



## NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

# Jeneese Hilton: Raven Reviewing Modern, A Gift To The Permanent Collection April 3 - August 22, 2015

Missoula, MT / December 17, 2014 / Missoula Art Museum (MAM) / St. Ignatius artist Jeneese Hilton is a painter's painter. Her lush canvases of expressively applied paint deftly capture light and color, form and content. The themes of her paintings are richly layered, drawing from myth, history, literature and spirituality, the personal and the communal. Imagery from her own Blackfeet tradition recurs, with creatures suggestive of Native American animism and sacredness, such as the horse, turtle, raven, bison, and bear. The fields of thick color and compelling forms invite the viewer to ponder and find meaning in the paintings.

Hilton has generously donated 18 revelatory paintings from her oeuvre to MAM's permanent collection, the new home for this important and striking body of work. This gift will not only expand MAM's Contemporary American Indian Art Collection, but Hilton's large-scale and painterly works will also add depth and breadth to the permanent collection's offering of paintings.

Hilton's perceptive, inquisitive mind and adventurous spirit were nurtured on her grandparents' ranch on the Blackfeet Reservation, where she and her siblings were raised. She was a voracious reader from an early age and gifted with an intuitive love of nature and animals. Hilton earned a BS in biology from the College of Great Falls in 1964. In 1967 she joined the Peace Corps, serving as a volunteer in the Marshall Islands, followed by travel throughout Asia and the South Pacific. Upon return to the states, she began studying and producing art, including year of study at the Arte Institute Allende in San Miguel de Allende, Guanajuato, Mexico. She formalized her art education with a BFA from the University of Montana in 1986 and an MFA from UC-Boulder in 1990.

During her travels, Hilton noticed commonalities between the philosophies and spirituality of cultures she spent time with and her own Native American heritage, especially the animism and emphasis of community over the individual found in the eastern Taoist and Eskimo traditions. She says:

*The painting process itself motivates me and is ultimately my main emphasis and struggle. It has taught me many life lessons over the years. It is a balance between having control of the process and letting go. It has taught me the little bit of patience I now possess and how to let go of preciousness when needed. I feel that if I can make the painting work formally, the painting works. On the other hand it is the content and research that ensues before and during the process that is interesting to me and motivates and stimulates me to continue. I use both to suggest the effects of attitudes, dogmas, and beliefs on all aspects of life, including the environment.*

Missoula Art Museum is grateful for this generous donation and proud to feature Jeneese Hilton's work in the Lynda M. Frost Contemporary American Indian Art Gallery. The Frost Gallery is

dedicated to honor the creative cultural contributions of American Indian people to contemporary art and to ensure that Indian artists will always have a place to celebrate that contribution.

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 Stephen Glueckert, Senior Exhibitions Curator, [stevegl@missoulaartmuseum.org](mailto:stevegl@missoulaartmuseum.org), 406.728.0447 x226.

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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.