



*Beaver Omen, Middle Fork Flathead River, MT 2020—acrylic and graphite on paper 50" x 38"*

**Artist:** Eric Carlson from his exhibition, *Entanglements* on view until May 22, 2021

**Artwork:** *Beaver Omen*

**Age range:** The whole family!

**Create:** Art inspired by this painting using simple materials found in the home.

**Prompt:** Eric Carlson is an archaeologist as well as an artist. He spends time in nature and this work was inspired by a moment he witnessed, and then interpreted and imagined further. When he saw the beaver push his foot against the rock he felt a message come through that he should try harder and get help! Spend some time in nature and observe the all the life around you closely – animals, plants, and elements like air and water. Get very quiet and allow ALL of your senses to engage. See if a story or a message comes through for you!

**Materials:** Work with adults to find the largest sheet of paper you can. You could even tape some sheets together to make one large piece. Collect any pencils you have. Regular school pencils are great, as well as colored pencils. An eraser or a rag is optional.

### Steps:

1. **Use your memory and your imagination to envision** the moment you want to draw.
2. **Think about the message you want to convey.** What are the animals or the natural world saying to you? How can you show that message through drawing?
3. **Lightly sketch out your composition (where things go).** Consider size, overlapping elements, and ways in which plants, animals and elements of nature might tangle together.
4. **Continue drawing** pressing lightly in some areas (or erasing or rubbing) and firmly in others to give a sense of movement. Varying lights and darks can create emphasis
5. **Allow your drawing to build** until it covers the entire large paper from edge to edge. This might take some time. Feel free to put the drawing aside and work on it over days or weeks.
6. **Share your art** using the hashtag #saturdayswithMAM and tag us @missoulaartmuseum.