

# LAUMEIER SCULPTURE PARK

# ART + NATURE

# GUIDE



## STOP, LOOK + LISTEN

Being aware of your surroundings requires great observational skills. Take time to stop, look and listen to what's happening around you as you hike through the Park. What colors do you see? Do you hear any animals rustling, or the wind whistling through the trees? Do you smell any flowers or plants? Do you feel anything bumpy, soft, fuzzy or slick?



## WOOF, WOOF! WHAT'S THAT SOUND?

You might be hearing a real-life dog, or you may have stumbled upon Tea Mäkipää's *Howl-Along* from *Not Without My Dog*, 2011. The barks and howls encourage pups visiting the Park (on leashes, of course!) to take the stage for some dog karaoke!

## WHAT'S IN YOUR BACKPACK?

A true explorer always comes prepared! Here are a few things you should bring when hiking through the Park. If you don't have these items today, keep them in mind for your next visit.



### A Water Bottle

It's important to stay hydrated on your hike. Water fountains are located near the public restroom locations.

### A Snack or Lunch

Your body converts food to energy to keep you moving!



### A Pencil + Sketchbook

Be sure to take notes along your walk, and sketch the cool things you see!



### A Magnifying Glass + Set of Binoculars

These items help you view small things up close, or far-away things as if they are near!



### Your Eyes, Ears, Hands, Nose + Mouth

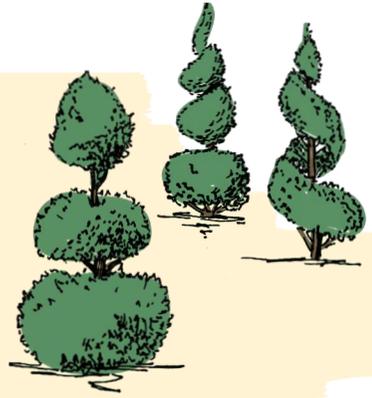
Nature and art engage all of the senses (but don't eat anything unless you are 100% sure it's safe!), so take your time and pay attention to your surroundings.

## PEOPLE + NATURE

While Laumeier's environment appears to be mostly natural, much of it has actually been built or shaped by humans. An environment includes not only things like trees and grass, but also things made by people—like buildings, cars and sculptures! The Park contains many remnants from the past, including a spring house and an inground pool that was incorporated into Mary Miss' *Pool Complex: Orchard Valley*, 1983–85.

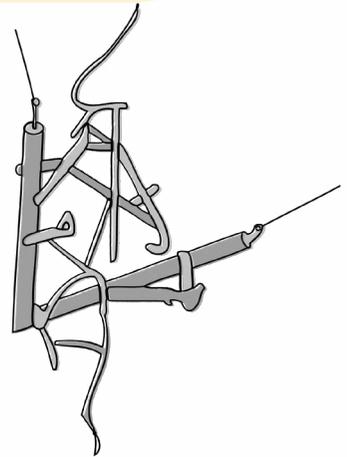


The Park staff maintains the grounds at Laumeier, which includes mowing the grass, keeping the trails clear and installing new artworks. Sculptures with living elements—like grass or plants—must be manicured to maintain the artist's original vision. Pearl Fryar's *Topiary*, 2013, was shaped using a hedge trimmer, and must be regularly pruned by the Park staff!



## SOMETHING SEEMS FAMILIAR...

Many of the sculptures at Laumeier were inspired by nature, were made using natural materials or were considered in their relation to the environment. Along your walk, stop at each sculpture you encounter to see if you notice anything that reminds you of something in nature. Are the materials alike? How about the shapes? Is the texture similar to something you've touched in the natural world, like a plant or other artifact?

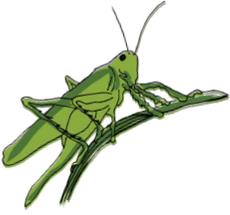


Richard Hunt, *Linked Forms*, 1999



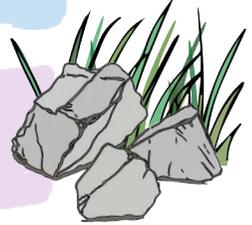
# THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Have you noticed that some things in nature are alive, while other things are not? An environment includes both the *biotic* and *abiotic* elements of an ecosystem.



