



CURATORIAL+CO.

SIMON CARDWELL

25 SEPTEMBER – 5 OCTOBER 2024

THE COMING STORM

SIMON CARDWELL

THE COMING STORM

Simon Cardwell is a fine art photographer who uses a combination of surrealist ideologies and still-life compositions to explore two common tropes of the human condition – beauty and tragedy. By employing symbols from the natural world, Simon creates a sense of drama evoking emotional responses to the dark underbelly ever present in the natural world. Having worked in the film industry for over 25 years, Simon approaches his artwork through a theatrical lens using light, set, props and characters to craft his cinematic narratives. His hyper-real photography alludes to a sense of 'realism' that is contradicted by the uncanny compilations of his subjects.

In his body of work *The Coming Storm*, Simon takes narrative cues from Joseph Campbell's *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, exploring the mythological structure of the 'hero's journey'. This narrative arc is widely adopted in both literature and film to assert and mirror daily life – challenge, struggle and resolve. Simon has crafted moments from the hero's journey within this series, which is reflected in the titling of the works. His cinematic approach extends to the process of composing each image where the sky acts as the set, flowers as props, and wildlife takes the stage as characters within each story.

A sense of trepidation is imbued through these meticulously constructed images. Simon oscillates between backdrops of dark clouds, open skies or pink-orange sunset to communicate the uncertainty of change. The timeless allure of flowers serves to beautify the images but also reminds the viewer that the scene is a construct. By seeking and photographing foreign or tropical floral species, he further enhances the surreal otherness of his images. Foreboding is present within each element of the composition, through the placement of each wildlife species creating behavioural tension that mimics posturing. Simon then positions each species in a manner that is poetically dark – snakes wrapped around a stem, butterflies dripping in blood and groups of circling birds in the background.

Simon uses the attractiveness of these natural elements to allure the viewer into the image and then expose dark moments hidden within the work. The fundamental power of Simon's work is that they are both familiar and unseen – another impossibility that he brings to life in his photographs.



