



PRESS RELEASE

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## Missoula Art Museum Showcases Site-Specific Installation, Photorealistic Drawings Billings-based Artist Jodi Lightner Responds to Architectural Space

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The Missoula Art Museum presents a new exhibition of large-scale, architecturally inspired drawings in *Jodi Lightner: Gathered Coherence*.

"Lightner is an ambitious and versatile artist. We've been interested in working with her for many years," said John Calsbeek, associate curator at the Missoula Art Museum. "When we approached her about creating an exhibit for the museum, she insisted on creating a site-specific installation for the space."

What resulted is *Manifest [Equilibrium]*, a 60-foot-long drawing hung from the ceiling of atrium and stretching over three floors, filling the interior of the museum. An accompanying installation of Lightner's photorealistic drawings on Mylar are in the lobby. Both sets of artwork feature ropes and nets, a common motif for the artist.

In her artwork, Lightner reflects on architecture and physical space. In a statement about the show, Lightner said: "[The] themes in this exhibition examine how architecture coexists with what we are thinking and imagining. Within any space, whether it is a palace or a barn, it is possible to have the mind wander and the imagination take us to a completely different location or experience." Lightner's artwork at MAM is pulled from a statewide traveling exhibition called *Jodi Lightner: Straight There and Back*, organized by the Montana Art Gallery Directors Association. MAM also used the opportunity to commission new work.

Lightner is an associate professor of art and the chair of the art department at Montana State University, Billings. She teaches courses that involve pencils, paint, and presses and oversees the foundation courses. She received her MFA in painting from Wichita State University, Kansas, and continues her studio practice in Montana while exploring the Northern Rocky Mountains and freeing the wild West. Lightner enjoys artist residencies focused on studio practice and has spent time at the International School of Painting, Drawing, and Sculpture in Monte Castello di Vibio, Italy; Vermont Studio Center in Johnson, Vermont; Ucross Fellowship, Wyoming; and as an emerging artist in residency at Penn State Altoona.

*Gathered Coherence* is on view at the Missoula Art Museum through March 1, 2022. This exhibit is sponsored by 120N Higgins and the Art Vault.

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**About MAM:** Founded in 1975 and accredited by the American Alliance of Museums since 1987, MAM is emerging as the leading contemporary art museum in the Intermountain West. MAM is situated on the traditional, ancestral territories of the Séliš (Salish or "Flathead") and Qłispé (upper Kalispel or Pend d'Oreille) peoples. MAM is committed to respecting the indigenous stewards of the land it occupies. Their rich cultures are fundamental to artistic life in Montana and to the work of MAM. MAM is a fully accessible, free public museum boasting eight exhibition spaces, a library, and an education center in the heart of Missoula's historic downtown.

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