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[Previous](#) [Next](#)

[Bird-Like Things in Things Like Trees Goes to New York](#)

by [Rob Tarbell](#)

- [Home](#)
- [Updates 1](#)
- [Backers 44](#)
- [Comments 1](#)
- [Lower East Side, NY](#)
- [Mixed Media](#)

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Help artist Rob Tarbell and composer Doug Boyce bring their Bird-Like Things project to White Box, a nonprofit art space in NYC.

- **Launched:** Sep 24, 2012
- **Funding ended:** Oct 24, 2012
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Bird – Like Things in Things Like Trees goes to New York!

Help bring the collaborative musical performance/art exhibition, *Bird – Like Things in Things Like Trees*, by Rob Tarbell and Doug Boyce, to the venerable White Box, a nonprofit artist space in New York City, October 25th to November 11th, 2012.



Cloud - archival inkjet print

The Need: White Box has invited *Bird-Like Things in Things Like Trees* to be exhibited as part of its Media Arts Performance Sound program (MAPS). This is a huge honor and we are excited to share this unique collaborative work with a larger audience. We, the artists, need your help to produce new work for this opportunity and to transport large-scale artwork, musical equipment (including a harpsichord), sculpture, and musicians from *Harmonious Blacksmith* to the Big Apple. We have already gained funding to cover some of the costs associated with producing this new series or work (a generous grant from George Washington University). That said, the need is great and we anticipate costs associated with this New York opportunity to exceed \$10,000.

Rob Tarbell will be crafting 4 new pieces including sculptural work that incorporates transmitted video and sound and Douglas Boyce will be working with musicians to finalize the in gallery live performance (including the transportation of electronic and acoustic musical instruments). This is a terrific opportunity for two Virginia artists – who met and began collaborating via the Virginia based VCCA residency program – to showcase their talents in the center of the art world via an internationally recognized venue. Help us bring this new collaborative

project to the Big Apple!

The Show: *Bird-Like Things in Things Like Trees* is a multi-media collaboration between visual artist, Rob Tarbell, and composer, Dr. Douglas Boyce. The project encompasses new paintings and drawings, glass horns producing video or sound, a live performance of an original musical composition, and the projection of spatialized audio loop in the exhibition/performance space.

Doug and Rob conceived the collaborative project during a stay in the medieval village of Auvillar in southwestern France at the Virginia Center for Creative Arts in the summer of 2010. As we shifted our daily life from a cycle of driving and teaching, to one of walking and markets cobblestone streets, we were both struck by a heightened presence of birds in our lives— neither of us had pursued mimetics previously, we felt obligated by our situation to trace our encounters with these birds into our art in some way. The project might be understood as *speculative ornithology* – originating from attempts to construct unfamiliar birds and beings based on interpreted, interrupted, or fleeting encounters while in a seemingly familiar yet foreign place. That intent was entangled, energized, and distracted by the excitement and expectation of significant change. Also under interrogation is the situation of observation, recollection, or construction of memories in retrospect based on the original encounters.



Douglas Boyce introducing Harmonious Blacksmith

Sounds Like: The exhibition would open with the acoustic musical work performed live by contemporary chamber orchestra, *Harmonious Blacksmith*, within the gallery displaying the paintings and drawings. For the remainder of the exhibition, the spatialized sound system creates an audio installation, by playing a continuous loop of an abstracted version of the live performance. The spatialized sound system distributes all or portions of the music inside a 360 degree perimeter.

Aesthetically the musical works will continue the timbral and aleatoric explorations of Douglas Boyce's recent work, *102nd & Amsterdam* and *A Brief History of Acceleration*. (Both of these pieces can be heard on www.douglasboyce.net under *Athenaeum then Listening*.) The ensemble will consist of violin, piano, cello, and percussion. By displacing the performers out of sight, the audience is situated spatially within the Umwelt of these

bird-like sounds; rather than reducing the experience of a sighting to either pure sound or simple visual observation, the audience is invited to experience a particular line-of-flight at a particular place and particular moment in musical time.



Cuckoo on left, Rob installing Obscura Horn.

Looks Like: With *Bird-Like Things in Things Like Trees*, Rob Tarbell's interest lies in fabricating immediate yet elusive objects. These slippery icons hover between the representational and abstract while resting in the uncanny. The work is dependent on projected and reflected light. On the cloud photograph and panel pieces, direct light illuminates backs, sides or splits creating a bounce of pinkish orange light. With the shaped canvases, light initially passes through the ink and reflects off the under layer of mirrored mylar, creating patterns and echoes of the ink image on the polyester surface. As the viewer passes, layers compress or pull apart or hover while the reflected light image appears or disappears. The translucent mirrored glass horns accept and reflect the surrounding environment while projecting sound and images through concealed speakers and pico projectors embedded within.