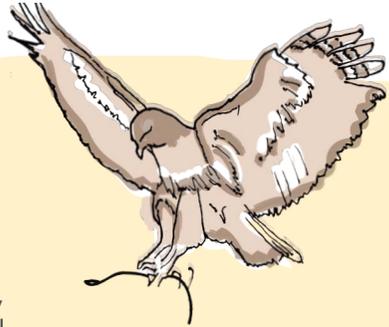
Things that are alive or were once alive—like plants and animals—are *biotic*.

Natural things that are not alive and have never been alive—like rocks and water—are *abiotic*.

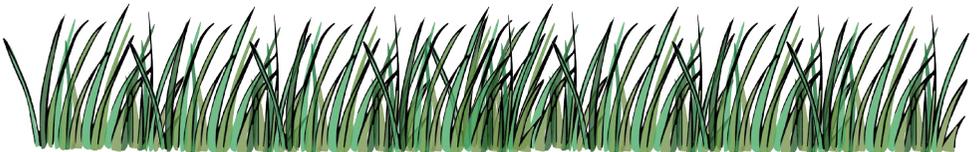
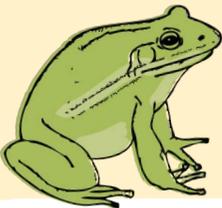


Both biotic and abiotic things make up an ecosystem, which is the scientific term for a natural community of organisms that interact with each other. Things in an ecosystem depend upon each other to survive.

For example, if clover were to start disappearing, the grasshoppers that feed on the clover would start disappearing, too! This would cause a domino effect in the food chain, because frogs feed on grasshoppers, snakes feed on frogs and hawks feed on snakes! For this reason, humans must be stewards of the

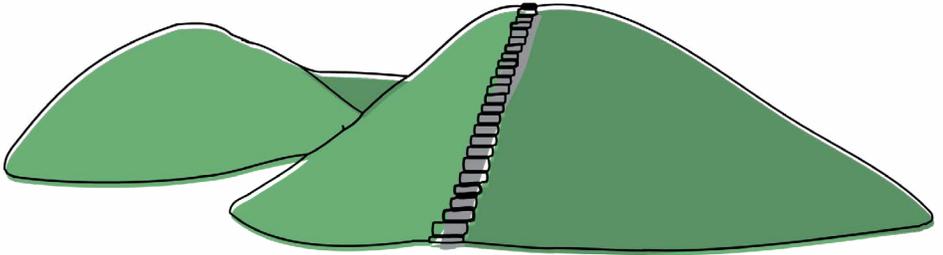


ecosystems they interact with to prevent the destruction of habitats (the natural surroundings). What sorts of biotic and abiotic things make up the environment at Laumeier?



## ART IN THE GREAT OUTDOORS

Outdoor artworks must be created using materials that can withstand their environment for a long time. Contact with the weather, animals and people can have lasting effects on outdoor artworks. Heavy rains can cause erosion, or the washing away of soil, on living sculptures like Beverly Pepper's *Cromlech Glen*, 1985–90. The uric acid in bird droppings causes metal to rust and breaks down other materials, so the sculptures must be cleaned frequently to prevent permanent damage. Even though the sculptures at Laumeier are outside, they must still be treated with respect, which means no touching or climbing. The oils on your hands and even the normal weight of your body can cause negative changes to the many different materials.