The Bait, 2024
Eco solvent print on cotton rag paper



The Mentor, 2024
Eco solvent print on cotton rag paper



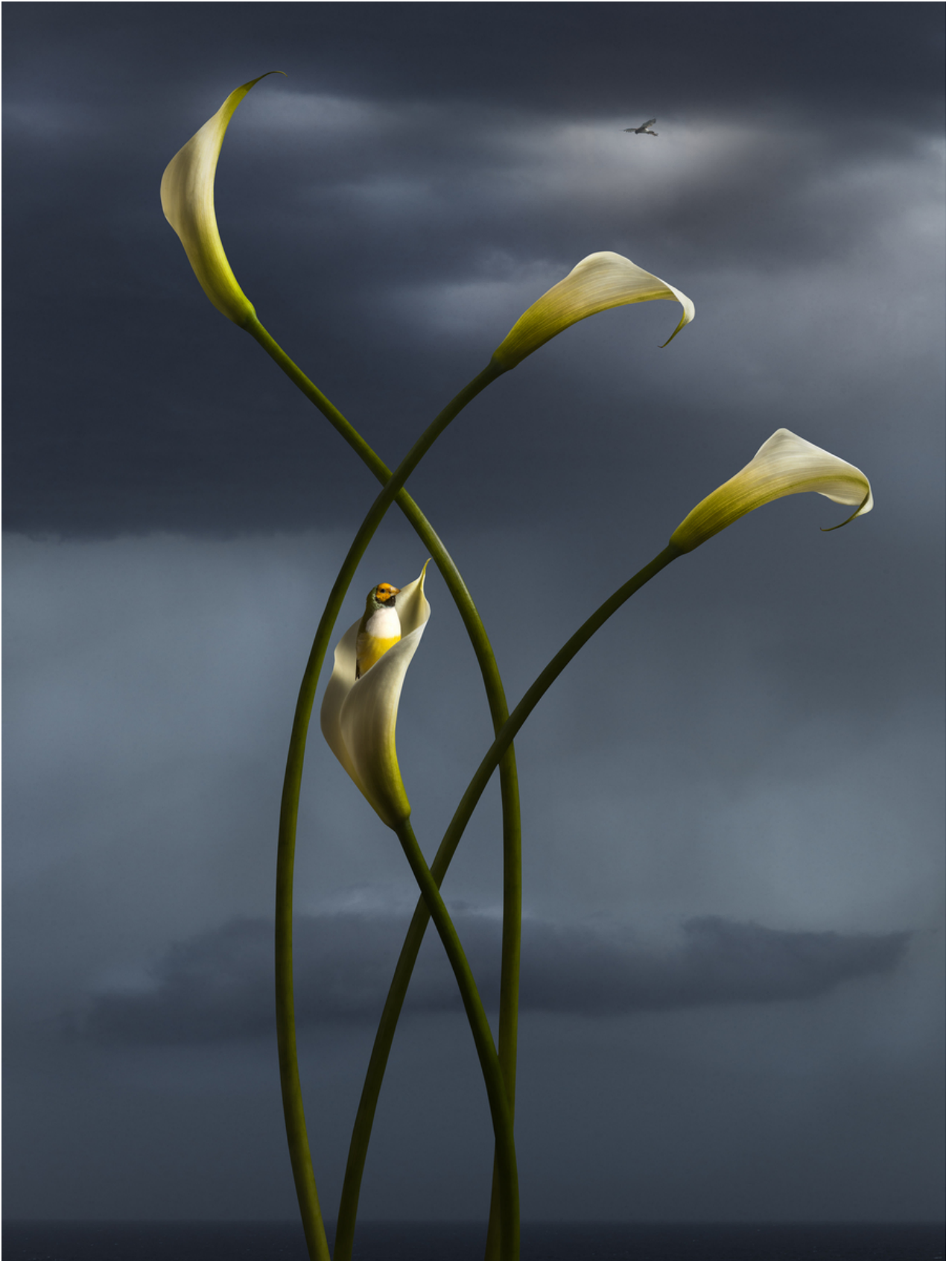
The Shadow, 2024
Eco solvent print on cotton rag paper



The Imposter, 2024
Eco solvent print on cotton rag paper



The Ally and the Enemy, 2024
Eco solvent print on cotton rag paper



The Sanctuary, 2024
Eco solvent print on cotton rag paper



The Return, 2024
Eco solvent print on cotton rag paper



The Resurrection, 2024
Eco solvent print on cotton rag paper



The Ally, 2024
Single channel moving image 2 min

THE COMING STORM

MEDIUM

Image size 82 x 110 cm

Framed size 85 x 112.5 cm

Print only \$3200

Framed \$4100

Edition of 8 + 1 AP

LARGE

Image size 150 x 112.5 cm

Framed size 152.5 x 115 cm

Print only \$4100

Framed \$5200

Edition of 5 + 1 AP

X-LARGE

Image size 200 x 150 cm

Framed size 206 x 156 cm

Print only \$5700

Framed \$7900

Edition of 3 + 1 AP

FRAME DETAILS

Print only: Eco solvent print on cotton rag paper

Framing: Eco solvent print on cotton rag paper mounted on aluminium, framed in black stained Tasmanian oak shadow box frame (no glass).

Paper can be wiped clean for care.



Photograph by Michael Carn.



CURATORIAL+CO.

ART GALLERY + ART CONSULTANCY

ENQUIRIES TO SOPHIE VANDER, DIRECTOR
curatorialandco.com | hello@curatorialandco.com
80 William St, Woolloomooloo NSW 2011
+61 2 9318 1728 | @curatorialandco

Curatorial+Co. acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the country on which the gallery stands, the Gadigal People of the Eora Nation, and recognises their continuing connection to land, waters and cultures. We pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging.