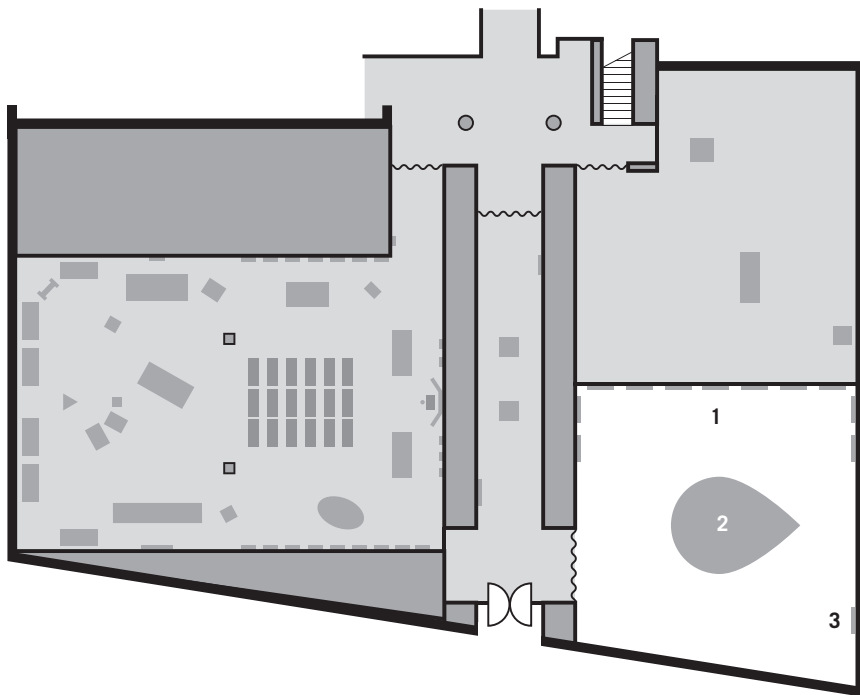


McLEAN GALLERY

THE BIRD THAT MADE THE BREEZE TO BLOW, 2006–2011



1. *THE BIRD THAT MADE THE BREEZE TO BLOW*
(PART ONE – PART ELEVEN), 2011
2. *THE BIRD THAT MADE THE BREEZE TO BLOW*
(Aero-Car N°500), 2011
3. *THE BIRD THAT MADE THE BREEZE TO BLOW*
(Hallowe'en Girl), 2006

THE BIRD THAT MADE THE BREEZE TO BLOW, 2006–2011

This work is composed of three scenes:

- **THE BIRD THAT MADE THE BREEZE TO BLOW (PART ONE – PART ELEVEN), 2011**
- **THE BIRD THAT MADE THE BREEZE TO BLOW (Aero-Car N° 500), 2011**
- **THE BIRD THAT MADE THE BREEZE TO BLOW (Hallowe'en Girl), 2006**

THE BIRD THAT MADE THE BREEZE TO BLOW (PART ONE – PART ELEVEN), 2011

Eleven pigment prints on archival paper with square blind deboss

(1 1/2 x 1 1/2 inches, 3.8 x 3.8 cm), ebonized poplar frames

Source: *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, New York, Harper & Brothers, 1877

(First American edition) in the collection of the artist

Frames: 61 1/2 (h) x 48 1/4 x 2 1/16 inches, 156.21 (h) x 122.6 x 5.2 cm

Poet, critic and philosopher Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772–1834) remains an enigmatic and emblematic figure in English letters. Alongside William Wordsworth (1770–1850), a close friend and collaborator, he is credited as a founder of the Romantic Movement in British poetry.

The Rime of the Ancient Mariner is the longest and most influential of Coleridge's poetic works. It was published in 1798 in *Lyrical Ballads*, a poetry collection co-authored with Wordsworth. In his own recollections, *Biographia Literaria* (1817), Coleridge says that when he and Wordsworth devised the idea of a collection melding supernatural subjects with topics taken from everyday life "it was agreed, that my endeavors should be directed to persons and characters supernatural, or at least Romantic; yet so as to transfer from our inward nature a human interest and a semblance of truth sufficient to procure for these shadows of imagination that willing suspension of disbelief for the moment, which constitutes poetic faith." The idea of the "willing suspension of disbelief," then, may be traced back to Coleridge.