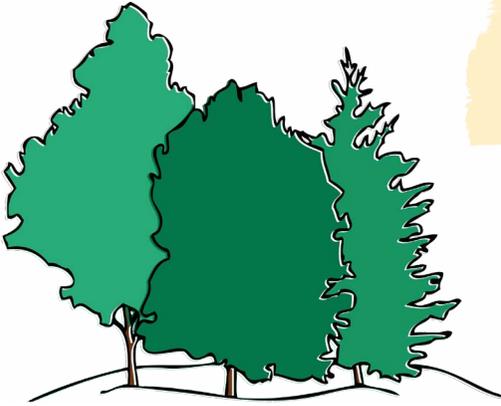


Have you ever touched a mirror or a window and noticed the fingerprints left behind? Those fingerprints are evidence of the oily residue on our fingers, which can wear down the surfaces of many sculptures. Have you ever jumped on a bed and been told it would damage the mattress springs? Although the sculptures at the Park may look like they are made of sturdy materials, they can still be affected by our interactions with them!



Niki de Saint Phalle, *Ricardo Cat*, 1999

## EARTHWORKS



Ian Hamilton Finlay, *Four Shades*, 1994

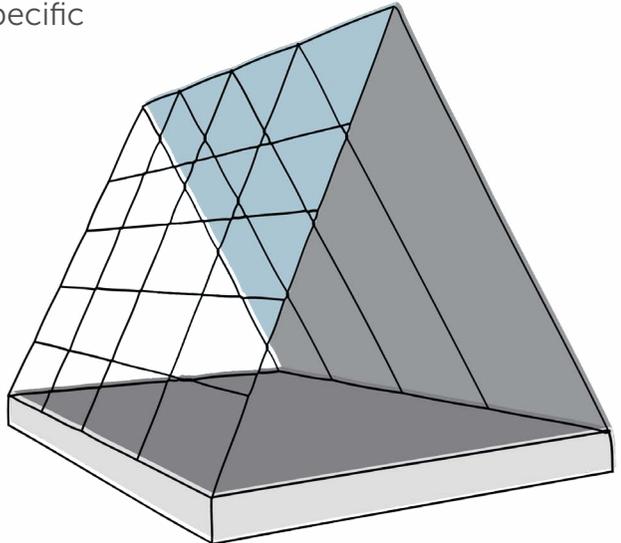
Artworks that use natural materials to shape and modify the landscape are called *earthworks*.

Since they are often made with materials from the earth like soil, rock or plants, it might not be obvious that an earthwork was made by an artist. Can you find any earthwork sculptures? What materials were used in their making?

## SITE-SPECIFIC ARTWORKS

Sculptures that respond and relate to their environment, and are made exactly for their location, are called *site-specific* artworks.

Can you find any site-specific sculptures at Laumeier? (Hint: There are several along the Art Hike Trail!) How do they relate to their location? Do you think they could be moved anywhere else? How would that change the artwork?



Dan Graham, *Triangular Bridge Over Water*, 1990

## COLOR WITH A PURPOSE

Artists select colors purposefully to make you feel different emotions.

Cool colors are often calming or sad.

Warm colors evoke energy, happiness or anger.



Frances Whitehead's *Hortus Obscurus (The Dark Garden)*, 1997, is filled with the darkest varieties of plants—ones with black, purple and brown foliage. How do these colors make you feel? Do you usually see such dark plants? Why do you think the artist chose them?

Nature gives plants and animals their colors for specific reasons. The fur and feathers of many animals are meant to camouflage them in their surroundings to protect them from predators. With birds, the males are often more brightly colored, so that they can attract female mates. Female birds, however, have duller coloring, which helps them blend into their surroundings while protecting their nest.



Beautifully colored flowers attract pollinators like butterflies, bees and birds; pollination is crucial to the survival of the plant. Other plant colors warn animals searching for food that they are poisonous to eat!



Did you know? Sunlight is made up of all seven colors of the rainbow: red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo and violet.

## COLOR ME WILD!

Things in nature can be found in every color of the rainbow! See for yourself, and take note of the colorful plants and artifacts you find!



## STRIKE A BALANCE

Balance in a sculpture is connected to its symmetry.



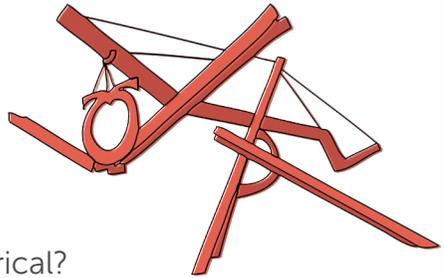
An object is considered symmetrical if you could draw a line down the middle of it and both sides would be nearly identical.



Several sculptures in the Park have symmetry, including Vito Acconci's *Face of the Earth #3*, 1988. Symmetry can be found in nature, too—in butterflies, flowers, honeycombs and more! Most of nature's symmetry, however, is approximate. Leaves are considered symmetrical in shape, but the veins on each side are certainly not symmetrical.

Other things—both sculptural and natural—are asymmetrical, and would not appear identical if split down the middle.

Trees, rocks and mountains are typically asymmetrical. What natural things can you find with symmetry or asymmetry? Can you find a sculpture that is symmetrical? How about one that is asymmetrical?

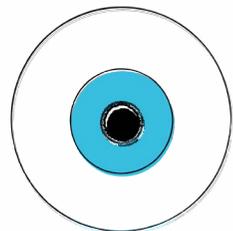


Mark di Suvero, *Bornibus*, 1985–87

## RADICAL RADIAL SYMMETRY

*Radial symmetry* describes a structure (often circular) in which a vertical cut through the axis in any two or more planes produces two halves that are mirror images of each other.

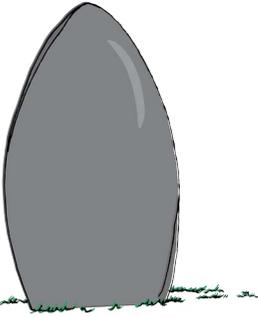
Think of cutting a pie through the center at different angles! Can you find a sculpture in the Park with radial symmetry? Along your walk, create a design using natural materials that exhibits radial symmetry using multiples of found objects. Arrange the items you collect in a *mandala* (circle) on the ground and leave your *ephemeral* (temporary) artwork for another visitor to discover!



Tony Tasset, *Eye*, 2007

## SHAPE IT UP!

Most of the shapes you encounter in nature are *organic* shapes.



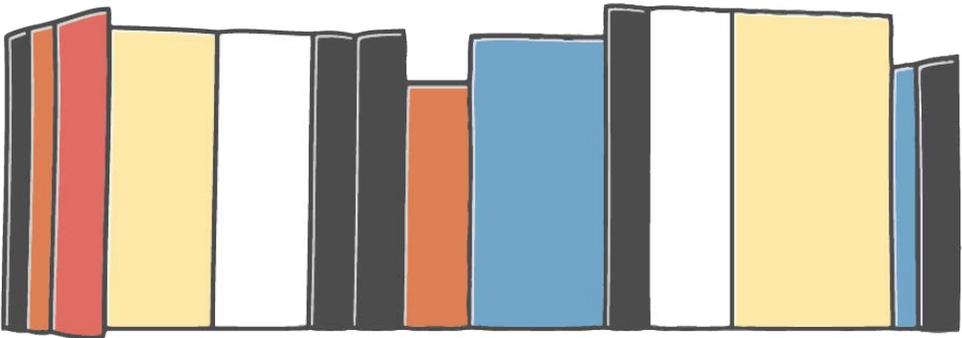
Jene Highstein, *Ada's Will*, 1990

Organic shapes have curvy, fluid lines.

Many objects made by people have *geometric* shapes.

Geometric shapes have straight lines and sometimes perfect symmetry—such as rectangles, circles and triangles.

As you walk through the Park, take note of how artists use both organic and geometric shapes in their sculptures. Do organic shapes make you feel a certain emotion? Do they seem more natural? What about geometric shapes? What do they remind you of? Do certain materials—like wood, metal or earth—lend themselves to either organic or geometric shapes? Why?



Tony Rosenthal, *House of the Minotaur*, 1980

## CREATURE FEATURE

Laumeier is home to many different wild animals and insects.



### Hawks, Owls + Songbirds

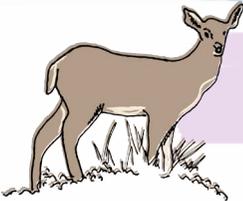
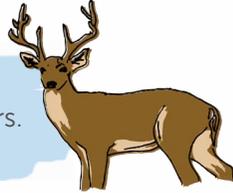
Look up in the trees to spot the many types of birds that inhabit the Park! Listen for their chirps, calls and songs while you wander through the woodlands.



### Deer

Approach quietly if you want to get a good look at the deer that dwell in the wooded areas of the Park.

The male deer (buck) has antlers.



The female deer (doe) does not have antlers.

During mating season, a buck will rub his antlers on a tree and make scrapes on the ground with his hooves, marking his territory. If you visit the Park during the fall and winter seasons, you might notice the fencing surrounding Pearl Fryar's *Topiary, 2013*, to protect it from these territorial buck.

### Squirrels + Chipmunks

Watch for these little critters running up trees and dashing into hidden spaces. They are sometimes guilty of damaging sculptures by scratching the surface of an artwork with their nails as they scurry across it!



## NATIVE PLANTS

Native plants are those that grow naturally in an area without human intervention. As non-native species are introduced to an area and animal habitats are altered with human development, the landscape changes and many native species decline. Native plants are well-adapted to the climate and soil in the area, and they provide food resources to the native insects with whom they have co-evolved, which then provide food for native birds and other animals. The Park staff plants native milkweed for the monarch butterfly at Laumeier. Milkweed is the only plant on which monarch butterflies will lay their eggs, and it is the primary food source for monarch caterpillars.



Now that you understand how important native plants can be, why not help them grow? Look for the plants below throughout the Park, and visit [www.grownative.org](http://www.grownative.org) to learn which options are best for your own yard at home!



Goldenrod / *Solidago speciosa*

Black-Eyed Susan / *Rudbeckia hirta*



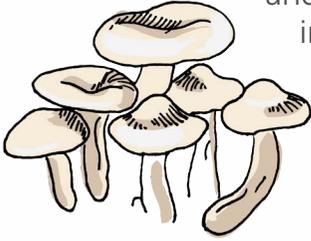
Butterfly Milkweed / *Asclepias tuberosa*

Prairie Blazing Star / *Liatris pycnostachya*



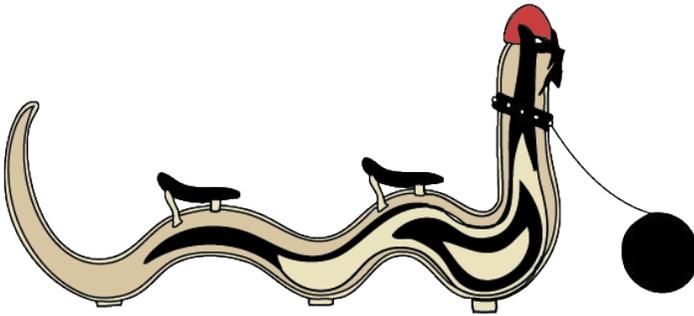
Pale Purple Coneflower / *Echinacea pallida*

## LIFE ON, IN + UNDER A LOG



Dead, fallen trees often make great homes for plants and animals alike! Many organisms work together to break down the log, returning its nutrients to the soil. These “decomposers” include sow bugs (roly-polies) and insects like termites and carpenter ants, as well as plants like lichen and fungi. Moss also plays an important role in this process, keeping the log moist. As the log decays, many animals and insects seek shelter in the hollowed-out center. Eventually, the log completely decays, leaving behind nutrient-rich soil where new plants can grow!

What if “real” bugs were the same size as Tom Huck’s *Bugs*, 2014–15? Do the shapes or materials remind you of anything? These sculptures were meant to be interacted with by sitting upon them—just please be sure to play with care!



Real bugs can be found high and low throughout the Park! Don’t be afraid—most of them are harmless! Just as you would not intentionally harm the artworks in the Park, you should also be mindful to not harm the bugs you find on your visit.



## HOW DOES YOUR GARDEN GROW?

Be sure to visit Kim Yasuda's *Hunt + Gather*, 2012, garden at Laumeier while you're here. This garden looks very different depending on the season! Seedlings sprout in the spring and grow until early fall. During the summer, several types of yummy vegetables and herbs are available to harvest by Park staff. Winter provides so little sunlight that the plants go into hibernation until early spring, which is why everything looks "dead" in the winter! Do you have a garden at home? What plants are growing there?



The *Hunt + Gather* garden includes mint, which is very easy to grow. Harvest fresh mint from your own garden at home to try out this simple recipe (with an adult's help!), provided by our 2015 *In-Residence*: Nutritionist Marjorie Sawicki.

### MINT-INFUSED GREEN TEA

#### Mint Simple Syrup

- 1 cup of sugar
- 2 cups of water
- 1 large bunch of fresh mint, rinsed



In a small saucepan, combine the sugar and water; bring the mixture to a boil over low heat. Cook and stir until the sugar is dissolved (about 5 minutes). Remove from heat, set aside and add the mint to steep until cooked. Remove the mint and store the syrup in the refrigerator until needed.

#### Green Tea

- 1 quart of water
- 3 individual-sized green tea bags

Bring the water to a boil, remove from heat and add the tea bags to steep for 5 minutes. Remove the tea bags and let the tea cool.

- 3 cups of green tea
- 1½ cups of mint simple syrup
- Juice of 2 limes
- ½ cucumber, sliced
- Sprigs of fresh mint, rinsed

Combine the green tea, simple syrup and lime juice. Stir to combine; add cucumber slices and fresh mint sprigs. Let the flavors combine until ready to serve. Pour over ice in glasses and enjoy!

## LAUMEIER IN EVERY SEASON

The way you view outdoor sculptures changes with the seasons! The trees, ground and sky surrounding an artwork look different throughout the year, making sculptures look different, too.



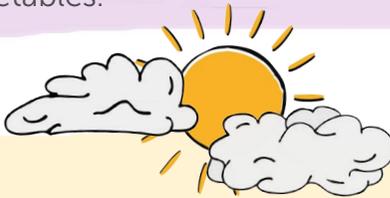
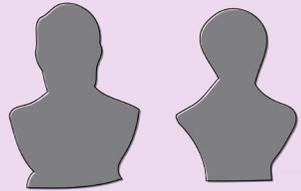
Try sketching the same sculpture and its surroundings at different times of the year, or even at different times of the day. Do you notice any changes in color, light or the surroundings? How does it change the way you feel about the artwork?

There are many things to see and do in nature at Laumeier year-round! Visit the Park each season and give some of these activities a try!



### Spring

In the springtime, plants and animals that hibernate through the winter begin to come back to life. This makes spring a very colorful season! Add some color to your own yard by starting a garden at home. Read about the plants you want to grow to find out how much sunlight and water they need, and the best places to plant them. Seeds and seedlings can be picked up at your local nursery or garden center—don't forget to include a few flowers to attract birds and butterflies! Visit Ken Lum's *The Space Between Scott and Plessy*, 2013, at Laumeier for inspiration on landscaping with native plants and vegetables.



### Summer

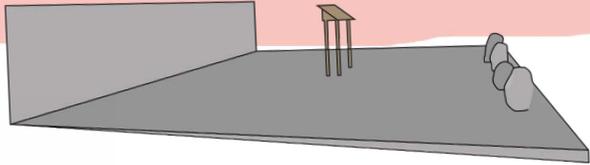
Animals and insects can be found everywhere in the summertime. Take your watchful eye into the wild to locate as many different bugs as you can. Use a magnifying glass or a breathable bug jar to get a good look at the fascinating creatures around you. Summer is also a great time to see local plant life. To view the Park in its full, blooming glory, stop in for a FREE Docent-led Walking Tour of the Park on the first Sunday of each month, May–October.





