

RUTH MEIJER

The drawings you see in this exhibition are studies of the natural world I experience from day to day. Shapes are everywhere and form compelling compositions: clouds in the sky, shadows of branches overlapping on the sidewalk, fissures in ice during the winter, water shimmering on the sand at the beach.

I like the immediacy of working with charcoal on paper and the ease in creating layers that transition gradually from one shape to another. Charcoal is malleable in a way that paint is not because paper will absorb charcoal and allow for a dense application while also being easy to erase away. The effects are endless but especially suited to the transient impressions I'm trying to convey.

I enjoy the simplicity of charcoal as a material and interacting directly with it and paper using just my hands. To create a additional range of effects, I rely on my other tools, erasers and soft brushes. With an eraser, I can remove varying degrees of a shaded area making broad or pointed strokes and burnish the surface with the flat side of an eraser to soften marks. With a brush, I can diffuse a line or blend areas together. It's a satisfying rhythm to draw, smudge, erase, burnish and repeat.

Each drawing adds to my understanding of how to manipulate charcoal to suggest the texture of different elements, whether they're physical or intangible. Or, how to suggest movement itself by rendering lines and shapes with dots.

Ruth Meijer is a multimedia artist based in Portland, OR. She draws, paints with oils, and is exploring video using elements of her artwork.