

# For the love of nature

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The three artists featured in this edition of *Unity Magazine* use feathers, paintings, photographs and sculptures to celebrate our planet's environmental treasures.



"Flame" by Eugenie Spirito



"Victory" by Eugenie Spirito

### EUGENIE SPIRITO

Eugenie Spirito was born and raised in Los Angeles and became interested in art and sculpture at age 5. Spirito says she has always loved to climb rocks, build stone forts and simply hold rocks in her pocket for good luck.

Starting her career in New York City, Spirito apprenticed with a world-renowned expressionist sculptor who insisted on the use of hammers, chisels and rasps, which she still uses.

"Flame" is carved from a rectangular piece of Portuguese rose marble that a teacher/mentor gave to Spirito. It took 15 years for her to work with the stone and after viewing a fellow sculptor's work, she was inspired to do her own interpretation.

"Because white onyx is a harder stone than marble, 'Victory' was a challenge and contributor to building personal strength," says Spirito. "I wanted to create something abstract yet feminine. Some view 'Victory' as the epitome of a brave female."



"Tribal Woman" by Eugenie Spirito

Spirito wanted to evoke a strong, peaceful spirit in "Tribal Woman." Carved from pink alabaster, she refers to this piece as exuding a healing presence.

A self-described minimalist, Spirito states she uses only what she needs – such as fragments of discarded or broken pieces that she transforms into beautiful artwork.

"Stone sculpture is a medium that can last for hundreds, even thousands, of years," Spirito says. "Stone comes from the Earth in its most basic sense and it will eventually be returned to its source."

### CHRIS MAYNARD



"Baby Grouse" by Chris Maynard

Chris Maynard was raised in the Seattle area. His mother was a Sumi artist (not Japanese) who taught in Japan and his father was a surgeon. Maynard attributes his artistic sense and love of feathers (affirmation of his appreciation of life) to his mother; his scientific knowledge and use of scissors, forceps, scalpels and magnifiers to his father.

Maynard's methods of arranging feathers must be done with precision. He strives to respect the feathers' curves and shapes by not pasting them flat. He also places his works in shadowboxes to show change in the direction of light.

A grouse camouflaged in the bushes of the Uinta Mountains of Utah was Maynard's inspiration for "Baby Grouse." He methodically positioned each feather to create a scene of mother and baby chicks.

In "Peacock," Maynard wanted to portray the same beauty seen by a female peacock when she chooses a male based on the attractiveness of his feathers.

Although Maynard's signature theme involves birds, he created "Dragon" for a children's picture book. It was a stretch to create the dragon, yet Maynard was able to capture the essence of its fiery breath with his meticulous use of bird feathers.

Maynard's sources for feathers are private aviaries and zoos. Many of the birds whose feathers he uses are alive and well to this day.