It's not certain why he decided to set his story on a sea voyage ranging as far as the southern ice pack, though such voyages were vivid in the popular imagination in the 18th-century Age of Exploration. An account by Wordsworth suggests the idea for the poem was developed on a country walk with his sister and Coleridge. Wordsworth says he told his companions about a book he was reading, *A Voyage Round the World by Way of the Great South Sea* (1726)

by Captain George Shelvocke (c. 1675–1742), in which a sailor kills an Albatross. Wordsworth also takes credit for the idea that supernatural spirits rose to exact vengeance for the crime.

Coleridge's mariner, however, seems condemned not only to a sea voyage over which he has no control, but also, even after he has reached port, endless wandering in search of redemption for the crime of killing the seabird. This key aspect of the story taps into more widespread narratives, most clearly that of the *Flying Dutchman* ghost ship. That in turn has been linked with the older tale of the Wandering or Immortal Jew, an association that Coleridge himself made explicitly when he wrote in a notebook: "It is an enormous blunder...to represent the An. M as an old man aboard ship. He was in my mind the everlasting wandering Jew—had told this story ten thousand times since the voyage, which was in his early youth and 50 years before."

Although there is a Christian underpinning to the poem's tale of sin, guilt and the search for redemption, the universality of its themes gives it much wider resonance. The poem is also rife with references to the role of chance or fortune in our lives, of individual and collective responsibility and the secular concept of death-in-life.

The first illustrated edition of Coleridge's poem was published in Edinburgh in 1837, three years after the poet's death. There have been numerous attempts to capture its mystery since, though the most widely known is that of the Strasbourg-born Gustave Doré (1832–1883), one of the most influential artists and illustrators of the 19th century (see also the Note on *Marburg! The Early Bird!*).

His 38 full illustrations (there are also four smaller supporting images) were first published in a jumbo-format edition in 1876. The prints have assumed iconic status, and their visual representation of the poem has certainly influenced its interpretation.

THE BIRD THAT MADE THE BREEZE TO BLOW (PART ONE – PART ELEVEN) derives from *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* and uses some of Doré's illustrations to focus on the tale of the ship in trouble, the encouraging omen of the bird, the mariner's shooting of the bird and his subsequent shunning by the other sailors, who scapegoat him for the ship's miserable reversal of

fortune after he kills the bird. By selecting specific images to create a filmic sequence that ends with the mariner still at sea, the sole survivor of the trauma, Hendeles's retelling of the story is restricted to the bird and the sailor and his subsequent isolation with the carcass of the albatross strung around his neck. There is no resolution or redemption in her allegory insofar as the mariner is stranded on the ship, burdened both by his own sense of responsibility and remorse and by the behaviour of the group of which he was part.

The dynamic interplay of personal and group belief systems in this interpretative reading arises from the eleven selections made from the total suite of Doré illustrations, resequenced to create a narrative with an alternative beginning, middle and end.

In form, these large pages were inspired by the didactic panels recording another narrative of group prejudice, persecution and responsibility at the Topographie des Terrors museum in Berlin. Located on the site of the Nazi Secret Police, SS and State Security headquarters, the museum is close to König Galerie, where this artwork was first shown. As with early photographs, which were initially made for publications, engravings were generated for books and journals. Hendeles's renditions are scaled for viewing on a gallery wall. Their size addresses the viewer in the public space, while also inviting an intimate experience by revealing the hand-made gestures inscribed in each engraving.

They were made on a high-density, state-of-the-art scanner by a master scanner, the contemporary equivalent of Doré's master engravers, the resulting images recreating the original artwork on a larger scale and in unparalleled detail. The scans were painstakingly worked on to reverse the effects of the publishing process, effectively rendering the type and engraving on the original pages in a hyper-realistic way. They were then printed with inkjet technology that generated deep, rich blacks. The eleven elements chosen are debossed with individual square blind stamps to identify each one (PART ONE to PART ELEVEN) as part of a group. They were then presented as a specific selection.

The book pages selected create a new narrative that acts as both a context for and dialogue with the other components in this work, and they do the same for it. That is, each "frames" the other.

One aspect of Hendeles's practice is to choose narratives that are so deeply entrenched in culture that specific words or images can assume iconic status as metaphors for understanding the human condition. The common English idiom, "like an albatross around the neck," to designate an unwanted burden is derived from Coleridge's poem. It is analogous to a spiritual burden. It hampers an individual's freedom to act through its psychological or emotional weight, as well as isolating and stigmatizing the individual among peers. The Doré images reflect Coleridge's original portrayal of a solitary soul separated and tormented by his separation from others. In "The Mariner and the Albatross" (*University of Toronto Quarterly*, XVI, 1946/47), George Whalley (1915–1983) made a detailed case for reading Coleridge's poem as an allegorical reflection on his own life as an artist and outsider. "Whether or not he recognized this process at the time, Coleridge enshrined in *The Ancient Mariner* the quintessence of himself, of his suffering and dread, his sense of sin, his remorse, his powerlessness." Even the grotesquely vivid image of Life-in-Death in the poem reflects the ghosts and demons that haunted the poet's life and informed his writing. "Life-in-Death is a recurrent theme in Coleridge's thought," Whalley continues. "Life-in-Death meant to Coleridge a mixture of remorse and loneliness. Yet 'loneliness' is perhaps too gentle and human a word; let us say 'aloneness'."

THE BIRD THAT MADE THE BREEZE TO BLOW (Aero-Car N°500), 2011

Sculpture based on a toy made in the U.S. Zone, Germany, 1945–1952

An original example in green is in the collection of the artist.

Hand-worked and machined aluminum body, clear-coat gloss automotive paint and nickel-plated steel and brass details, welded and aircraft-riveted to a waterjet-cut aluminum chassis, supported by four powder-coated cast-aluminum wheels

Overall height: 33 ³/₄ inches, 85.7 cm

Overall length (propeller retracted): 117 ¹/₄ inches, 297.8 cm

Overall length (propeller extended): 124 ¹/₂ inches, 316.2 cm

Overall width (wings retracted): 42 ⁷/₈ inches, 108.9 cm

Overall width (wings extended): 127 ³/₁₆ inches, 323.1 cm

Original Toy: 2 ³/₈ (h) x 7 ¹/₂ x 2 ³/₄ inches, 6 (h) x 19.2 x 7 cm

Scale of the Aero-Car to the original toy: 15.5:1

Disassemblable mahogany vitrine

Overall height: 99 ¹/₂ inches, 252.7 cm

Overall length: 201 ¹/₈ inches, 510.9 cm

Overall width: 145 ¹/₄ inches, 368.9 cm

Height of glass: 78 ¹/₂ inches, 199.4 cm

Height of base: 18 inches, 45.7 cm

Height of the two interior risers: 6 inches, 15.2 cm each

Key is in cast aluminum with sides and raised surfaces polished.

16 1/4 (h) x 17 5/8 x 3 1/4 inches, 41.3 (h) x 44.8 x 8.3 cm

The vitrine has 26 structural elements to facilitate assembly and disassembly for transportation. These include: mahogany and poplar-plywood base consisting of six units bolted and keyed together to make a seamless construction; seven curved glass panels and two doors of two-ply curved glass panels provide hinge support for two rear curved glass doors; and locked-together, three-piece mahogany crown, which ties the entire structure together with pin-locks. Starburst ceiling formation not glazed so the sound can be heard.

Two hinged curved glass doors at rear provide access for Aero-Car, which is rolled into position on its four cast-aluminum wheels. Inside, it sits on two 6 inch- (15.2 cm-) high, linen-covered wooden bases built to support the 400 lb (181 kg) sculpture. Three-piece mahogany crown locks together and is pinned to each of the eight upright supports.

