

JANE ROSEN

second nature

14 july - 23 august 2011

TAYLOE PIGGOTT GALLERY

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PREFACE

"When you see a fish, you do not think of its scales do you? You think of its speed, its floating, flashing body seen through the water.... Well, I've tried to express just that. If I made fins and eyes and scales, I would arrest its movement and hold you by a pattern or a shape of reality. I want just the flash of its spirit."

-Brancusi

Spending time at Jane Rosen's studio was like witnessing the flash of spirit that Brancusi sought to capture. Such a philosophy of seeing is very close to my heart. With this perspective framing my vision I capture the profound essence of nature and art seen through the animal life. It was our reciprocal vision of the life force that instinctually and immediately connected me to Jane's work. Her art, whether bird, fish or fowl, resonates with the fundamentality of the being's spirit. The word "essence" is defined as "the permanent as contrasted with the temporary element of being." Her sculpture is essence.

Thank you Jane for changing the way I see.

- Tayloe Piggott

SECOND NATURE

The hawks perch in a tall tree. A tree that grows and changes each time they land in it, build a nest in it, perch on it balancing in the wind. In the late afternoon, they are illuminated in such a way that they both blend into this tree and appear translucent simultaneously, much like the branches of the tree that are illuminated in this late afternoon light. How extraordinary that I was given the opportunity to learn about glass, that the sandblasted pigmented glass birds are illuminated in the same way that the birds I cohabit with appear to be. That the recycled provencal stone seems like an eternal beam of light, much like the streams of light that filter through the clerestories in the studio. The light passing through the studio taught me to adapt to a new way of working. I learned to work with the light as teacher, rather than trying to control the lighting conditions. Wouldn't it be grand if we were that responsive to the changes that one's life brings our way. What aging can say about youth, what light can say about darkness, what animals can guide us towards if we listen. What if this knowledge were in fact second nature to us. We are, in fact, composed of two natures, which seems to me so much like the passage in the Upanishads.

- Jane Rosen



EXCERPT

Jane Rosen: It's a hard word for me, "seeing," because I'm firmly convinced that seeing has nothing to do with the eyes in that way. I'm not saying it doesn't include the eyes. An impression comes in. It may come in through the eyes. When I'm looking at a bird or an animal, especially when I'm drawing it, the key is the shift in cognition where—and I know when it happens, I can sense it.

Richard Whittaker: Are you talking about drawing?

JR: I'm talking about life. When we talk about taking in an impression, most of the time I'm not taking you in, I'm trying to make an impression on you. I'm going out. And there's a shift that happens when I'm drawing or when I'm looking at the dog or a horse or looking at someone in my mind's eye, there's a shift where something in me listens, but not with my ears. There's another kind of listening. It's kind of like from the knees up to the shoulders is like a receiver or a satellite dish allowing something to come in almost through my middle. It could be seeing who someone is.

RW: Well, I wanted to go back to where you mentioned earlier something about this bar of light that falls into your studio. Now you said that this bar of light has...

JR: It changed my life. I always had studios where there were no

bars of light coming in because that kind of light changes everything, completely washing out the pieces. And at first, I was very upset with the lighting.

RW: Right. There's a huge contrast between the shadow and the direct sunlight.

JR: All day from dawn until dusk you get extremes of light bouncing all over and it was interfering. Then, just sitting in this chair day after day, week after week—I never did free-standing, vertical pieces like this before; my hawks were all low to the ground, like the Egyptian wing piece—but what started to happen was I started to listen to the light. I started to catch the light at various moments where the light would inform what the height of the piece needed to be, or the turn of the head. I started seeing the light as a help rather than trying to control it. Being in relation to the light was a big thing!

The other thing is that I'm very involved with vertical and horizontal movement, a movement in and out and a movement up and down. An inner emotional stance is an outer visual one. If you get nervous, for example, all the energy seems to go up. Your jaw tightens and your eyes scrunch and you hold your breath up high.

