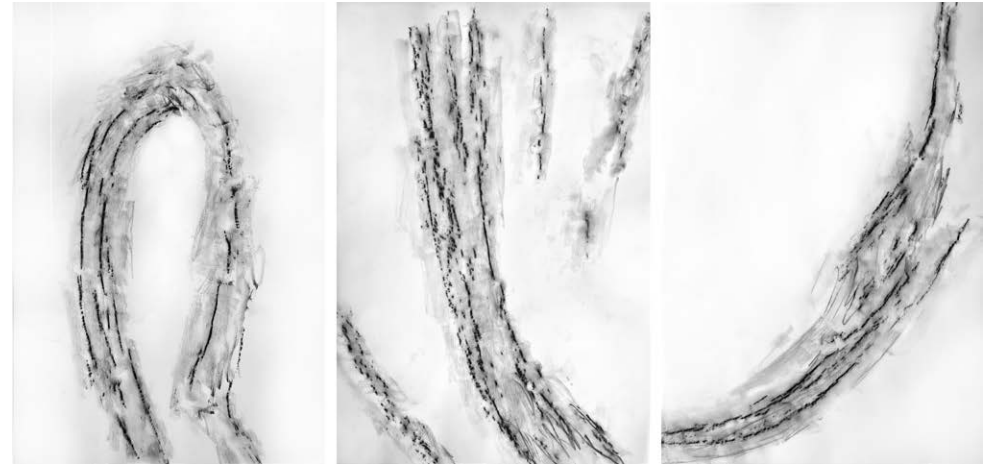


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Juniper 1, 2 and 3, graphite on vellum 12.5 x 18 in each, 2023

Thwhack! Something hit the glass door. Hard.

A meadowlark.

His eyes were moving but his body was limp. His beak open. Was this the meadow lark whose song traveled through our days? A few minutes passed. His beak closed. A few more minutes, and then, he flew.

We watched his resilience. That will to just go on living.

Living out in the sagebrush, watching the rains come most afternoons, from miles and miles away, seeing new plants push up through the dry hard ground, then bud and burst into bloom, it was a visual life force.

I asked a neighbor, Philip Behenna, about the winters. He said last winter they could not get out for six weeks. That it was bitter cold, the harshest winter they had lived through. I asked him, knowing we were brief fair-weather visitors, what would he most like us to understand about this place?

Philip wrote: *That while "Life" itself is astoundingly resilient, individual lives are so fragile. "Life" bounces back from the frigid monochrome. But not everything gets to see it. Not everything gets to lie out and feel the warmth of the spring sunshine. You feel that struggle between life & death here very intensely and at times death can feel like a houseguest, just hanging around looking for an opportunity.*

But life goes on. We have new goat kids running around bouncing off the walls and a 3-week-old calf who loves to run circuits of her pen in the evenings while her mother feeds. You see the color of the tanagers, the grosbeak, the geese nesting down



on the ponds. And you understand that you've survived, they have too. And for now, we're part of the survivors' group. We won't always be. One day it will be our turn to go. But "life" will go on.

I had walked to the juniper grove to make rubbings when Philips's text came in. I sat down on an ancient fallen limb, tears streaming down my cheeks.

Our changing earth is overwhelming. It is shifting so quickly, it is hard to find footing. I have worked to delve into this never never land of our current reality, I have experimented, recycled, discarded, always looking to find a way, a method, a strategy, anything, that would change everything.

I see now that I have been trying to work from the outside in. At Montello, being a part of the desert landscape, held by the vastness of the sky, I heard the clear song of my intuition. Did the place hear it too? Wasn't it a collaboration? Isn't it?

Because for now, we are part of the survivors group.

Cosmos 1 and 2, cyanotype on paper, 6 x 6 in each, 2023