This Aero-Car, designed on a scale to suit a child of about seven, is based on an antique mechanical wind-up tin toy—Das Flugzeug-Auto—made shortly after World War II by Nuremburg-based Blomer & Schüler. The toy realized the dream of making a car that could travel by land and air, a futuristic hybrid that encapsulated the hope for new possibilities in the immediate postwar period. A lever on the bottom of the car allowed a child to set the toy to work either as a car or a plane.

Quite apart from its protractible central turning propeller, vertically moving control lever at the back and retractable side wings and rear stabilizers, the overall shape of the toy embraced the modernist streamlining in European transportation design of the 1920s and 1930s, specifically the pre-war streamlined products of Czechoslovakia's Tatra automobile company. Tracing its corporate roots back to 1850, Tatra in 1897 produced the first car made in Central Europe. Its vehicles would be highly regarded in Germany by Hitler and Ferdinand Porsche. The earliest Volkswagen Beetle had so many elements in common with Tatra models that the Czech company launched a lawsuit, though that was dropped after the German invasion of Czechoslovakia. The articulated Aero-Car sculpture stands at just under 34 inches (86.4 cm),

but when positioned in the vitrine on risers, its roof height is 64 1/2 inches (164 cm), which is about the same as that of the pre-war Tatra T-series production vehicle. The length of the vitrine also echoes that of the vehicle and is designed to accommodate the Aero-Car's full wingspan when extended to line up with the sculpture's riser platform.

Significantly for this work, the fully extended wingspan of the automaton (10 ft. 7 inches, 323 cm) matches that of the Wandering or White-winged Albatross (*Diomedea Exulans*), the first species of Albatross fully described in science. The Wandering Albatross has the largest wingspan of any bird, and examples have been cited with spans as wide as 12 ft. 2 inches (370 cm). The wingspan of the Aero-Car links this streamlined symbol of postwar hope to the promise the Albatross must have offered to sailors facing an uncharted and unknown future in their exploratory voyages in earlier centuries. The eagle ("Der Adler") was also a bird of hope (as well as a Christian symbol of omnipotence) soaring over the earth, and in Whalley's analysis of Coleridge's *Ancient Mariner* (op. cit.) is cited alongside the albatross as a symbol of the poet's creative imagination.

Hendeles's interest in automata and clockwork wind-up toys dates to 1992, when she started to assemble an extensive collection of antique examples. Her first exhibited wind-up toy was in *Canadian Stories* (Toronto, 2000); the piece, called *Snik-Snak*, was a German toy made by Ernst Paul Lehmann Patentwerk in the period 1926–1933. In 2002, she presented *Minnie Mouse Carrying Felix in Cages* in a show entitled *sameDIFFERENCE*. In 2005, she positioned a unique, life-sized painted papier-mâché automaton of the American illustrator W. W. Denslow's *Mother Goose*—made in 1901 for Marshall Field's department store in Chicago and perhaps the earliest automaton created to advertise a published American children's book—as a still element in one of the works she made for a show called *Predators & Prey* in Toronto. Two years later, just after *Documenta 12* in Kassel, she returned to Marburg for the first time since her infancy at the invitation of Prof. Dr. Matthias Rothmund and his wife, Dr. Gesine Rothmund, to consider making an exhibition for their town. She was intrigued by the city's emblematic rooster, which functions in the manner of an automaton. She then installed a circa-1900 *Puss in Boots* automaton in *Marburg! The Early Bird!* exhibited at the Marburger Kunstverein in 2010, and restaged here in the North Gallery upstairs.

This Aero-Car is the first automaton she conceived herself, reimagining the Blomer & Schöler toy's wind-up action as an articulated creature. The performance sculpture is controlled with a custom aluminum-and-steel clockwork mechanism driven by DC electric motors and controls. One motor drives a cam and crank assembly to control the movement of the wings and the in-and-out motion of the steel propeller shaft. A second electric motor controls the propeller's rotation through a set of bevel gears. And a third electric motor powers the up-down action of the lever on the back of vehicle. A zinc-coated steel spring mounted around the propeller unfolds the three propeller blades when they emerge; contact with a bezel closes the blades as the propeller shaft retracts.

The Aero-Car in its vitrine as a sculpture in the round continued Hendeles's work with curved glass, the vitrine serving as both a container and as a generator of light reflections and refractions. Both static and in operation, the Aero-Car projects otherworldly images and light scintillations onto the transparent curves of the vitrine's glass elements, the effects changing as viewers shift position and perspective around it. The performance of the sculpture is a rendering of the mechanical function of the key-wind toy, except that the wings and propeller of the toy spring into place whereas the sculpture operates in a slow gliding motion. The remote-controlled sequence of the Aero-Car sculpture's movements is adjustable, and set using a series of timers, controllers and relays.

The seven-part performing sequence is as follows:

- Activation lever on the back moves down to the "on" position
- The wings begin to unfold, gliding out to the side until they are at right angles to the car and give the vehicle the form of a Christian cross; at the same time, the propeller shaft in the car's body cavity moves the blades towards the edge of the bezel covering the opening on the front.
- As the propeller blades move beyond the edge of the bezel, the spring around the shaft forces them to unfold.
- Unfolded, the propeller begins to spin and continues for 1 minute 50 seconds.
- The propeller shaft and the wings start to retract, the activation lever on the rear moving up to the "off" position as this happens.
- As they retract past the bezel at the front opening, the propeller blades close like the petals of a flower at night.
- The wings and the propeller fold back completely to rest inside the Aero-Car's body.

The large fabricated key that is part of this sculpture is based on the key for the Blomer & Schüler toy, and bears Hendeles's interpretation in *bas-relief* of the company's Jumbo the Elephant logo on both sides.

The articulated creature tries to fly, but is trapped behind glass. The glass also protects others from harm from the twirling propeller that comes out regularly.

THE BIRD THAT MADE THE BREEZE TO BLOW (Hallowe'en Girl), 2006

LightJet photograph of an enamel painted cast iron doorstop, c. 1930

Made by Littco Products, a division of the Littlestown Hardware & Foundry, Littlestown, PA, USA

Printed on Kodak Endura Premiere archival matte paper, in ebonized poplar frame

The original doorstop is 13 ³/₄ inches (34.9 cm) tall and in the collection of the artist.

Frame: 61 ³/₈ (h) x 48-1/4 x 2 ¹/₁₆ inches, 155.9 (h) x 122.4 x 5.2 cm

This is one of only four known examples of this doorstop design, and the only one with the maker's label on the reverse. The company, established in 1916, is still in operation, but now specializes in aluminum casting for commercial use as well as aluminum awning and marine hardware.

The figure shows a young girl in a Hallowe'en ghost's costume, with a traditional carved pumpkin jack o'lantern distending her stomach, making her appear pregnant. The doorstop was made at a time when Hallowe'en was becoming increasingly popular in North America as a secular annual celebration in which children dress in costume to go door-to-door seeking candies, money or favors. Their cries of "Trick or Treat" when the homeowner opens the door is a playful threat that the household will suffer from their tricks if they don't receive treats. One of the earliest known references to the practice by the name of "Trick or Treat" is in a November 1927 newspaper article in the *Lethbridge Herald* in Alberta.

Although the spirit of today's secular Hallowe'en celebration is largely a 20th-century construct, it's just the latest development in one of the world's oldest and most widespread celebrations, which has been traced back beyond the early Christian era to pagan Celtic times. Some authorities believe that Hallowe'en has its roots in the Celtic festival of Samhain, which marked the end of summer and the beginning of the dangerous winter season. This eventually became the celebration of a kind of netherworld intersection of life and death where ghosts and spirits were abroad.

The tradition of dressing up in costumes for Hallowe'en is also of very early origin, perhaps based on the practice of wearing masks to avoid being recognized by ghosts or spirits, or of dressing up as a ghost or demonic agent to blend in with the spirit world and so again avoid recognition. Until quite recently, children generally dressed as witches, goblins and spirits to go trick-and-treating, though today they are just as likely to dress in the costumes of popular cartoon characters or even figures from popular film, television or video-gaming culture. The actual practice of trick-or-treating itself likely has its origins in medieval times, when beggars and children around the time of All Saints Day would offer to say prayers for the dead in return for food or money.

