



# Art Cart: Bird Builder

For this month's Art Cart, you will be creating your very own birds! You will be taking inspiration from the *Back Yard Bash: Conference of the Birds*, *Audubon in the Anthropocene* exhibition and the *Birds of a Feather* collection card. *Conference of the Birds* features 13 sculptural "nests" created by KU students and installed in Marvin Grove. *Audubon in the Anthropocene* shows a series of works by artist Matthew Day Jackson. Jackson reworks pictures of birds from John Audubon's book *The Birds in America* and places them in a world affected by humans: our world. Our *Birds of a Feather* collection card is of a painting by Haitian artist Joseph-Valcin Pierre and shows two richly colored birds perching on branches with pink flowers.

## Look at these works of art!



Pierre Joseph-Valcin  
*Birds of a feather*, 1975  
Paint, hardboard, 2011.0334

### Look at *Birds of a Feather*

What colors do you see in the birds' feathers?

What type of environment do you think these birds live in?

What kind of weather do flowers need to bloom?

Keep in mind that color is super important for birds! It is important for them to blend into their environment so they can stay safe!

**Fun Fact:** the pink flowers possibly represent the Haitian spiritual figure Iwa.



### Now look at *There will come soft rains and the smell of the ground*

These birds are drawn realistically but have dramatic and brighter than life colors!

Why do you think the artist did this?

What kind of environment do these birds live in?

Hint: there are no leaves or flowers on these branches.

How could you use bright and dramatic colors when making your own birds?

What ways do humans impact natural environments?

**Fun Fact:** Turkeys were reintroduced back into Kansas in the 1960s.



Mathew Day Jackson  
*There will come soft rains and the smell of the ground*, 2015-2016  
Color intaglio



# The activity

Look at these birds!



Penguins are black and white to blend in with the snow and shadows



Flamingos are pink because they eat pink algae and brine shrimp!

## Steps

1. Using your #2 pencil and drawing paper, draw your bird.  
Where does your bird live? Is it hot? Cold?  
Does your bird fly?  
What does it eat?
2. Color your bird in! Use whatever colors and patterns you want on your bird.  
What patterns does your bird have?  
Why are you using the colors you are? Remember where your bird lives.
3. Using your #2 pencil, draw the bird's environment and then color it in.  
Does your bird have a nest?  
Does it live in the trees or on the ground?
4. Create your bird's story! On the writing paper, write a short story about your bird.  
Give your bird a name!  
Describe your bird!  
Tell us where your bird lives!

Share your creations with us! Ask an adult for help and send pictures to:  
[educate@ku.edu](mailto:educate@ku.edu)



Owls have huge eyes so they can see better in the dark!

Hummingbirds have long and skinny beaks so they can reach into flowers to drink the nectar!

