

MICHAEL CARRINO

The Bird Artist Finds Morning in Newfoundland

“Isabel was just out for a walk, I imagine, lost in thought, when she saw me and was overcome.”

—Howard Norman,
The Bird Artist

Michael Carrino is a retired English lecturer at the State University of New York at Plattsburgh, where he was co-founder and poetry editor of the *Saranac Review*. His publications include *Some Rescues* (New Poets Series), *Under This Combustible Sky* (Mellen Poetry Press), *Café Sonata* (Brown Pepper Press), *Autumn's Return to the Maple Pavilion* (Conestoga Press), *By Available Light* (Guernica Editions), and *Always Close, Forever Careless* (Aldrich Press), as well as individual poems in numerous journals and reviews.

A purple slash of light licks ash-stained sky
as I try to rise, check

each black hand on the bedside clock
for the hour, yet it's plain

dawn is breaking coarse. I write one line
of a letter to Chiyo interrupted

yesterday. Now, beginning another
I brew coffee, leave the local

paper on my doorstep, no interest
in expert opinion, odd

bits of rumor, misnomer. Later, in blurry
midday light I will navigate

the seawall path, the lighthouse and cliff
still coated with the last

stubborn mist, find myself imagining honest
labor at the dry dock, and as

too often lately, fancy myself a bird artist.
Drawings of ibises and ospreys, already

sold this year to patrons in Halifax. Puffins
and two harlequins close

to complete. Workers will be drying
cod, as children fish

off the salt-bleached pier. The Lady
Marguerite Barnacle

will leave the wharf. I'll add for possible
future reverie a more

favorable wind. I'll have black-backed gulls
marauding off its bow.

One of Chiyo's letters in each beak.

STEPHANIE MARTIN

Four Crowns, 2017
Intaglio Etching, 8 x 8 in



COURTESY THE ARTIST