So there's this movement of going out to the piece, like if you shot an arrow out to the piece. You're looking at it, but there is also a filtering back so that you're also aware of yourself and the piece. So that's a movement in and out. And the movement up and down, I start to wonder, isn't this a cross? These pieces become representations of a seeing both in and out. And the light, which I resisted enormously, became the teacher.

RW: Can we call that seeing?

JR: Yes. That's another form of seeing. But when I talked about the conference, it's that more than one part of you needs to see. You can't see with your head alone. You can't see with your heart alone, because it's very partial. You can't see with your body alone because basically, I don't want to put down the cigarette or the cake.

The day I met that raven you were asking about, this is what happened. I heard the dogs barking in the living room. Not a bark like "someone is here," which is an announcement. Not a bark like "get away from my stuff." That's a territorial thing. Not a bark of fear like, "Oh, my God there's a bobcat on the deck!" It was a bark I wasn't used to, a kind of "What are you doing?"

I walked into the living room and there was the raven underneath the chair at the dining room table. I looked at this big raven with huge claws and this huge Roman beak. The raven somehow had walked into the house before we had become friends and had gotten stuck underneath the chair. I believe it was a mom and she was coming in looking for food.

I looked at the raven and the raven looked at me. She had these beautiful eyes and she blinked at me. It was clear she said to me, "I'm stuck. I don't know how I got under this chair. I can't get out and you've got two pretty big dogs. I'm in a situation here."

So I looked at the raven and said, "Okay. Here's the deal. You're big. You have sharp claws and this beak. You could hurt me. I'm going to pet your back and if you don't try to peck me or claw me, I will get you out from under the chair. If you try to peck me or claw me, you're on your own."

She looked at me, cocking her head like she was thinking about it. It wasn't like she understood my words or I understood hers. There was something in my tone that was explaining to her, in the same way there was something in your inner tone explaining to the dog that you were about to make a move. He was watching in an instinctive way what you were conjuring. And was just waiting for your signal. He had it worked out long before you did.

