TONY ANGELL

DRAWINGS IN STONE

MARCH 2020



FOSTER/WHITE GALLERY

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INTRODUCTION

Recently a friend asked me what was most often on my mind when I approached my work. I was surprised at how my answer was immediate and spontaneous – in a word, Gratitude. A sense of indebtedness is what I feel. My life has been immeasurably enriched by having an artistic association with Nature. There is the compelling beauty of the form, patterns and movement of the wild subjects that demand attention and generate awe. Sharing the field with falcons, owls, ravens and crows in particular, has introduced me to some of their near supernatural capacities. Their distinctive spirit, unique intelligence and finely evolved behavior is enacted with perfection in the critical roles they play in ecosystems. There is, of course, that human imperative to explore and expand our aesthetic sense. It is my intent to render some attention and permanence to moments in Nature that are becoming less and less frequent in a world dominated by human motives and indifference. I am compelled to give voice to a reverence I hold for these subjects that words alone cannot convey.

THE MATERIAL

The carving of stone invites reflection on its origins. The chisel's bite provides one with a measure of the stone's resistance, while its sound speaks of its uniformity. Combined with the color and the patterns therein, even the smell of stone will reveal some of its history. Slate, within which these relief carvings are rendered, had its origins a half a billion years ago as clay sand washed from the earth's surface to be transported by rivers to embayments, where it settled out into layers of silt. Over time the silt was compressed to form sedimentary shale which in turn, over the next ten million years of heat and compression, was metamorphized into slate.

This durable stone has had a long history of use by humankind, serving as prehistoric tools, blackboards and roofs that outlast the buildings they protect from the elements. The slate plates for these relief pieces were cut from three separate portions of the top of a discarded billiard table which I salvaged.



Capture (detail) slate 10.5 X 7 inches

THE METHOD

I have approached these carvings in a manner not unlike a drawing in ink on a scraperboard. The slate's black surface allows me to etch into it with a steel stylus much as I would into an inked surface to define shapes and highlight patterns. The chisel is employed to cut into the stone, allowing me to further convey dimensions and depths. The darkest elements in the relief panel are achieved by the polishing and waxing of the stone. Lighter portions are where the surface has been scraped to create an area that reflects more light. With this combination of drawing and carving I feel I can convey a rich range of action that might otherwise be unavailable in a free-standing sculpture.

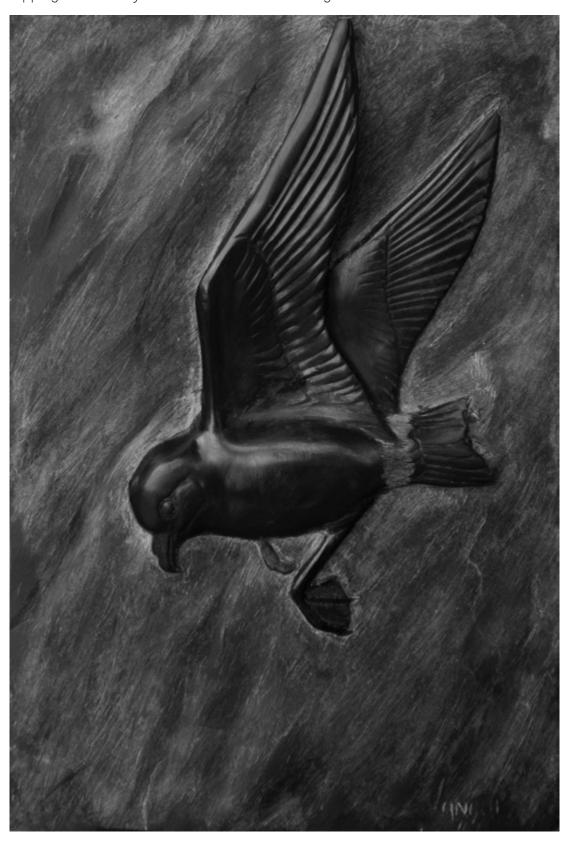
What follows are stone records of moments and memories of encountering Nature. Some have been indelibly set in my mind since childhood, while others are more recent.



Diver (detail) slate 10.5 X 7 inches

BIRD AT SEA

In a late winter I have watched a storm petrel when fifty miles off the Washington coast. I marveled as its diminutive form, in one moment seeming to be swallowed by a wall of water, reappeared with feet dipping indifferently into the face of an oncoming swell.



