

# **MATTHIAS GARFF**

Portfolio  
2026

[mail@garff.de](mailto:mail@garff.de)  
[www.garff.de](http://www.garff.de)

I explore the presence of animals in urban environments through sculpture, collage, and video. Working with found objects and everyday materials, I create animal figures that carry traces of human use and consumption. Often larger than life, they make visible the diversity of life while pointing to the materials that shape our surroundings.

Encounters with animals nearby and during travel inform the figures I create. Human and animal traits merge into hybrid forms that become portraits.

My work reflects on how human activity shapes the natural world and on the impact of our consumption. It draws attention to the animals that live with us, often unnoticed yet deeply entwined in our shared existence.

*Artist Statement*

## **MATTHIAS GARFF**

b. 1986 — Solothurn, Switzerland  
Lives and works in Leipzig, Germany

### **Education**

2015 Meisterschüler, University of Fine Arts Dresden (HfBK), Dresden, DE  
2013 Fine Arts, University of Fine Arts Dresden (HfBK), Dresden, DE

### **Solo exhibitions** (selected)

2025 Antennenvögel, Museum im Kulturspeicher, Würzburg, DE  
2025 Birds of Central Park, West 87th Street Park & Garden, New York City, US  
2025 Refugium, Kunstverein Jena, DE  
2024 City Dwellers, YIRI Arts, Taipei, TW  
2023 Wolkenkuckucksheim, Museum im Kleihues-Bau, Kornwestheim, DE  
2023 Mimese, Galerie Tammen, Berlin, DE  
2021 Garden Birds, Museum of Fine Arts Leipzig (MdbK), DE  
2021 Habitat, Kunstsammlung Neubrandenburg, DE

### **Group exhibitions** (selected)

2026 Animalia, Heidi Horten Collection, Vienna, AT  
2026 Vogelperspektiven, Museum Sinclair-Haus, Bad Homburg, DE  
2026 Future/Nature, CP Project Space, New York, US  
2025 Microcosm, Drents Museum, Assen, NL  
2024 Tönende Tiere, National Museum of Natural History, Luxembourg, LU  
2021 Play, Staatsgalerie Stuttgart, DE

### **Collections** (selected)

Art Collection of the German Bundestag, DE  
Drents Museum, Assen, NL  
Museum im Kulturspeicher, Würzburg, DE  
Art Collection E.SUN Bank, TW

### **Residencies**

2025 International Studio & Curatorial Program (ISCP), New York, US  
2024 Goethe-Institut Philippines, Batangas, PH  
2019 European Capital of Culture, Plovdiv, BG  
2015 La Ira de Dios, Buenos Aires, AR

### **Projects & Public Interventions**

2026 Bird Walk, Pioneer Works, New York City, US  
2024 Forever Senna, Interlagos, São Paulo, BR (with Sebastian Vettel)  
2019 ANOHA, Children's World of the Jewish Museum Berlin, DE

### **Publications**

2023 Tönende Tiere, Eichborn Verlag  
2021 Matthias Garff – Menagerie, Verlag amarto



**Great Spotted Woodpecker**

2026

Barrel, wheelbarrow, iron pipes, garden hose, aluminum, tire, sheet metal, fabric, buoy

255 x 120 x 200 cm



### **House Sparrows**

2025

Children's shoes, bristles, wood

17 x 12 x 25 cm each

### **House Sparrows (video)**

2025

Video, 1 min

<https://youtu.be/E7-TPcdd9F8>



**Birds of Central Park**

2025

Installation view

International Studio & Curatorial Program (ISCP)

New York City



## **Bird Walk**

2025–26

Participatory installation and community engagement project

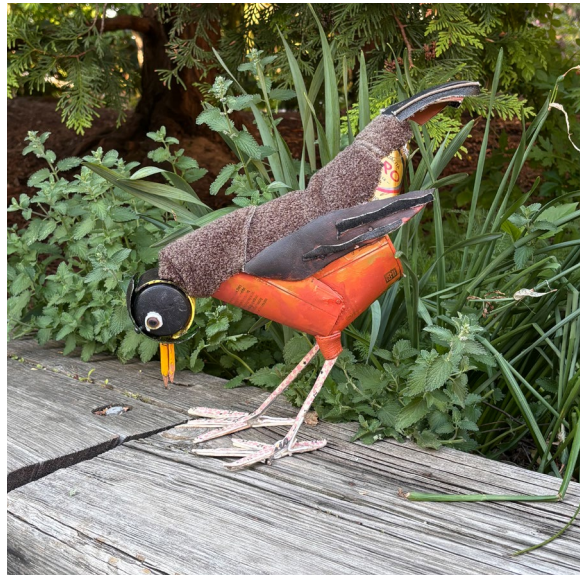
Various locations, New York City

Bird Walk combines sculpture, observation, and site-specific intervention.