Pop, Miss Couvade 2010, & Rooster - ink on polyester, mylar, reflected light, mdf

Support: In addition to out of pocket contributions by both artists, the initial production stage of this project was funded in part by a creative research grant from the George Washington University. Doug and Rob are grateful the grant eased the pain of funding the creation of the musical work, recording costs, acquisition of the spatialized sound system, and paying for a portion of the materials to produce the artwork. In kind donations and trading services for goods provided photography and catalog design. We are also thankful for our talented friends who like our art.

Your support of our *Bird – Like Things* Kickstarter Campaign will defray the costs of:

Production of new artwork specific to the White Box exhibition

Installation expenses

Catalog production

Transportation of artwork, musical equipment, and sound equipment from Virginia to NYC (and back)

Musicians performance fees – (Harmonious Blacksmith has to eat too)

More:

More images and information on Rob Tarbell can be found at www.robtarbell.com.

More sounds and information by Doug Boyce can be found at www.douglasboyce.net.

More information about White Box is available at www.whitebox.org.

Risks and challenges [Learn about accountability on Kickstarter](#)

Bird - Like Things in Things Like Trees brings a unique blend of contemporary arts together - chamber music and visual art into one exhibition/ performance/ spatialized audio installation. The project has overcome some hurdles in finding appropriate exhibition programs and venues, but we still face many obstacles. Exhibiting the project in a major city has been hindered by everything from finding the right size venue, program cuts, budget cuts, lack of funding, even loss of staff. We are grateful for the opportunity White Box and their MAPS program has presented us. Even with their generosity, we need to enlist the support of everyone to bring Bird-Like Things to a major art and music city. The funds raised will help defray the costs involved with the creation of new work, transportation of artwork, musical instruments, sound equipment, installation expenses, musicians performance fees, and the production of a catalog to document the creation, progress and performance/ exhibition.

FAQ

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pledged of \$3,500 goal

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Project by

[Rob Tarbell](#)

[Charlottesville, VA](#) [Contact me](#)

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- [Rob Tarbell](#) 817 friends
- Website: robtarbell.com

[See full bio](#)

- **Pledge \$10 or more**

3 backers

Exhibition Catalog (PDF file), Music/ Bird-Like Things Installation Loop (mp3 file), Video of Bird-Like Things Performance (digital file), Invitation to come to exhibition opening performance / reception, Named as sponsor at exhibition.

Estimated delivery: Jan 2013

- **Pledge \$25 or more**

18 backers

4" x 6" Cloud photograph: color archival inkjet print/ signed, Exhibition Catalog (PDF file), Music– Bird-Like Things LIVE (mp3 file), Music/ Bird-Like Things Installation Loop (mp3 file), Video of Bird-Like Things Performance (digital file), Invitation to come to exhibition opening performance / reception, Named as sponsor at exhibition.

Estimated delivery: Jan 2013

- **Pledge \$50 or more**

6 backers

8" x 10" Cloud photograph: color archival inkjet print/ signed, Exhibition Catalog (PDF file), Music– Bird-Like Things LIVE (mp3 file), Music/ Bird-Like Things Installation Loop (mp3 file), Video of Bird-Like Things Performance (digital file), Invitation to come to exhibition opening performance / reception, Named as sponsor at exhibition.

Estimated delivery: Jan 2013

- **Pledge \$75 or more**

2 backers

Exhibition Catalog: printed/color/paperback, 8" x 10" Cloud photograph: color archival inkjet print/ signed, Music– Bird-Like Things LIVE (mp3 file), Music/ Bird-Like Things Installation Loop (mp3 file), Video of Bird-Like Things Performance (digital file), Invitation to come to exhibition opening performance / reception, Named as sponsor at exhibition.

Estimated delivery: Jan 2013

- **Pledge \$125 or more**

1 backer

Exhibition Catalog: printed/ color/ paperback, Framed Cloud photograph: 11" x 13" white frame/ 8" x 10" image/ color archival inkjet print/ signed, Music– Bird-Like Things LIVE (mp3 file), Music/ Bird-Like

Things Installation Loop (mp3 file), Video of Bird-Like Things Performance (digital file), Invitation to come to exhibition opening performance / reception, Named as sponsor at exhibition.

Estimated delivery: Jan 2013

- **Pledge \$250 or more**

4 backers

Framed Cloud photograph: 14" x 17" white frame/ 11" x 14" image/ color archival inkjet print/ signed, Bird-Like Things music score/signed, Exhibition Catalog: hardback/ printed, Music– Bird-Like Things LIVE (mp3 file), Music/ Bird-Like Things Installation Loop (mp3 file), Video of Bird-Like Things Performance (digital file), Invitation to come to exhibition opening performance / reception, Named as sponsor at exhibition.

Estimated delivery: Jan 2013

1.

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