Bird At Sea slate 10.5 X 7 inches

INTERVIEW OF TONY ANGELL BY KATY SEWALL

Among other pursuits, Katy Sewall is a podcast consultant at The Bittersweet Life, writer for Crosscut, host at Seattle's Town Hall and has been a radio producer for NPR-KUOW. She conducted interviews of Tony Angell at the exhibition of *Drawings in Stone*, as well as, the following correspondance relating Angell's interaction with his subjects carved in slate.

Katy Sewall: What subject of your carving is perhaps little known, and why did you carve it?

Tony Angell: I immediately think of Diver as a piece that features a subject that is not as readily known as many of the birds often depicted in art, a murre. I wanted to portray this subject because of its anonymity. It was an opportunity to reveal a spirited sea bird, and one that if it is seen at all, is seen at a distance in our coastal waters. I was fortunate to share a bit of ocean space with the bird and witness its beauty in action under water. An artist has a special opportunity to share insights and circumstances that otherwise might remain unknown or less appreciated. I feel there is a responsibility to speak on behalf of my subjects through my art.

KS: Do you have something Marvelous to share?

TA: Doesn't one always set out to share something marvelous as an initial motivator to create art in the first place? Sometimes I really have no idea where I am headed in the design of a work, and only after digging in literally, do I discover something very special about the subject that I want to bring forward. I'm not confident that I achieved this in Over Cattails. After I was well into the carving, I realized how uniquely fashioned these birds are for their life in the marshes. Compared to other species of the same order of birds, harriers are quite elongated, with long wings that are perfectly suited for their constant patrols over the beds of marsh grasses and cattails. They are acrobatic with their abrupt turns and plunges into the ground cover. They are indeed birds that have been fashioned over time by the habitat they frequent.

I sought to commemorate another unique moment in Stand Off, as well as in At The Edge Of The Woods. What's special about these depictions is that such episodes in Nature are far more frequent than most people realize. With some patience and experience, we can and do encounter the interplay between species like a hummingbird and a hawk. We can stand in the twilight of a woodland, where an owl may very well join our company. We are enriched and inspired by these interludes. They are at once provocative and emotionally reassuring.

KS: Which of your subjects do you consider exuberant?

TA: Carving the hummingbird for Stand Off, I could almost feel this dynamo of a bird ready to take off under my chisel and rasp. I felt I was trying to give this temporarily stationary subject a posture of readiness, and immeasurable energy despite its tiny stature. Hummingbirds are all exuberant. Watching these birds dart about, knowing something of their accelerated rates of heart and wing beats, leaves one with a sense of awe. Their inclination to confront a threatening hawk is a David and Goliath moment.

TA: The piece titled Aloft is a moment of exuberance in the life of a small falcon that resides in my neighborhood. In the spring, the males take to the air in displays of courtship, full of the vitality and promise that spring brings. With equal energy, they seem to take delight in chasing and harassing the crows that might intrude their space. I love their bravery and zeal.

KS: Why did you choose to depict a storm petrel?

TA: When I've been off the Coast at some distance and witnessed the vastness of the ocean in all directions, I have always been surprised at the sighting of birds like the one I depicted in Bird At Sea. Petrels, which are not much larger than robins, are particularly striking to see amid the towering swells and inevitable storms that come at sea. They certainly deserve my admiration for their capacity to thrive there. Moreover, creating the carving gave me the opportunity to describe the beauty of this black and white subject against the back-drop of a towering wave.

KS: While working in a medium with the heaviness of stone, how do you capture the lightness of flight?

TA: Well now, that's the challenge. Sometimes, through the combination of material and subject, you can communicate the intent and spirit of the piece. Bird At Sea combined an opportunity to present the posture and delicacy of the wings and tail of the bird in flight, reinforcing the lightness I witnessed. The ponderous back drop of the face of a wave does provide a heavy contrast to the bird in air, seeming to defy the forces around it.

KS: Do you think Birds of Prey possess nearly supernatural skills?

TA: The piece entitled Wild depicts the goshawk, which has always been a rather enigmatic bird to me. It flies through a dense forest at extraordinary speed; it has only recently been revealed that it does so by pulling its wings in along its sleek body, allowing it to thread its way through a maze of branches. The vision of Birds of Prey allows them to resolve forms we cannot see. This astounding visual capacity is distinct from their ability to give confrontational and defiant looks, like those I have received from goshawks in the wild.

At The Edge Of The Woods is an homage to a great horned owl that would visit our woods on Lopez Island and scout us out in the darkness. This creature is able to discern movement and form in darkness that I couldn't even imagine being able to see.

