



## NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

### **Karen Shimoda: Field Notes**

June 3 - October 1, 2016

First Friday: June 3, 5-8 PM

Gallery Talk: June 3, 7 PM

Missoula, MT / April 20, 2016 / Missoula Art Museum (MAM) A field note is a means for recording an observation in order to remember and better understand the particular phenomenon later. It can be data collected by a scientist, the careful observation of a naturalist, notes taken during a hike, or a journal entry written after a day walking the river. In all instances field notes are tools to aid greater understanding, be it simple identification of a plant or an in-depth study in behavioral science. They are reminders of a subject, a reinforcement of memory, or the recollection of an experience. The practice of keeping field notes is in part a search for knowledge but can also be an existential quest for greater understanding.

Shimoda moved from Missoula to Portland, OR, at the beginning of 2015. During her daily walks in this new environment, she took notes to learn the flora of the unfamiliar forest and as a diary of observations. The observations and patterns worked their way into her art practice and are on display in this solo exhibition titled *Field Notes*. The exhibit is organized around three bodies of work.

The six black and white ink drawings on drafting film focus on the patterns found in tree bark. Shimoda used the state trees of the Washington, Oregon, Idaho, and Montana as a point of departure for the drawings. Considering the overall image, astute viewers may identify the specific tree, but Shimoda's detail-driven approach to drawing yearns for closer contemplation. The precise marks reveal a microcosm within the whole image and reflect on the meditative nature of Shimoda's art-making.

In contrast to the drawings are a series of painted six-inch cubes. Where Shimoda's drawings are abstractions and use all over mark-making across the page, the cubes are instead purely reductive. Shimoda moves to a three-dimensional surface but one that is pure in form. The surface texture reveals layers of white paint worked over the dark marks underneath, erasing by addition, and reducing the final image to an elemental state.

A counterpoint to the drawings and paintings is a set of small artist books. The pictures in the accordion folded books are representational drawings of flora and fauna that Shimoda has encountered on her walks. The realistic depictions of nature are an accessible entry into the work in the exhibition.

Each body of work displays the contemplative and meticulous approach in Shimoda's work, and encourages the viewer to look at the natural world in a different way.

Contact: For more information, please contact the Missoula Art Museum at 406.728.0447, visit the MAM website at [www.missoulaartmuseum.org](http://www.missoulaartmuseum.org) or contact John Calsbeek, Associate Curator, [johnc@missoulaartmuseum.org](mailto:johnc@missoulaartmuseum.org), 406.728.0447 x229.

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About MAM: FREE EXPRESSION / FREE ADMISSION. The Missoula Art Museum strives to engage artists and audience in the creative exploration of contemporary art relevant to our community, state and region. Founded in 1975 and accredited by the American Association of Museums since 1987, MAM

showcases diverse and thought-provoking contemporary artwork from local and international artists.  
Gallery Hours: Tuesday- Saturday, 10 AM - 5 PM. Office hours: Mon-Fri, 9AM-5PM.