

New Mexico Museum of Art

Small Wonders Celebrates Small Photographs

On view through March 12, 2017



Susan R Goldstein, *Still Life*, 2013,
albumen print and paper collage, 3.5 x 3.5 inches, courtesy of the artist

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE—September 13, 2016 (Santa Fe, NM): The New Mexico Museum of Art is making a big deal about little pictures! Opening with a free public reception on Friday evening, October 7, *Small Wonders* is a surprising selection of small contemporary photographic work that invites visitors to revel in the pleasures of the miniscule.

"The scale of these works of art draws viewers closer, quietly commanding more attention and closer looking than large photographs," said exhibition curator Katherine Ware. "In some of the pictures, the small size alludes to the precious and somewhat secretive quality of a special snapshot or keepsake. And while the smallness of some pieces makes them approachable, it sometimes concentrates their intensity into a concise form, like a thorn."

Offering context for the contemporary work are several examples of nineteenth- and early twentieth-century photographs that illustrate the small scale of early photography and its use as source material for some of the artists in the exhibition.

Susan Goldstein, based in Denver, uses found photographs as the basis for her collages, some of which are humorous and others unsettling. Liz Steeete of San Francisco also relies on photographs made by others, then cuts, rephotographs, and sews them into startling compositions. Española artist Laurie Tümer began her career by cutting photographic prints into spirals and arrows, joining them with paint to invent small scenes, each about 2 x 2 inches in size. Jan Pietrzak, based in Santa Fe, uses a camera to create his images, working in the darkroom to develop his exquisite platinum prints that measure a diminutive 2 ¼ x 2 ¼ inches each.

Other small pictures in the show are made of forms generated solely by the artists. Santa Fe artist Jenna Kuiper has invented a distinctive visual vocabulary for her charming yet cryptic photograms (photographs made without a camera), presented here in an installation by the artist. Taking cameraless photography even further, Houston-based David Janesko creates his images using a laser to draw on light-sensitive paper, arranging the works into a constellation on the wall.

Inspired by the work on view, visitors are invited to create their own photomontages (a mixture of elements made into a single composition by photographing them) in the gallery using a variety of scrap images and their imaginations.

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Founded in 1917 as the Art Gallery of the Museum of New Mexico, the New Mexico Museum of Art has been presenting innovative arts programming in downtown Santa Fe for close to 100 years. At its founding the museum collected and exhibited artworks by noted artists from New Mexico and elsewhere. This tradition continues today with a wide array of exhibitions and a significant collection featuring work from the world's leading artists. Today, as at its founding, the New Mexico Museum of Art strives to bring the art of New Mexico to the world and the art of the world to New Mexico.

The New Mexico Museum of Art is a division of the Department of Cultural Affairs. Museum exhibitions and programs are supported by donors to the Museum of New Mexico Foundation and its Director's Leadership Fund, Exhibitions Development Fund, and Fund for Museum Education.

The Museum is located at 107 West Palace Avenue, Santa Fe, New Mexico, just off the downtown Plaza. 24 Hr. Recorded Message: (505) 476-5072; Front desk: (505) 476-5041. November through April the museum is open Tuesdays - Sundays: 10 am-5 pm and open for free 5 to 8 pm on the first Friday of the month. May through October the museum is open 7 days a week 10 am-5 pm and is open for free every Friday night from 5 to 8 pm. The Museum is closed on Easter, Thanksgiving, Christmas Day, and New Year's Day. Weather conditions may require the Museum to close; you can check with the Front Desk at 505-476-5041. Visit us on the web for the latest updates at www.nmartmuseum.org.

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