Both On The Hunt and Capture are depictions of pygmy owls - birds I've witnessed be fearless in their pursuit of their prey, both through my rehabilitation of injured owls and in the wild. The strength and determination possessed by such a diminutive bird seems nearly supernatural when one considers that they often capture prey three or even four times their size.

I believe it is the artist's unique and special responsibility to reveal and communicate matters of life that words don't convey.

STAND OFF

In order to catch their quarry by surprise, sharp-shinned hawks will lurk motionless in our woods. Occasionally however, I can spot their silhouettes amid the dense foliage they have sought concealment in. One afternoon I watched the hawk seeming to feign indifference to both my observations and those of an Anna's hummingbird that had perched close by while protected by a shroud of leaves. Physically it was a David and Goliath match up with an inherent survival strategy. Keeping a potential threat in view, the hummingbird's future was assured.



Stand Off slate 17 X 6.5 inches

SWIFTS OVER ICICLE CANYON

One late afternoon on the eastern slopes of the North Cascades, I watched a small assembly of black swifts course back and forth above the edges of Icicle Canyon. Their dark bodies were sleek and trimmed for constant time in flight. I imagined flying in their company at such a height and looking down upon them.



Swifts Over Icicle Canyon slate 15.5 X 10.5 inches

AT FOREST'S EDGE

On evenings in late winter I sometimes discover owls perched sedately along the edges of our forest. Their shapes stand out against the tangle of bare branches and limbs of the maple and alder. Their haunting calls proclaim the boundaries of their territories and their presence is a sign of the woodland's vitality.



At Forest's Edge slate 10.5 X 7 inches



ON WATCH

One fall afternoon years ago, my three year old daughter Gavia and I rode a biking trail along the edges of Padilla Bay. We stopped when I pointed out a northern shrike that was perched nearby, atop the wild rose bordering a slough. Imagine my surprise when the shrike bolted directly toward us, to land along the back tire of the bike and seize a tiny meadow vole we had disturbed when we stopped. It was a flutter of black and white wings below Gavia's bike seat as the bird seized and then immediately took off with its catch to return to the cluster of rose. We watched the shrike use a thorn to secure its prey and begin to feed. Since shrikes are also insectivorous, I decided to include bumble bees in my composition.



On Watch slate 10.5 X 7 inches



ALOFT

Our community is enriched by the increasing presence of the black merlin. Each time I see these birds I am encouraged that such a small falcon can find a niche within the increasing changes of our landscapes as human populations expand. In the early spring I have watched the male birds fly with demonstrative exuberance as they seek to attract and court their mates, select nest sites and defend territories. Overhead, amid the cumulus clouds on warm days, they are stunning reminders of the immeasurable powers of flight and the beauty of display.



Aloft slate 17 X 11.5 inches



OVER CATTAILS

In the distance, a hawk is slowly making its way above the edges of the estuary where a line of marsh grasses separate waters from shore. The bird flies with focused intention scanning what to my eye seems to be an impenetrable tangle of cover. Throughout the day, mile after mile, the harrier flies the margins of its winter territory landing only when it makes a strike into the cattails with its long legs and taloned toes. Nothing caught, and in an instant it is back into the air continuing its run – a dark feathered needle gracefully stitching its livelihood to these quiet and somber places.



Over Cattails slate 7 X 10.5 inches

DIVER

They come to the near shores of the Salish Sea and Puget Sound in late summer, fall and winter. These diving birds are of a family with wings superbly fashioned to propel them both in shallows and to deep waters to catch fish. While diving off Lopez, I once watched a murre flash by using its wings underwater as it might in airborne flight. While I didn't see the prey it might have been pursuing, I imagined a moment of closing with its intended catch in a graceful dance.



Diver slate 10.5 X 7.5 inches





WILD

The goshawk is a secretive bird of the remote northwest forests. My moments with them in the field have been fleeting but memorable. When we met eye to eye, the intense and defiant expression of the bird spoke of the essential distance it required from the enterprises of humankind – an icon of wildness that must be sustained and respected. We can sully and destroy their habitat, capture and seek to train them for the glove, but we can never conquer their indomitable spirit.



The Wild slate 10.5 X 7 inches

CAPTURE

A pygmy owl is fearless and will relentlessly chase to capture prey that may weigh several times its own weight of only a few ounces.



Capture slate 10.5 X 7 inches



ON THE HUNT

It has been my good fortune to live in close company with several species of owls, among them the pygmy owl. An injured pygmy was rehabilitated before release and during its stay it flew about our home, perched inquisitively on our window drapes and chased mice across our living room floor. Here is a hunter that occupies our higher mountain slopes in spring and summer and descends to the lowlands in fall and winter.

