statues wear crocheted disguises to look like extinct species with more colorful plumage. But the most stunning of Roth's birds are her meticulously constructed peacock sculptures, such as *La Reina*, 2013, which are all hand constructed out of iridescent acrylic fingernails, earrings, and other human beauty products. This series includes individual birds and pairs, often posed in combat, fighting for dominance and mating rights. Their aggressive postures but seductive bling subtly emphasizes the competitive underpinnings of human beautification rituals, with Roth's characteristic wit.

Hominid skulls and hands, carved from wood, polished to a high shine, and adorned with Swarovski crystals and gold, bring Roth's animal kingdom closer to home. The rich wood gorilla hand, a new subject in her series of carvings, features a geode inset in the wrist, and these pieces are all presented on custom velvet cushions. Much like human religious relics, these objects, adorned with precious materials, command instant reverence, while asking perhaps uncomfortable questions about the poaching and habitat destruction that threatens our closest genetic relatives.

Flight of the Dodo will bring to light many connections between human desire, our interdependence with the animal world, and the guilt and glory that results from the power to change natural history.

About the Artist

Laurel Roth examines the biological ramifications of humankind's drive to modify itself and our environment, through a lens of art and design. She has worked in the past as a park ranger, and her artwork has been exhibited at such venues as the Smithsonian American Art Museum in Washington D.C., and the Museum of Art and Design in New York, as well as in India, London, Chicago, Miami, Los Angeles, Wisconsin, Kentucky, Belgium, the Netherlands, and San Francisco. She and her partner and frequent collaborator Andy Diaz Hope were awarded the Artist Fellowship at the de Young Museum of San Francisco in 2012, and her work is included in many prominent collections, including Smithsonian American Art Museum, the Museum of Art and Design, Project Space 176, Zabudowicz Collection, London, UK, The Progressive Collection, USA, 21C Museum, Louisville, KY, USA, and Ripley's Museum, Hollywood, CA, USA. Her work has been reviewed in such publications as *Audobon Magazine*, *Khaleej Times of Dubai*, *Trendhunter Art and Design*, *The Village Voice*, *Beautiful Decay*, and *ARTnews*.

About the Gallery

Gallery Wendi Norris presents a compelling contemporary and modern program with a strong emphasis on the global market. Since 2003, we have worked with over one hundred of the top museums around the world, placing works in their collections and collaborating on solo and group exhibitions. Though, by design, the range of works we show is diverse, a common thread runs through them all: a focus on the human ability to create psychological and spiritual meaning through form and content. Both the artworks and the artists themselves are emblematic of this aesthetic ambition and our trans-cultural nature. Through our expertise in the modern art world, with an unparalleled network in Surrealism, and through our considered selection of some of today's most dynamic artists, we support a range of private clients, museums, and not-for-profit art organizations.

For additional information and images please contact the gallery (415) 346-7812 or email molly@gallerywendinorris.com.