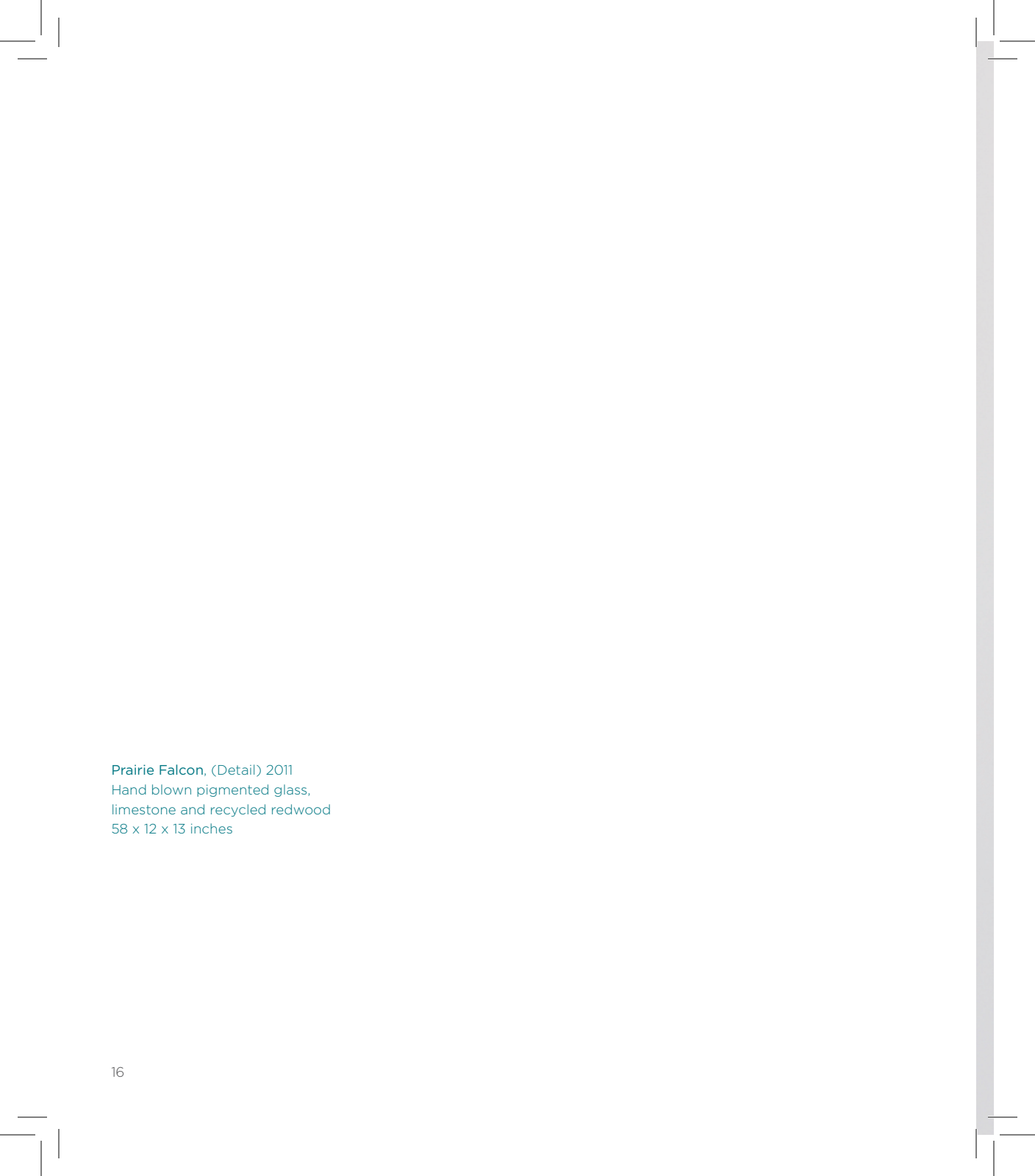
So I pet the back of the raven and not only does she not claw me, she pulls her claws into her belly and tucks her beak into her chest. I pick her up and I hold her like this [cradled in her arms] and she is perfectly still. I put her out on the picnic table figuring she would make a beeline out of there. She turned around, she looked at me and she nodded.

*Excerpted from an Interview by Richard Whittaker
'Seeing' published in Parabola Magazine, August 2011*



Prairie Falcon, 2011
Hand blown pigmented glass,
limestone and recycled redwood
58 x 12 x 13 inches





Prairie Falcon, (Detail) 2011
Hand blown pigmented glass,
limestone and recycled redwood
58 x 12 x 13 inches



