

ZEHRA FATIMA TOOBA

TEACHER ARTIST

Visual Artist | Curator | Art Therapist |
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SOCIAL MEDIA

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MEDIA/TECHNIQUE

Acrylic Painting and Gold Leaf



*"Where the Blackbird
Stands",
by Zehra Fatima Tooba*

ARTIST STATEMENT & CREATIVE PROCESS



This painting is part of a bird series inspired by my students' fascination with birds, which began during classroom clay projects exploring form, movement, and nature. That shared curiosity deepened my own connection to birds, leading me to integrate their symbolism into my personal painting style. The yellow-headed blackbird was chosen for its striking presence and character—bold, noisy, territorial, and fiercely expressive. It symbolizes confidence, resilience, and the courage to claim space and identity. I am especially drawn to the strength of the female birds, who independently build nests and sustain their young, representing dedication, endurance, and quiet power. The gold leaf circle serves as a symbol of value, energy, and focus—a luminous element that elevates the bird's presence and reflects themes of worth, protection, and radiance. The layered green field evokes nature, growth, and emotional depth, while textured surfaces echo time, effort, and lived experience. This work celebrates the spirit of birds as metaphors for strength, voice, and freedom, while honoring the influence of teaching, observation, and the evolving relationship between nature and my artistic practice.

“WHAT CHALLENGE(S) DID YOU FACE WHILE CREATING THIS PIECE, AND HOW DID YOU WORK THROUGH THEM?”



One of the main challenges I faced while creating this piece was balancing realism with my personal artistic style. Capturing the bold character and posture of the yellow-headed blackbird—while keeping the composition minimal and expressive—required careful control of detail, color, and texture. Working with gold leaf was another challenge, as it demanded precision and patience to maintain its luminosity without overpowering the painting. I worked through these challenges through experimentation, layering, and trust in the process. I allowed the background to evolve organically and adjusted the bird’s form until it conveyed both strength and presence. Teaching and observing my students’ creative freedom also encouraged me to embrace imperfection, helping me transform technical challenges into opportunities for growth and artistic confidence.