Diminutive it may be but spirited beyond measure.

On The Hunt slate 10 X 7.5 inches

SUMMER CHASE UP SUMMER CHASE DOWN

My childhood provided opportunities for a wealth of lasting impressions of moments in nature. Such an enduring memory came from the Michigan woods when I took my uncle's boat and crossed the lake that his cabin bordered. I was perhaps nine and intrigued by the possibilities of poking about the edges of the unsettled woodlands on the opposite shore. No sooner had I arrived than a commotion amid the ground cover caused me to look up. As I watched, the sinuous form of a long-tailed weasel emerged from the cover of low willow branches in pursuit of a chipmunk. When its quarry took to treetops, I remember a momentary pause of the weasel as it seemed to contemplate an ascent to the forest upper story. The pursuit was fruitless and after a few minutes the weasel descended and in doing so fixed me with a quick glance.



Summer Chase Up Next page: Summer Chase Down slate 8.75 X 5.5 inches



WOODHEWER

It is an impressive sight to watch the crow-sized pileated woodpecker fly at speed into the embrace of a dense forest cover. They negotiate the pathways through the branches and limbs with instant precision. Equally impressive, their powerful chops excavate the larvae of termites and carpenter ants at the sides of trees. What an essential woodland community member this bird is. The cavities they excavate are used by a wide range of other species to raise their families, from flying squirrels to small owls and even honeybees. To a sculptor's eye they are also compelling forms to interpret and to celebrate for their

beauty of shape and line and the possibility that my effort conveys some of the spirit within.



Woodhewer slate 22 X 12.75 inches

TENDING THE BAY

Along the bays and coves and some rivers of the Pacific Northwest there is usually a kingfisher tirelessly flying back and forth along the shoreline to maintain its territorial borders. Big beaked with crested head and stout body, they hover and plunge to snap up a meal from the near surface of the water.



Tending The Bay bronze 9 X 19.25 inches

RAVEN'S WALL

Where the Columbia River has carved steep cliffs in the basalt, ravens nest and occasionally assemble in family groups or larger numbers. Seeing these sagacious birds, I always wonder what their take is on the world and if they have an "opinion" on my fascination with them. Here they are gathering, perhaps, to exchange information or simply enjoy the presence of one another's company.



Raven's Wall bronze 16.5 X 47.5 inches

POORWILL

A secretive cousin of the demonstrative nighthawk, which we now hear less often in our summer twilight skies, the poorwill is nevertheless prowling aloft in darkness catching insects. Come the daylight, they retreat to a recess that matches their plumage in color and pattern.



Poorwill bronze 5.75 X 9.25 inches

RIVER SPIRIT

More than a half century ago, my artist friend Ed Sawyer shared a curious story with me. I met Ed when he was over ninety and knew that he had been one of the original artists for Bird Lore, the precursor for Audubon Magazine. He was the go-to fellow for stories on birds, so when he mentioned he got a call from a distressed lady friend, I expected it might have a curious twist to it. She told him she had witnessed a big dark wren-like bird trying to commit suicide by plunging headfirst into a flowing stream near her home. Ed explained that this was the manner that the well-insulated dipper hunted underwater for may fly larvae and other insects that have aquatic connections.



River Spirit bronze 8 X 7.5 inches





TONY ANGELL

Education

1958-62	Bachelor of Arts, University of Washington, Seattle, WA
1964-66	Master of Arts Program, University of Washington, Seattle, WA