Bird sculptures made from materials found in the city are installed in parks and public spaces, encouraging visitors to engage with local birdlife through guided walks and self-directed discovery.

*Introducing Bird Walk at Pioneer Works with Hannah Kirshenbaum from NYC Queer Birders*

*Photo: © Max Lakner*



**Bird Walk**  
 2025–26  
 Participatory installation, selected views  
 Various locations, New York City



**Bird Walk**  
2026  
Participatory installation  
Francisco "Pancho" Ramos Community Garden, NYC  
Photo: © Mark Reigelman



**Mourning Dove**

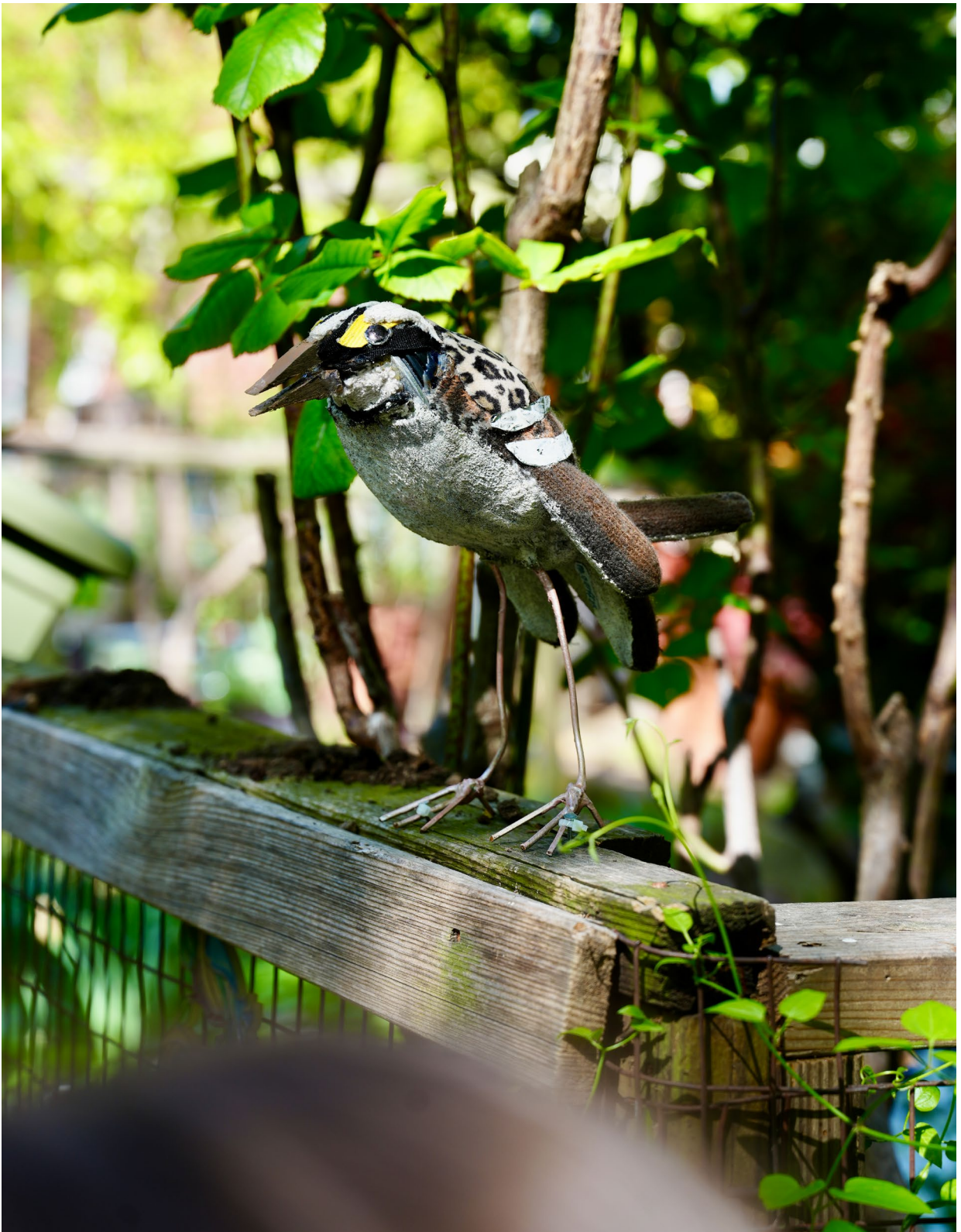
2025

Knife, furniture caster, glove, plastic bottle, wire, leather

22 x 10 x 36 cm

Francisco "Pancho" Ramos Community Garden, NYC

Photo: © Mark Reigelman



**White-throated Sparrow**

2025

Glove, wood, wire, packing tape, upholstery nails

24 x 12 x 26 cm

Francisco "Pancho" Ramos Community Garden, NYC

Photo: © Mark Reigelman



**Birds of Utah**  
2025  
Sketchbook drawing



## The Blue Magpie

2025

Video, 1 min

Taipei, Taiwan

<https://youtu.be/nU-Ky-YnO2U>



**Macaque**

2024

Travel bag, walking stick, bicycle saddle

96 x 40 x 110 cm

YIRI ARTS, Taipei, Taiwan

*Below: Macaque observed in a parking lot at Taroko National Park.*





**Garden Birds**

2019

Installation view *Gartenvögel*, 2021

Museum der Bildenden Künste (MdbK)

Leipzig, Germany

Photo: © dotgain



**Chaffinch**

2019

Bamboo, wood, plastic bin, aluminum, carpet, wax, paint

265 x 130 x 130 cm

Museum im Kleihues-Bau, Kornwestheim, Germany

*Background: Peacock Butterfly, 2023, 140 x 210 x 16 cm*



**Great Tit**

2019

Bamboo, wood, beer crates, blind, mattress, copper

40 x 160 x 180 cm



**Wasp**

2024

Aluminum bowl, tennis racket, handlebar,  