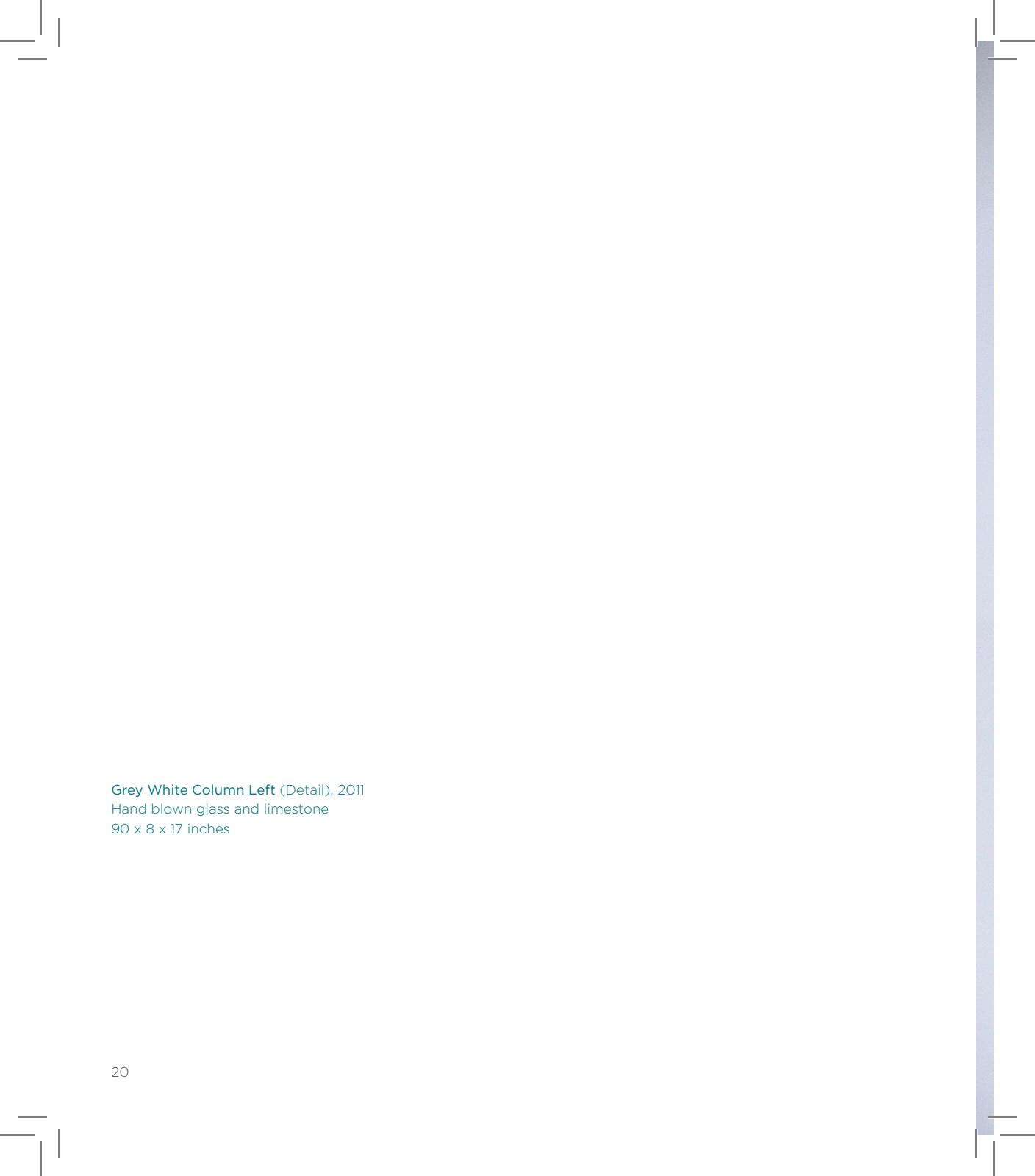


Grey White Column (Left), 2011
Hand blown glass and limestone
90 x 9 x 17 inches



Grey White Column (Right), 2011
Hand blown glass and limestone
90 x 8 x 17 inches





Grey White Column Left (Detail), 2011
Hand blown glass and limestone
90 x 8 x 17 inches





Red Shouldered Hawk, 2011
Hand blown pigmented glass,
limestone and recycled redwood
70 x 12 x 12 inches