Selected Exhibitions

2020	'Drawings In Stone,' Foster/White Gallery, Seattle, WA
2019	'Woolaroc Museum Retrospective,' Bartlesville, OK
2017	'Wings,' Foster/White Gallery, Seattle, WA
	'Birds In Art' Woodson Art Museum, Wausau, WI
	'Prix de West' Western Heritage Museum, Oklahoma City, OK
2015	'The House of Owls,' Foster/White Gallery, Seattle, WA
	'Of a Feather,' White River Valley Museum, Auburn, WA
2013	'Spirit Companions,' Foster/White Gallery, Seattle, WA
	'Responding to Nature in Form and Line,' Robert Graves Gallery, Wenatchee, WA
2012	'Celebrating form: An Artist's Response to His Life Amid Nature,'
	Foster/White Gallery, Seattle, WA
2011	'Conversations with Nature in Bronze and Stone,' Foster/White Gallery, Seattle, WA
2009	'Companions from Land and Sky,' Foster/White Gallery, Seattle, WA
	'Tony Angell: Spirits of Place,' Museum of Northwest Art, La Conner, WA
2007	'Artists Honor Puget Soundscape,' Foster/White Gallery, Seattle, WA
	'Birds In Art,' Leigh Yawkey Woodson Art Museum, Wausau, WI
2006	'In Recognition of Victoria and Albert Award,' Foster/White Gallery, Seattle, WA
2005	'In the Company of Crows and Ravens,' Foster/White Gallery, Seattle, WA
	'Birds in Art,' Leigh Yawkey Woodson Art Museum, Wausau, WI
	'Wildlife Art for a New Century II,' Nat. Museum of Wildlife Art, Jackson, WY
2004	'Silver Anniversary Rendezvous 2004,' Gilcrease Museum, Tulsa, OK
	'Birds in Art,' Leigh Yawkey Woodson Art Museum, Wausau, WI
2003	'Birds in Art,' Leigh Yawkey Woodson Art Museum, Wausau, WI
0000	'Wildlife Art for a New Century I,' National Museum of Wildlife Art, Jackson, WY
2002	'Birds in Art,' Leigh Yawkey Woodson Art Museum, Wausau, WI
	'Iridescent Light: Origins of Pacific Northwest Art,' Museum of Northwest Art, LaConner
	'The Frye at Fifty: Five Decades of Collecting,' Frye Art Museum, Seattle, WA
0001	'Spirit Companions,' Foster/White Gallery, Seattle, WA
2001	'Master Artist Retrospective/Birds in Art,' Leigh Yawkey Woodson Art Museum, Wausau
1999	'Images of Forest and Shore,' Foster/White Gallery, Seattle, WA
1000	'Earthscapes,' Frye Art Museum, Seattle, WA
1998	'Natural Habitat,' Spanierman Gallery, New York, NY
1000 10	'Distillations of Place,' Foster/White Gallery, Seattle, WA
1998-10	Prix de West Invitational, Oklahoma City, OK
	'Birds in Art,' Leigh Yawkey Woodson Art Museum, Wausau, WI

1997	'Great American Artists,' Cincinnati Art Museum, Cincinnati, OH
1996	C.M. Russell Museum, Great Falls, MT
	National Academy of Design, New York City, NY
1994	'Community of Images,' Foster/White Gallery, Seattle, WA
	'Wildlife Art in America,' James Ford Bell Museum, MN
1993	'Recent Work by Gallery Artists,' Foster/White Gallery, Seattle, WA
1992-93	'Birds In Art,' National Touring Show of Leigh Yawkey Woodson Art Museum, Wausau
1991	'Drawing Show,' Foster/White Gallery at Frederick & Nelson, Seattle, WA
	Foster/White Gallery, Seattle, WA, solo show
1981-97	National Academy of Western Artists, Oklahoma City, OK
1987	'Animals in Art,' traveling show in United States, Woodson Art Museum, Wausau, WI
1986	'Retrospective,' Gilcrease Museum, Tulsa, OK
1985	'Birds In Art 10th Anniversary Exhibition,' Woodson Art Museum, Wausau, WI
1980	Washington State Capitol Museum, Olympia, WA
1979	'Coastal Art Forms,' Tacoma Art Museum, WA
1978	'Birds In American Art,' Cape Cod, MA
1976	'Nature In Art,' Tacoma Art Museum, WA
1975	'Animals In Art: An International and Historical Review,' Royal Ontario Museum,
	Toronto, Canada
	'Tony Angell Drawings,' James Ford Bell Museum, St. Paul, MN
1971	Allied Arts/Richard White Gallery, Seattle, WA
1970	'Tony Angell, Drawings and Paintings,' Cornell University, Ithaca, NY

