

# From the community: The Choreography of Birds Opens at Brushwood Center



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By **Community Contributor Laura Fruhauff**

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**A**s Artist-in-Residence at The Field Museum of Natural History for over 30 years, Peggy Macnamara has had a unique opportunity to study and paint the museum's estimated 30 million specimens. Brushwood Center is thrilled to showcase a series of her meaningful watercolors that elegantly detail the different graceful perspectives of avian movements and poses. Macnamara is an accomplished author--with 8 books in publication--and the art exhibition will include paintings from her new books, *Art of the Peregrine Falcon* and *Coloring Nature*, a unique take on coloring books that utilizes a diverse collection of Macnamara's work. During the art opening, select pages from *Coloring Nature* will be available to attendees who want to put their own creative spin on Macnamara's delicate sketches by coloring them in.

Although already a celebrated professional artist, the complex natural subjects and compositions of Macnamara's artwork showcase her belief that nature provides the best subjects to hone an artist's skills. She notes that "...drawing from nature has always been a means to an end. If I study the best forms, colors, shapes and compositions found in nature I will become a better artist, sharpen my instincts and make better

judgments." More than just honing her incredible creative skills, however, Macnamara hopes to "advance the protection" of the natural treasures she paints. To more intentionally achieve this latter goal, Macnamara pairs her paintings of plants and creatures with narratives, as she has with Art of the Peregrine Falcon. Speaking specifically to peregrine falcons, Macnamara credits her colleagues at The Field Museum for their efforts to support the species saying, "They are now off the endangered list thanks to Mary (Hennen) and her colleagues. It is a conservation success story that hopefully will encourage others."

Macnamara has deep roots at Brushwood Center, making The Choreography of Birds all the more special for both the artist and the nonprofit: "Brushwood is my favorite place to immerse myself in nature," says Macnamara, "It is pure and "as is," and has been a refuge for the past 25 years. I have walked, photographed, painted and appreciated all of Brushwood." Just as Macnamara enjoys and appreciates Brushwood Center as a source and subject of creative inspiration, Brushwood Center anticipates that displaying Macnamara's work will inspire all those who enter its warm and intimate gallery.

The Choreography of Birds Opening Reception: March 5, 1-3pm at Brushwood Center. Free. No registration required. Exhibition runs March 5-April 17.

Brushwood Center is located at 21850 N. Riverwoods Rd. Riverwoods, IL 60015

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