The custom of carrying a lantern to light the way on Hallowe'en or to guide good spirits to a home is also of great antiquity. The common name of jack o'lantern comes from an old British legend. According to one Irish variant, a farmer nicknamed Stingy Jack invited the Devil to have a drink with him, though, being stingy, did not want to pay for it. He convinced the Devil to turn himself into a coin, but then decided to keep the money and put it into his pocket next to a silver cross. This prevented the Devil from changing back into his original form. Stingy Jack agreed to free the Devil only on condition that he did not bother Jack for one year or, should he die, claim his soul. The next year, Jack tricked the Devil again, this time persuading him to climb into a tree to pick fruit. Jack then carved the sign of the cross into the tree, stranding the Devil until he agreed not to bother Jack for 10 more years. When Jack died shortly after, God would not allow the trickster into heaven, while the Devil, punishing Jack for his trickery, would not let him into hell and sent him off into the dark night with a burning coal to light his way. According to the legend, Jack put the coal into a carved-out turnip and has roamed the earth with it ever since. Jack o'lantern, then, is another eternally wandering soul, like the Mariner who killed the Albatross.

In North America, the pumpkin has become emblematic of the Hallowe'en lantern, and the carved features in the Hallowe'en Girl doorstop are typical. Though perhaps not by design, the girl figure looks pregnant, which is suggestive of the pumpkin's significance in some cultures as a symbol of fecundity (as also is the rooster). In his *Zoological Mythology, or the Legends of Animals* (1872), the Italian born, Berlin-trained philologist Angelo De Gubernatis (1840–1913) notes that, “In Hindoo (sic) tradition, besides the pea or kidney-bean, we have the pumpkin as a symbol of abundance, which is multiplied infinitely,

or which mounts up to heaven. The wife of the hero Sagaras gives birth to a pumpkin, from which afterwards come forth 60,000 sons.”

The pumpkin, as a cultivar of squash, has a prominent position in North American aboriginal and indigenous cultures, which often consider it as one of the “three sisters” of agriculture alongside corn and beans. Indeed, the pumpkin and its golden orange color is generally taken as a symbol of the fall season, after the harvest and when the days grow shorter. This in part explains why pumpkins and the orange color feature prominently in the American Arts and Crafts Movement, the aesthetic colour palette of which was essentially autumnal. The movement celebrated the harvest moment in the seasonal cycle of Fall in the northern states of America, when everything is about to die in winter. The colour orange is celebrated not only because it is a central symbol of a fruit that flourishes in the Fall, but because it represents fire and, by extension, the warmth of the hearth—the heart of the home, a refuge to keep safe from predators outside.

The pumpkin figures in many other legends and tales, notably in the most familiar western versions of the Cinderella story, a fable of a journey from persecution to liberation that appears in some form in most cultures around the world. In the late 17th-century version written down by Charles Perrault (1628–1703) as *Cendrillon, ou La petite pantoufle de verre* (Cinderella or The Little Glass Slipper) in his collection, *Histoires ou contes du temps passé*, Cinderella has been reduced to the status of a servant after her father remarries and is not allowed to go to a ball at which a prince intends to choose his wife. Left alone, she is distraught until her fairy godmother appears to help, turning the girl's rags into a ball gown, a pumpkin into a golden coach, mice into horses to pull it, a rat into a coachman and lizards into footmen. She warns the girl that if she doesn't leave the ball by midnight, all the spells will be broken and the coach will turn back to a pumpkin and the animals to their original form. Cinderella just makes the deadline, though in her hurry loses a glass slipper that the prince finds and will eventually use to identify her to give her a happy ending. Such is the way children are encouraged to believe their lives will turn out. As she appears in this show, however, the fearful girl is left carrying the pumpkin, forever serving the door as a doorstop and burdened with a frightening and perpetual pregnancy.

The assemblage of elements in this work intertwines three psychological conditions in a way that suggests there may be no escape.