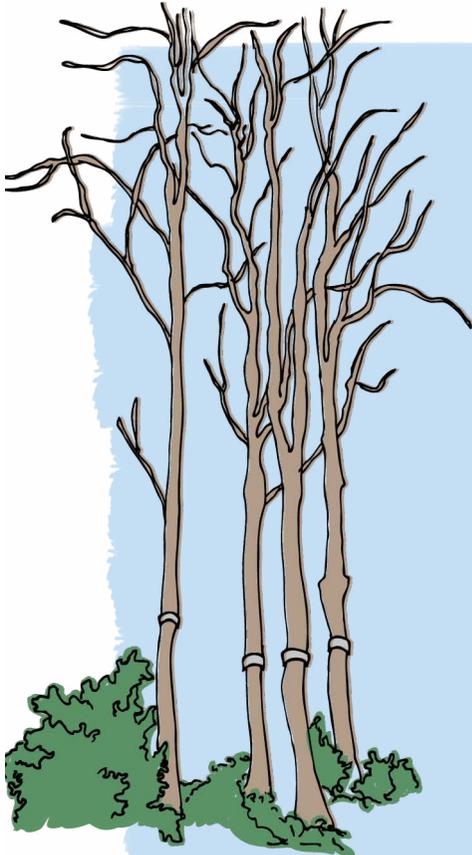
## Fall

Fall is the time of year to witness the leaves changing colors on the trees! Green leaves are made when trees turn sunlight into chlorophyll, which is pigmented green. As the days grow shorter, the trees receive less sunlight, causing the leaves to change colors as the chlorophyll breaks down. Rake up a pile of leaves in your yard at home to jump in, or toss them in the air to watch the explosion of color as they fall down around you. You can also take a walk in the woods at Laumeier to observe all the wonderful colors on different trees before spending some quiet time at Harriet Bart's *Without Words, A Reading Room*, 1998.



## Winter

When deciduous trees lose their leaves in the winter, it's easier to spot the habitats and critters living amongst them! Birds and their nests are very visible, but there are other things you can search for, too! See if you can find a food cache where an animal has hidden its nuts and seeds to feed on throughout winter. Be sure not to disturb any food store you might find; the animal depends on that food to survive. You can also look for nibble and chew marks on tree bark from the animals feeding on the tree in the absence of leaves. Be sure to check out the tree bands as part of the Raqs Media Collective's *If the World is a Fair Place Then...*, 2015, as you explore the trees along Laumeier's Art Hike Trail.



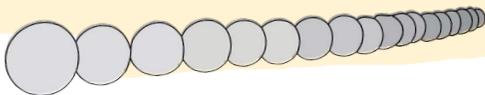
## HOW CAN YOU HELP?

If you enjoy Laumeier Sculpture Park, then you should become a nature ally!

*Human ecology is the study of the interaction between people and their environment.*

When you have a positive interaction with the environment, nature gives back! For example, when you water your garden daily, it produces food for you. And reusing or recycling an item, rather than throwing it away, keeps it out of a landfill. You should always make an effort to limit the amount of waste you produce—but when you can't, you should reuse and recycle!

Many sculptures at Laumeier are made with reused materials. Alexander Liberman's *The Way*, 1972–80 (right), is made from 18 salvaged steel oil tanks, while Donald Lipski's *Ball? Ball! Wall? Wall!*, 1994 (below), is made from 55 steel marine buoys. Think of some items you usually throw away—can you imagine making them into something else?



Want more *Art + Nature*? Visit [www.laumeier.org](http://www.laumeier.org) for more information on our art and nature themed Art Camps, Classes and Workshops.

We hope that your visit to Laumeier Sculpture Park has been an amazing adventure! Please come visit us again soon!

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SCULPTURE PARK

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