



MUSEUM of
NORTHERN
ARIZONA

Celebrating the Colorado Plateau

PRESS RELEASE

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Artist David Christiana brings dynamic landscapes of northern Arizona to MNA in *Portraits of Petrichor*

(Flagstaff, Ariz.) February 26, 2016 – More than 30 works by former Museum of Northern Arizona (MNA) artist-in-residence David Christiana, will be on display in **Portraits of Petrichor**, opening March 12. The exhibition will be on view through May 30 in the Museum’s Donald Ware Waddell gallery.

Born in Huntington, New York, Christiana has been drawn to the American West since his youth. After completing his BFA from Tyler School of Art and MFA from Syracuse University, he moved to Flagstaff for a teaching position at Northern Arizona University in 1989. On a challenging day, in need of quite space for meditation, Christiana found himself on “the Loop,” a stretch of road surrounding Sunset Crater Volcano National Monument and Wupatki National Monument. So began his enchantment with the landscapes of northern Arizona.

For more than twenty years, the loop has held Christiana’s attention. The path threads through lava flow, rounded cinder hills, views of the Painted Desert and runs alongside Antelope Prairie. Prehistoric to contemporary humans have had a hand on this land. Christiana includes himself in this collective. As an artist, he does not try to capture exactly what is before him, but rather explore the feelings and emotions inspired within him by this unique landscape. Representing the artist’s intensive exploration of Sunset Crater Volcano National Monument and its surrounding area, the exhibition creates an intimate portrait of this volcanic wonderland through juxtaposed sketches with notes, simplistic watercolor and large scale acrylic paintings. He creates, in his own words, “a visual literature.”

Portraits of Petrichor, is representative of the elusive phenomena and emotion that Christiana explores in his works. Petrichor, the pleasant smell that accompanies the first rain after a long period of warm, dry weather, is exemplified in the exhibition’s signature piece 222222.2 and 2.2 miles.

“There is beauty in this world. It’s sometimes difficult to believe. And for me, words just don’t cut it. Marks, on the other hand, lines, a form described, images carved out of the ether, somehow, sometimes do,” said Christiana of his process.

Christiana is currently the President of the Genius Loci Foundation in Tucson, Arizona as well as a Professor of Visual Communications in the School of Art at the University of Arizona. In addition to his landscape portraits, he is a New York Times Best Selling illustrator of more than twenty books created in collaboration with some of the world’s most renowned authors.

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The Museum of Northern Arizona is located at 3101 N. Fort Valley Road in Flagstaff, Arizona. Admission is \$12 for adults and \$8 for seniors (67+), students (with ID), American Indians (10+ with tribal affiliation) and youths 10-17. Children under 10 are free.

The **Museum of Northern Arizona** inspires a sense of love and responsibility for the beauty and diversity of the Colorado Plateau. Founded in 1928, the 200-acre campus includes an historic exhibit building with nine galleries showcasing the geology, anthropology and art of the region; research and collections facilities; a museum shop and bookstore; and more than 450 public programs annually. To learn more, visit musnaz.org or call (928) 774-5213.

Location: Museum of Northern Arizona, 3101 N. Fort Valley Rd, Flagstaff, AZ 86001

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