tent poles, bicycle saddle, tire

120 x 75 x 17 cm



**Pigeon IV**  
2021  
Collage in display case  
28 x 34 x 4 cm



**Raccoon**

2021

Champagne cooler, aluminum pot,  
bicycle saddle, broom bristles, faux fur

85 x 40 x 40 cm



**Green Woodpecker**

2020

Canister, armrest, school bag, faux fur, paint, rubber boots

160 x 120 x 60 cm



**Swallowtail Butterfly**

2020

Found objects in display case

20 x 25 cm



**Insect Case (Corfu V)**

2021

Found objects, display case

30 x 40 x 4 cm



**Chaffinch (Portrait)**  
2019  
Photograph, framed  
60 x 60 cm



**Mosaic Darner**

2021

Bicycle lights, badminton racket, caulking gun, plastic

120 x 65 x 14 cm



**Tönende Tiere**  
2022–ongoing

Collaborative project with biologist and musician Dominik Eulberg featuring 52 native animal species. Eulberg's texts and compositions based on animal calls are paired with my sculptures made from everyday objects. The project has been realized as a publication, traveling exhibition, and live performance format. Published by Eichborn Verlag, 2022

[www.toenende-tiere.de](http://www.toenende-tiere.de)

*Tönende Tiere, installation view, Staatliches Museum für Naturkunde Stuttgart, 2024*



**Tawny Owl**

2022

Aluminum bowl, pot, bicycle helmet, dish brushes

38 x 20 x 25 cm

Part of *Tönende Tiere*, 2022

<https://toenende-tiere.de/Waldkauz.php>



## White Stork

2021

Streetlight, moped helmet, paddle, branch

96 x 40 x 110 cm

Installation view, *Refugium*, Botanical Garden Jena, Germany

Photo: © Wolfgang Grau



Studio Leipzig, 2024

**MATTHIAS GARFF**  
Leipzig, Germany

mail@garff.de  
[www.garff.de](http://www.garff.de)

Instagram [@matthias\\_garff](https://www.instagram.com/matthias_garff)  
YouTube [@matthias\\_garff](https://www.youtube.com/matthias_garff)