

The Garden Musings Project is an open invitation to look more closely and broadly at our backyards, front yards and neighborhoods. Each week we'll send three prompts focused around a theme – color, texture, lines, interaction to name a few. These prompts will include ideas to guide a musing or conversation between you and your nearby outdoor spaces. Try each of the exercises, or stick with one that evolves into a regular practice.

Musing on Color: Inspired by Lorene Edwards Forkner, a Seattle Based garden writer and artist, we're kicking off the Garden Musings Project with a practice of looking closely at the colors in the garden. Lorene calls her practice "Seeing Color in the Garden". Check out ahandmadegarden.com or follow [@gardenercook](https://www.instagram.com/gardenercook) on Instagram.



Muse No. 1

Look for an object in the garden – a small set of leaves (new or dried from last year), a bud and bloom, a stone, etc. Settle in with it, observe and try to draw out 9 colors from the object. If you have them, use watercolors or pencils to mix the 9 color palette. If you don't have paints, think about photographs, words, or other ways to articulate what you see. Feel free to take a photo and share on social media using the hashtag #gardenmusings.



Oh sky, so open
Say lake, saving your sweet light
Blue beams up at blue

Muse No. 2

Find a space where you like to sit (outside or with an outside view). Make some notes (eg. a list, descriptions, etc) on the range of colors in your view. What color feels the most dominant? Is there a poem emerging from your notes and lists? Need ideas? Check out this poem, [*Colors passing through us*](#), by Marge Piercy. Or take a look at [these examples](#) for some ideas on writing color poems with kids. Share your musings with #gardenmusings!



Muse No. 3

Collect several (more than 3) objects that are close to the same color. Arrange them and take a photo; or do a quick sketch of the objects. Share your musings with #gardenmusings!

Coming Up Next Week!

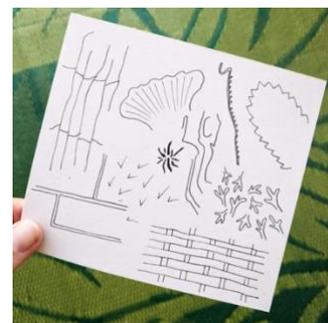
Join us for our first Garden Musings Conversation – Wednesday, May 6th from 12:00 – 1:00 PM (Mountain Standard Time)

Join the Santa Fe Botanical Garden Education staff for lively conversation to share our experiences with the Garden Musings Project. Each conversation features a moderated discussion with an invited guest, artists, educators, scientists, writers, to discuss their practices from which the Garden Musings Project draws inspiration. Our May 6th discussion will focus on the color themed garden musings. Participants are encouraged to share their own practices and observations from their gardens, backyards, and favorite nature spaces.

This conversation will take place via the Video Conferencing app Zoom. Click [here](#) to join the meeting.

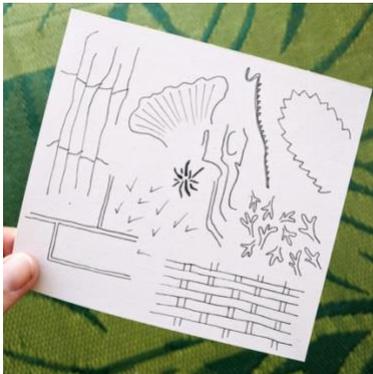
Musing on Lines: We're drawing inspiration from influential environmental thinker Dr. Donella Meadows. From her poem "Lines in the Mind, Not in the World" we're thinking more deeply about the lines around us: where we find them, what they divide (or not), how they change. You can find the full text of the poem at the [Donella Meadows Project](#).

We'll share a few of our favorite lines from the poem in each of the following line muses for the week of May 4 - 10.



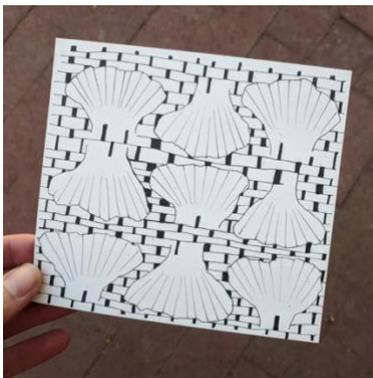
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Musing on Lines: The next three musings are about lines. We're drawing inspiration from influential environmental thinker Dr. Donella Meadows. From her poem *Lines in the Mind, Not in the World* we're thinking more deeply about the lines around us: where we find them, what they divide (or not), how they change. You can find the full text of the poem at the Donella Meadows Project ["Lines in the Mind, Not in the World"](#). We'll share a few of our favorite lines from the poem in each of the following line muses.



