

“The need to know and understand the force of the natural environment lead me from Toronto to the NorthWest where I spent long periods of time in complete isolation. It was both a powerful and a humbling experience which had a profound effect on me and the work I was doing at the time. It took several years before I was able to access and assimilate this experience and relate it to my painting.

In my most recent paintings, which are more representational, I have tried to convey some of the strength and power that I find in nature. It is spiritual, magic and fluid as well as being formidable and solid. It is not hostile. It is simply there—strong and complete—and when we leave it alone, it works. My paintings are an attempt to penetrate to this hidden spirit of nature and to understand its relationship to my own inner reality. It is this essence and its influence on our everyday lives that fascinates me.”

Judith Currelly



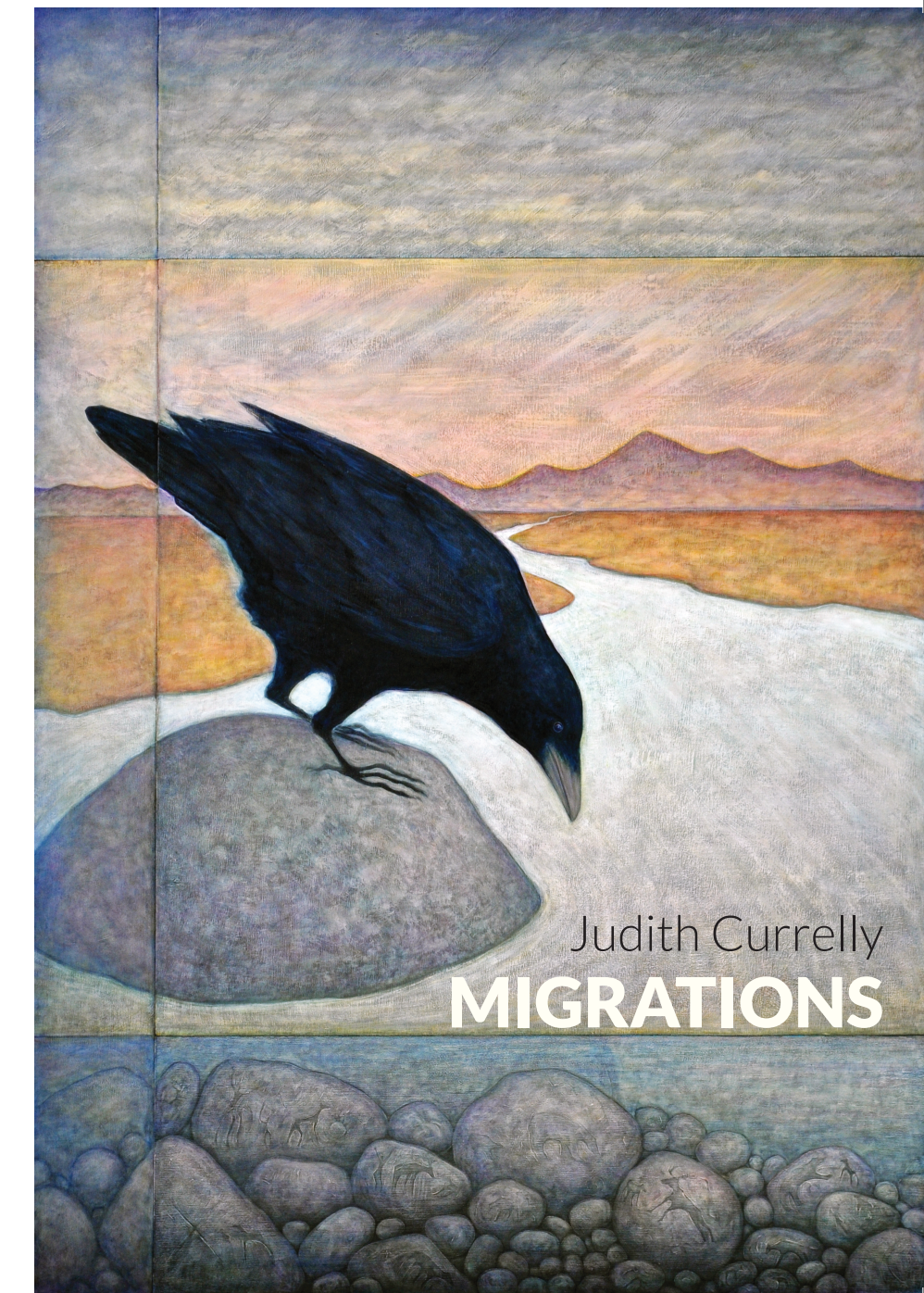
The Reach Gallery Museum Abbotsford September 29, 2016–January 8, 2017

The Reach Gallery Museum Abbotsford
32388 Veterans Way
Abbotsford, BC V2T 0B3, Canada
604.864.8087 | thereach.ca

ISBN 978-1-988311-07-4

Produced by The Reach Gallery Museum
Graphic Design: Shaun Carrigg
Printed by Globe Printers, Abbotsford, BC
©Judith Currelly ©Laura Schneider

Images:
Front cover: *After The Flood* (detail), 2009, oil on wood panel
Inside: (l-r) *Calmness of Spirit* (detail), 2008, oil on wood panel
Calving Grounds (detail), 2006, oil on wood panel
Back (l-r) *Reading the Night Sky* (detail), 2006, oil on wood panel
Joy (detail), 2008, oil on wood panel



Judith Currelly
MIGRATIONS

MIGRATIONS

Judith Currelly's life has been characterized by movement and migration. In the early 1970s, the artist moved from Toronto to the Yukon where she built a cabin accessible only by small aircraft. The ensuing decades of the artist's career were spent flying a commercial bush plane across the Northwest Territories and the Yukon participating in aerial surveys of the land and the animals that inhabit it. Today, the artist spends winters on Salt Spring Island, BC migrating north to her property in Atlin, BC, near the Yukon and Alaska borders, for the summer months.

Currelly's years as a pilot were a means to livelihood and a source of visual inspiration. Years spent witnessing the land from an aerial vantage point have had an inevitable and significant impact on both the artist's work and her relationship to the land. This exhibition, which presents work spanning the past decade of Currelly's career, gives us a sense of the vastness of her experience.

It is widely accepted that the idea of "the wilderness" is socially constructed. We come to know the wilderness as much through our own experience. While Judith Currelly's paintings are representational, it does not seem sufficient to describe them merely as depictions. The artist's dedication to her surroundings is palpable in these works, which so eloquently express the eternal, and simultaneously fragile, quality of the northern landscape. It is this commitment that seems to make Currelly's experiences our own.

Laura Schneider, 2016