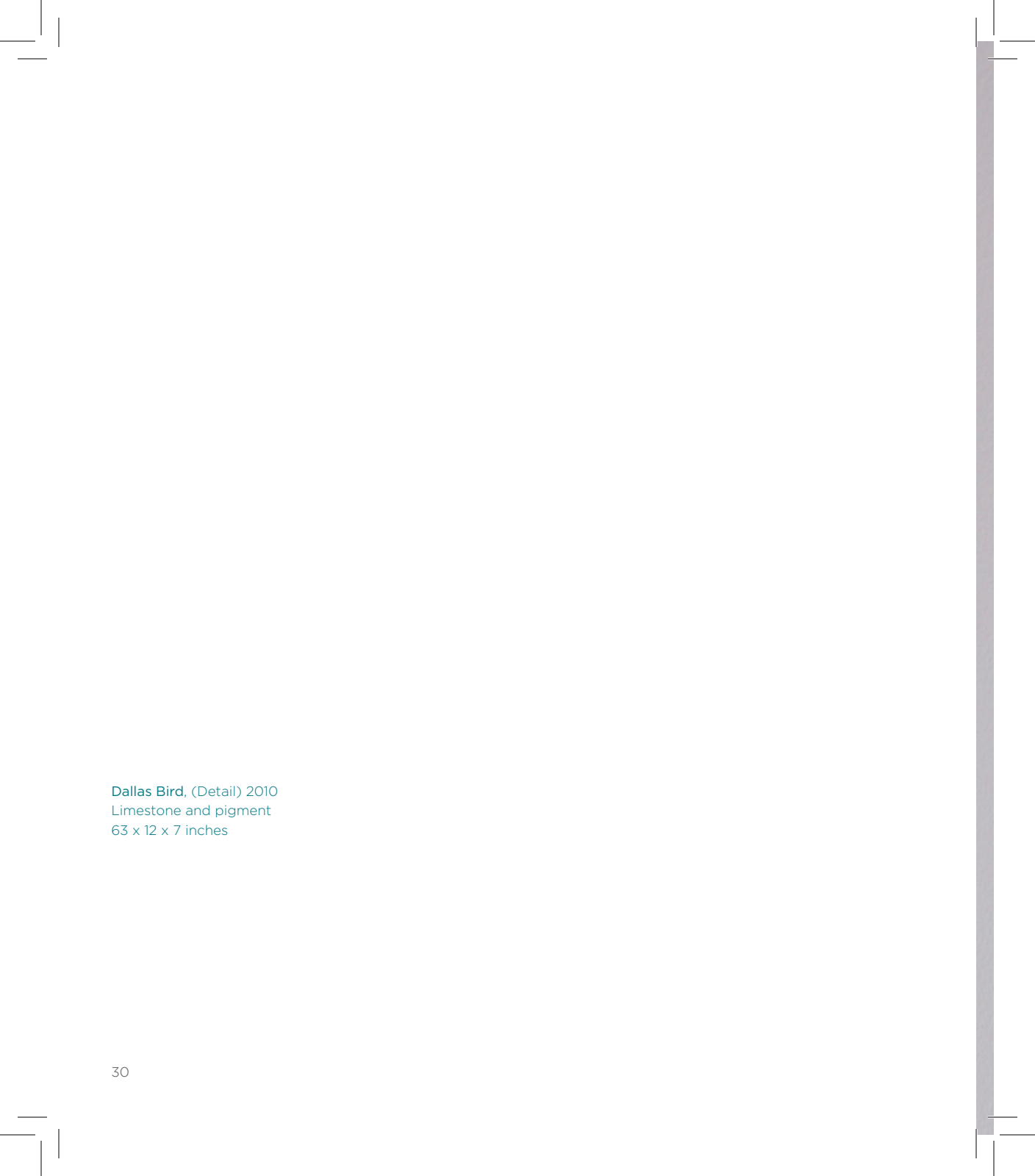
Red Shouldered Hawk, (Detail) 2011
Hand blown pigmented glass,
limestone and recycled redwood
70 x 12 x 12 inches



Artist's Studio






The image is a large, blank white page with a thin, dark vertical line running down the right edge. There are some faint, dark lines in the top-left and bottom-left corners, possibly indicating the edges of the page or a binding.

Dallas Bird, (Detail) 2010
Limestone and pigment
63 x 12 x 7 inches





Italian Twins (installed), 2011
Pigmented provencal limestone
56 x 27 x 14 inches (installed dimensions)



Striped Bird, 2011

Hand blown pigmented glass


15 x 4 x 4 inches



Pale Male, 2011

Hand blown pigmented glass
and pigmented limestone
71 x 10 x 20 inches





Pale Male (Detail), 2011
Hand blown pigmented glass
and pigmented limestone
71 x 10 x 20 inches





Published on the occasion of the exhibition

JANE ROSEN

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Tayloe Piggott Gallery

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(Previous Page), Glass Blow Study # 3, 2010
Korean watercolor, beeswax, gouache and ink on paper
22 x 30 inches