



## Martha Campbell Mansfield

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### Artist Statement

I spent some time in Utah with my nephew last summer. He is the caretaker for a magical piece of property owned by a prominent brain surgeon and his wife Michelle. She is the sister of a long-favored comic artist of mine, Gary Trudeau who is the creator of Doonesbury. They built a cabin for him nestled in an Aspen grove. It is named Walden and I was given the gift of staying there all by myself.

Much like the beloved Rowan tree, the Aspen was often planted at the entrance to a house, in memory of lost loved ones, and for the protection they offered. In Celtic Mythology, the unique sight and sound of the quivering leaves and the whispering of the wind through them was thought to be the souls of ancestors communicating with the world of the living, leading to the tree being known as the Whispering Tree. It is said that they communicate with each other even if they are hundreds of miles away.

Within the trees, of course, live the birds. I have a passion for birds, their songs, their community, and their homes. Nests fascinate me, although very delicate they are a marvel of artistic skills of weaving and design. I have one that fell from a tree that is interwoven with a thread from a blue tarp that covers my woodpile.

This body of work reflects my belief that our lives are interwoven globally and our actions directly impact our world. If we could live more like the trees and the animals wouldn't the world be a healthier place to live?