

## Kirsten Furlong

Boise, ID

[www.kirstenfurlong.com](http://www.kirstenfurlong.com)

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My current artistic practice engages with a series of questions about our culture's multifaceted relationship to nature and the geography of human/animal interactions in urban and wilderness settings. These inquiries are utilized to contemplate various issues about the natural world and the concept of representation of animals and the environment. In recent work, including several I completed while in residence, my process is to mimic forms and patterns made by plants and animals: tree rings, concentric lines on seashells, woven grass in a bird nest, fractal patterns on ferns and corals, spider webs, or the meandering line of a snake. This is a way of understanding natural processes via imitation and representation using the tools of the artist - the pen, the blade, the needle.

The Great Basin desert ecosystem of Montello is relatively close (in Western landscape terms) to my home base on the Snake River Plain city of Boise, ID but I found many new things to explore and consider during the desert residency in the flora and fauna, environment, and land use in this remote and

*Unchopping a Tree #5, 2015*



*Birds of America #1, 2016*

beautiful place. I found the simplicity and functional design of the house and studio combined with the lack of distraction from daily news, digital communications, phones and media focused my attention to my work in the studio and intense observation to the sky, weather, wildflowers, insects, birds, and mammals. Having the constant reminder of knowing the power was coming from the sun and the water from the rain heightened my awareness of environmental and sustainability issues in my day to day living while at the retreat and since returning home.