

Artist Statement

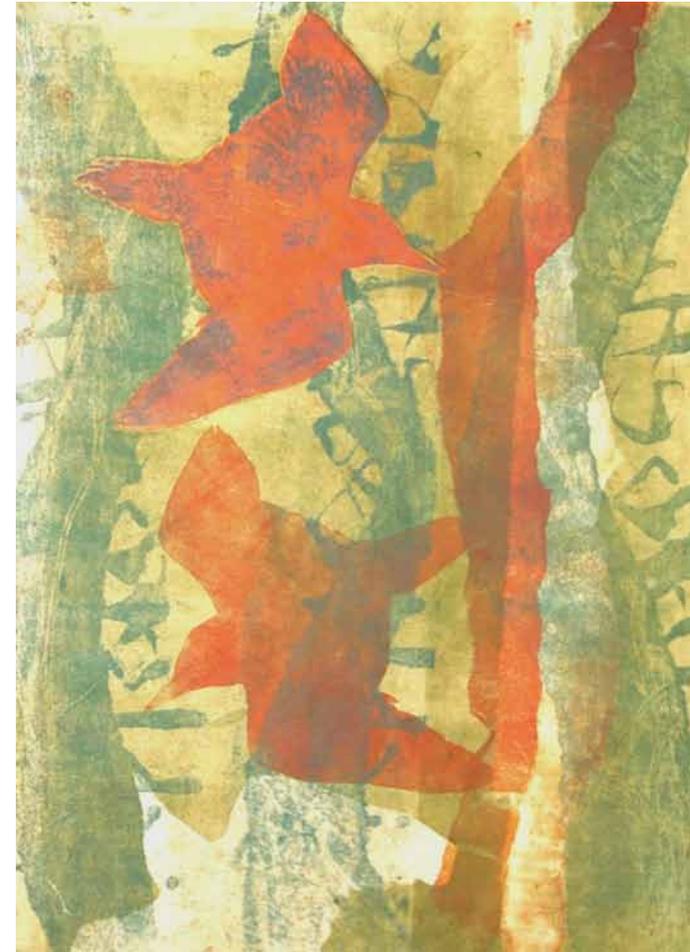
“All the life of the planet is interrelated ...each species has its own ties to others, and all are related to the earth.” These words of Rachel Carson appear on a boulder that I pass on walks in the National Wildlife Refuge named for her near my home in Maine. Her example has been a guiding light in my life. My husband and I relocated to Maine the decade *Silent Spring* came out, to move ‘back to the land’ with our young family. The values of community and caring for the environment informed the free school we helped start and the founding of our natural products company, Tom’s of Maine. Today my work reflects Rachel Carson’s understanding that we are all interrelated, all part of the web of life. Her urgent warnings about the misguided use of pesticides and the depredations of humankind on fragile ecosystems are still timely. What we do to the earth we do to ourselves.

My goal as an artist is to be, in poet Mary Oliver’s words, “a bride married to amazement.” It begins with attention. The

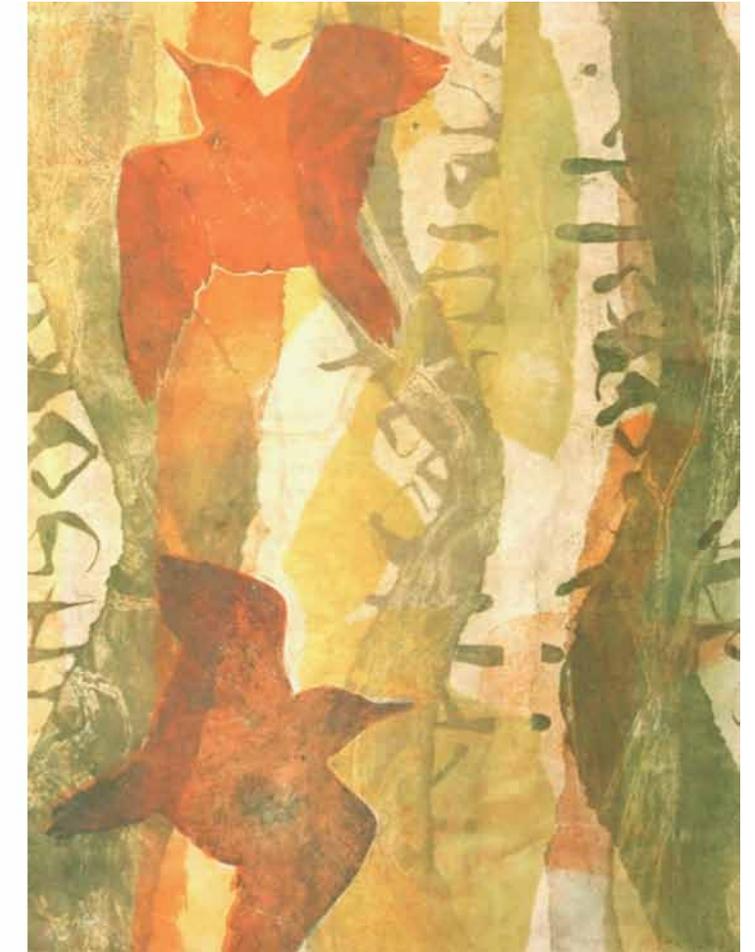
more I draw the more I see. I notice the patterns that connect across many forms: cells and stones, branching river, arching tree, what the Chinese call “li.” I find unexpected beauty in detritus; I collage disparate things together: plant material, rusted fragments, found objects. Snakes, turtles, birds and words inhabit my work. When pollution distorts natural forms, I record that, as in *Explosion of Amphibian Deformities*. For this show, the word for DDT, spelled out in my hand, lurks in the bird prints and on the starfish. It is present still in our bodies. I hope that people will see my work as a springboard to their engagement with and defense of the natural world.



Kate Cheney Chappell



Silent Spring I
17" x 12.5", Collagraph, 2012



Silent Spring II
17" x 12.5", Collagraph, 2012