Selected Public and Corporate Collections

Western Washington University, WA

Seattle Art Museum, Seattle, WA

Redmond City Hall, Redmond, WA

Bainbridge Island Public Library Garden Complex, Bainbridge Island, WA

Boeing, Seattle, WA

Cornell University, Ithaca, NY

Frances Anderson Arts Center, Edmonds, WA

Frye Art Museum, Seattle, WA

Gilcrease Museum of Art, Tulsa, OK

Leigh Yawkey Woodson Art Museum, Wausau, WI

Museum of Northwest Art, La Conner, WA

Seattle Aquarium, Seattle, WA

Seattle Public Schools Administration Center, Seattle, WA

Seattle Woodland Park Zoo/Educational Center, Seattle, WA

UW Medical Center, Seattle, WA

Victoria & Albert Museum, London, England

Virginia Mason Clinic, Seattle, WA

Whatcom Community College, Bellingham WA

Selected Books Written and/or Illustrated by the Artist

2015	Tony Angell, 'The House of Owls,' Yale University Press, New Haven/London.
	Author and illustrator.
2012	John Marzluff and Tony Angell, 'Gifts of the Crow: How Perception, Emotion, and
	Thought Allow Smart Birds to Behave Like Humans,' Free Press. Co-author and illustrator.
2009	Tony Angell, 'Puget Sound Through An Artist Eye,' University of Washington Press
2005	John Marzluff and Tony Angell, 'In the Company of Crows and Ravens,' Yale University
	Press. Co-author and illustrator.
1998	William H. Gerdts, 'Natural Habitat: Contemporary Wildlife Artists of North America,'
	Spanierman Gallery, New York, NY
1978	Tony Angell, 'Ravens, Crows, Magpies and Jays,' University of Washington Press,
	Seattle/London. Author and illustrator.
1974	Tony Angell, 'Owls,' University of Washington Press, Seattle/London.
	Author and illustrator.
1972	Tony Angell, 'Birds of Prey of the Pacific Northwest Slope,' Pacific Search Press, Seattle.
	Author and illustrator.

Selected Awards

2017	Juror's Excellence Award, Pratt Fine Arts Center 40th Anniversary Celebration
	and Ruby Riot Auction
2016	Northwest Luminary, Museum of Northwest Art, La Conner, WA
2015	National Outdoor Book Award for The House of Owls, Environment Category
2014	The Puget Sound Keeper's Alliance, Puget Sound Hero Award
2011	University of Washington Department of Communications Alumni Hall of Fame,
	Artist and Environmentalist
2010	Washington State Book Award Finalist: Puget Sound Through An Artist's Eye
2006	Illustrated Works Recipient of Overall Award 2006, Victoria & Albert Museum, London
2005	Washington State Book Award for In the Company of Crows and Ravens
2001	Master Artist Award, Leigh Yawkey Woodson Art Museum
1994	The Virginia Merrill Bloedel Lecture Fellow
1989	American Association of University Presses Design Production Award:
	Sea Brothers: American Sea Fiction since Moby Dick
1986	Association of Graphic Design Award: 'Blackbirds of the Americas'
	Fifty Best Books Award: 'Blackbirds of the Americas'
	Governor's Writer's Day Award: 'Blackbirds of the Americas'
1980	Silver medal, International Book Design Competition, Leipzig, Austria: 'Ravens, Crows,
	Magpies and Jays'
1974	Governor's Writer's Day Award: 'Owls'
1973	Governor's Writer's Day Award: 'Birds of Prey in the Pacific Northwest Slope'

Selected Books, Articles and Catalogues about the Artist

Jan Gardner, "'The House of Owls' by Tony Angell," The Boston Globe, May 9

	Todd Wilkinson, 'Confluence: In This Environmental Age, More Sculptors Are Taking On Wildlife to Make a Green Statement,' Sculpture Review, Spring 2015
	Mary Ann Gwinn, 'Tony Angell: A Grateful Guest in the House of Owls,'
	The Seattle Times, May 3
	Julie Zickefoose, 'Wise Guys,' The Wall Street Journal, April 24
	Gale Fiege, 'Angell's New Book Documents Owl Family,' The Everett Herald, April 19
	Todd Wilkinson, 'Through Wild Rock,' Western Art and Architecture, April
2015	Nancy Worssam, "'Of a Feather': Northwest Artists' Visions Take Flight,"
	The Seattle Times, March 6
2012	James Gorman, 'The Games Crows Play, and Other Winged Tales,'
	The New York Times, June 11
2007	Mary Ann Gwinn, 'Crows and Ravens': Fear and Fascination, Evermore,"
	The Seattle Times, October 23
2000	Richard Seven, 'A Life In Stone,' Seattle Sunday Times Magazine, December
1996	Todd Wilkenson, 'Summoning Spirits from Stone,' Seattle Magazine, November
1987	'Sculptor: Tony Angell,' KCTS Channel 9 special program, fall, television show
	'Raven Into Flight,' Seattle Sunday Times, May 21
1976	Pat Baillargeon, 'Tony Angell,' Pacific Search Magazine
1969	'Tony Angell: Learning is an Experience,' Seattle Times Magazine, November

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