

A collection of white feathers and a bird's nest with speckled eggs on a light background. The feathers are of various sizes and some have dark spots. The nest is made of white twigs and contains five speckled eggs.

Colleen Southwell
In Safe Keeping
The Corner Store Gallery

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382 Summer Street Orange NSW 2800 | www.cornerstoregallery.com

November 17 - 28, 2021 | Online Sales Launch 8pm November 16

In Safe Keeping pays homage to the natural treasures we gather, collect and study. I have long been fascinated with natural history collections, and through my horticultural background, herbarium specimens. There is a reverence to the taking and preservation of a single fragile specimen. When pulled from the crowd and treated with care, these individual beings are elevated to a position of great importance, capturing a moment in time and inviting study and appreciation through a quiet and still voice.

This body of work comprises ornithology, entomology, mycology and herbarium specimens and collections - a gathering of works in paper, as fragile as those they represent and intended to be observed closely and cherished in safe keeping.

Plumology Collection #1, 2021

Paper, pigment, watercolour, entomology pins, framed in Australian oak
behind Tru Vue glass, 23x23cm.

\$560



Plumology Collection #2, 2021

Paper, pigment, watercolour, entomology pins, framed in Australian oak
behind Tru Vue glass, 24x30cm.

\$730



Plumology Collection #3, 2021

Paper, paper clay, entomology pins, framed in Australian oak behind Tru Vue glass, 24x30cm.

\$730



Mycology Specimen, 2021

Paper, pigment, watercolour, wire, thread, entomology pins, framed in
Australian oak behind Tru Vue glass, 24x30cm.

\$730



Herbarium Specimen #1, 2021

Paper, pigment, watercolour, wire, entomology pins, framed in Australian oak behind Tru Vue glass, 24x30cm.

\$730



Herbarium Specimen #2, 2021

Paper, pigment, watercolour, wire, entomology pins, framed in Australian oak behind Tru Vue glass, 29x33cm.

\$790





Herbarium Specimen #2 (detail)

Ornithology Specimen, Bird #1, 2021

Paper, pigment, watercolour, wire, balsa wood, entomology pins, framed in Australian oak behind Tru Vue glass, 23x23cm.

\$600



Ornithology Specimen, Bird #2, 2021

Paper, pigment, watercolour, wire, balsa wood, entomology pins, framed in Australian oak behind Tru Vue glass, 23x23cm.

\$600



Ornithology Collection #1, 2021

Paper, pigment, watercolour, wire, balsa wood, paper clay, entomology pins, framed in Australian oak behind Tru Vue glass, 34x42cm.

\$1300





Ornithology Collection #2, 2021

Paper, pigment, watercolour, wire, balsa wood, paper clay, entomology pins, framed in Australian oak behind Tru Vue glass, 34x42cm.

\$1300

*Lucy Barrett
2021*



Ornithology Collection #2 (detail)



Mycology Collection, 2021

Paper, pigment, watercolour, wire, balsa wood, thread, entomology pins, framed in Australian oak behind Tru Vue glass, 42x34cm.

\$1300



Herbarium Specimens with Lepidoptera, 2021

Paper, pigment, watercolour, balsa wood, entomology pins, framed in Australian oak behind Tru Vue glass, 43x48cm.

\$1700



Three Herbarium Specimens, 2021

Paper, pigment, watercolour, entomology pins, framed in
Australian oak behind Tru Vue glass, 46x53cm.

\$1950



Herbarium Specimens with Lepidoptera (detail)



Entamology Collection, 2021

Paper, pigment, watercolour, wire, balsa wood, paper clay, entomology pins, framed in Australian oak behind Tru Vue glass, 34x42cm.

\$1300



Found and Gathered, Collection #1, 2021

Paper, pigment, watercolour, wire, balsa wood, paper clay,
entomology pins, framed in Australian oak behind Tru Vue glass,
43x48cm.

\$1700



Found and Gathered, Collection #2, 2021

Paper, pigment, watercolour, wire, balsa wood, paper clay, entomology pins, framed in Australian oak behind Tru Vue glass, 79x53cm.

\$2500



Found and Gathered, Collection #2 (detail)

Tell us about your art's progression since we first exhibited your work back in 2018. What's changed? What has remained constant?

Following my first exhibition at the Corner Store in 2018 my art practice has become full time, replacing my previous garden design business and continuing to grow. I am still overwhelmed by the interest in my work, the media coverage I've received and now the growing international interest. I have just completed my largest work by far which will feature in a property on Fifth Avenue New York, and I've been invited to participate in shows overseas in 2022. My work has become more complex, more detailed, and has moved beyond plant and insects as the subject. Always though, it is informed by the little details of the natural world, my connection to the garden and the landscape.

What's the theme for this new body of work? How does it differ from previous pieces?

My last exhibition at the Corner Store, Into the Wilder, was a walk through the landscape. This exhibition is a pause, collection and study of the individual elements within it.

Since studying horticulture years ago I have been fascinated with herbarium specimens. This interest extends too to natural history collections and the importance they have in recording and celebrating the life that is too often overlooked. There is something wonderful about the taking of a single specimen from thousands, millions, and elevating it to a position of great importance, to be studied and treasured. These individuals are valued, just as their species should be in entirety.

My studio too is full of treasures collected from the garden and on walks – nests, feathers, seeds, dried plants – I find them as beautiful in stillness and decline as in full growth. They are a constant source of wonder and inspiration.

This is the first time you've created birds, why and how have you done this?

Birds are such a precious part of our day to day life at home and in the garden – they bring great joy and it's such a privilege to have them choose our garden as their home. I have been wanting to include them as an element of my work for some time, but wasn't quite sure how to do it with paper! Recently I've taken some time to explore ways of making the structure, ensuring that they are captured in a gentle way. I'm keen to do more, to keep playing with forms and feathers and see where it goes. I would love to create some pieces mounted in glass cloches or boxes, there are structural things to work out but it's unfolding.

You've found some new materials, tell us about them and how you find them.

I've discovered some Italian and Japanese papers which offer new ways to sculpt and shape forms. Paper is a delicate medium and there are boundaries to how far it can be manipulated, but these papers are allowing me to push these boundaries.

What's your favourite part of the process at the moment?

The path of experimenting with new papers and forms like the birds and fungi is exciting, and every season in the garden inspires new directions, it's constantly changing. It can be hard to find the time to “play” with materials to ensure that my work continues to evolve, and the busier I get the harder it is to remain connected to the underpinning philosophy of my work, that is to slow down and appreciate. Ironically, in order to keep growing my work, I need to take time to be still. It's a challenge faced by many!



Colleen Southwell in her home studio, The Corner Store Gallery, photograph by Madeline Young.