Muse No. 4

From Donella Meadows: "The earth was formed whole and continuous in the universe, without lines. The human mind arose in the universe needing lines, boundaries, distinctions. Here and not there. This and not that. Mine and not yours." In your outdoor space create a collection of lines (drawings, photos, a written list). What lines do you see? Are they straight, wiggly, short or long? Are they edges, borders, interiors or ... Share your line collection with us #gardenmusings



Muse No. 5

From Donella Meadows: "...ideas are not stopped by the lines. How could they be? The lines are themselves only ideas." Look back to your collection of lines- or make a new collection! Quickly sketch your different lines if you have not already. Sort your collection into groups based on your line's similarities and differences. What groupings do you see? (human made, nature made, long, short, wiggly, straight, etc...) Choose a group of lines and make a design. Share your drawing with us #gardenmusings



Muse No. 6

From Donella Meadows: "Between me and not-me there is surely a line, a clear distinction, or so it seems. But, now that I look, where is that line?" Take 5/10/15 minutes and just write (about the lines that you see, the lines that your feel ...). Share with us #gardenmusings

Coming Up Next Week!

Musing on Spring: Spring is the perfect time to start observing and recording the timing of seasonal change events in your backyard or neighborhood. At Santa Fe Botanical Garden, we partner with the Rio Grande Phenology Trail to track the timing of seasonal changes in a number of plant species. Volunteers keep weekly data and share with the RG phenology network, and the larger National Phenology Network. What signs of seasonal change are you seeing this week - flower buds? buds bursting? new leaves? leaves increasing in size? eggs? larvae?



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Muse No. 7

Spring is in full force! Help us celebrate the citizen science volunteers who monitor phenology with SFBG. Monitoring seasonal change is the perfect way to fuse your garden observation practice with data collection. What to do: find signs of seasonal change in your garden. Make a notation of the location, date, and the conditions of the day. Take photos of three spring phenophases (observable stages in the lifecycle of your plant). Do you see breaking leaf buds, leaves increasing in size, flower buds, open flowers? Learn more about phenology monitoring at @usa_npn, #gardenmusings



Muse No. 8

With phenology monitoring we visit the same sites for each series of observations. For this musing, return to your Muse 7 object and make note of the differences from your first observations (record the date and the conditions of the day). As an observation exercise, try a blind contour drawing. Slowly follow the edge of the plant with your eye. Now place your pencil/pen on the paper and move your hand slowly with your eye as you follow the edge of the plant again. Don't look at the paper while you're drawing- it's hard! This exercise trains your hand to move in the same way your eye is moving. Share your signs of spring with us! #gardenmusings, #santafebotanicalgarden



Muse No. 9

Return to your spring observation object (. Make a record of the date and conditions of the day. What changes do you notice from your earlier observations (maybe look back at your records)? Make a color palette or a line collection (see Muses 1 & 4 for instructions). Share your musings on spring with us! #gardenmusings, #santafebotanicalgarden

Coming Up Next Week!

Garden Musing Conversation: Join us on Wednesday, May 27 @ 12:00 pm. We'll be talking about our Musings on Spring and the Rio Grande Phenology Trail project on Zoom. [Log in here>](#)

Monday June 1: Garden Musings 10 -13 will be on repetition. **Stay tuned!**

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Musing on Interactions: What a time in the world to be thinking about interaction. Musings on interaction may help us to think about, or perhaps briefly escape our thoughts about the social transformations in which we are in the midst. Like the other Garden Musings themes, interaction allows us to look at singular elements, or layers of relationships. For example, we can look, think, and create around a biological interaction - what forms of symbiosis do you observe in your nature space? We can do the same around ecological interactions by observing what's happening between living and non-living components in your space. We can think about social interactions in your nature space. We can think about this moment right now, or the history of your nature space, or even it's future - with questions like what has happened here, what's happening now, what may happen here next? We can think about all of these interactions laden with politics, interests, power - can you play with these ideas through biological interactions? Can you think about the social interactions as ecological? This series of musings provoke observations about art and ecological interaction.



Muse No. 10

Interspecies Interaction: What kinds of relationships have you developed across species in your yard or nature space during your garden musings. Take a few moments outside in your space to write about the interactions you've had with animals around you. What has changed about your relationship to the other species as you've spent more time intentionally noticing what's going on in your yard. Is it a new - found appreciation for the diversity of bird song, is it an antagonistic relationship with the miller moths? Write about an aspect of your interspecies interactions each day? Post and share your musings with us, #santafebotanicalgarden, #gardenmusings



Muse No. 11

Visual Interaction: How do the elements (sun, rain, wind) interact with and change the world around us? Find a collection of natural objects and make a sculpture that integrates with your outdoor surroundings. Need some inspiration? Take a look at the work of Andy Goldsworthy. Check in on your creation every day, and document how it changes, what's driving the change? Post and share your musings with us, #santafebotanicalgarden, #gardenmusings



Muse No. 12

How can we bring a broader social awareness to our nature spaces, and in what ways does this process of social interaction make seemingly invisible nature more visible? For this musing search out some plants that may go unnoticed on an ordinary day. Use some sidewalk chalk, or create a sign that draws attention to these overlooked bits of nature. Maybe it's a plant growing through the cracks in your sidewalk, wall, or road, or a tree that you walk under everyday. Take the week to observe changes in the way people interact with your public art and the nature that it highlights.

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