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When the world gets too big and too loud and too busy, I like to look at little pieces of it, one at a time. I put them in a quiet place, like museums do. Sometimes the quiet place is just in my mind. An imaginary museum.

But I think I could make a real one.

Maybe it would be called the Museum of Things

I Wonder About. Because I have a lot of those.





I wonder about things like, can a rock in a puddle be an island?

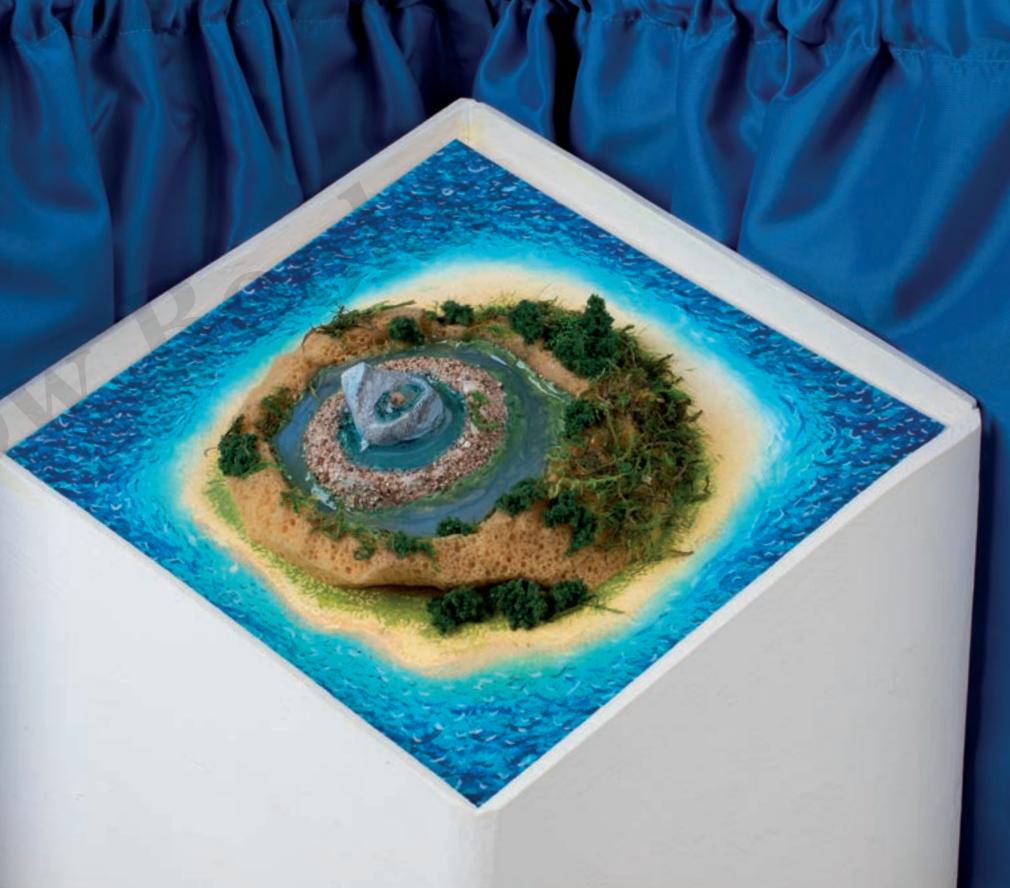
And think about if the rock in the puddle is on a boulder in a pond.

And what if that pond is on a small island in a lake?

And what if that lake is on a bigger island, out in the ocean?

It would be an island in a pond on an island in a pond on an island in a pond on an island in a pond.

My museum will have a model of this.



I might make a whole Museum of Islands, because there are so many different kinds. And all different sizes. Some islands only have room for one person at a time.

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Other islands are so big, you can't see all of the edges, even from the top of a very high hill.

I wonder if anyone has ever made a skirt that looks like a bush in springtime, because I want to. I want to wear one.

There will be a whole roomful of bushskirts in my Museum of Bushes. Everyone can try them on, and twirl.



There will be real bushes, too. There will be wild bushes and tame ones, plain bushes and fancy ones.

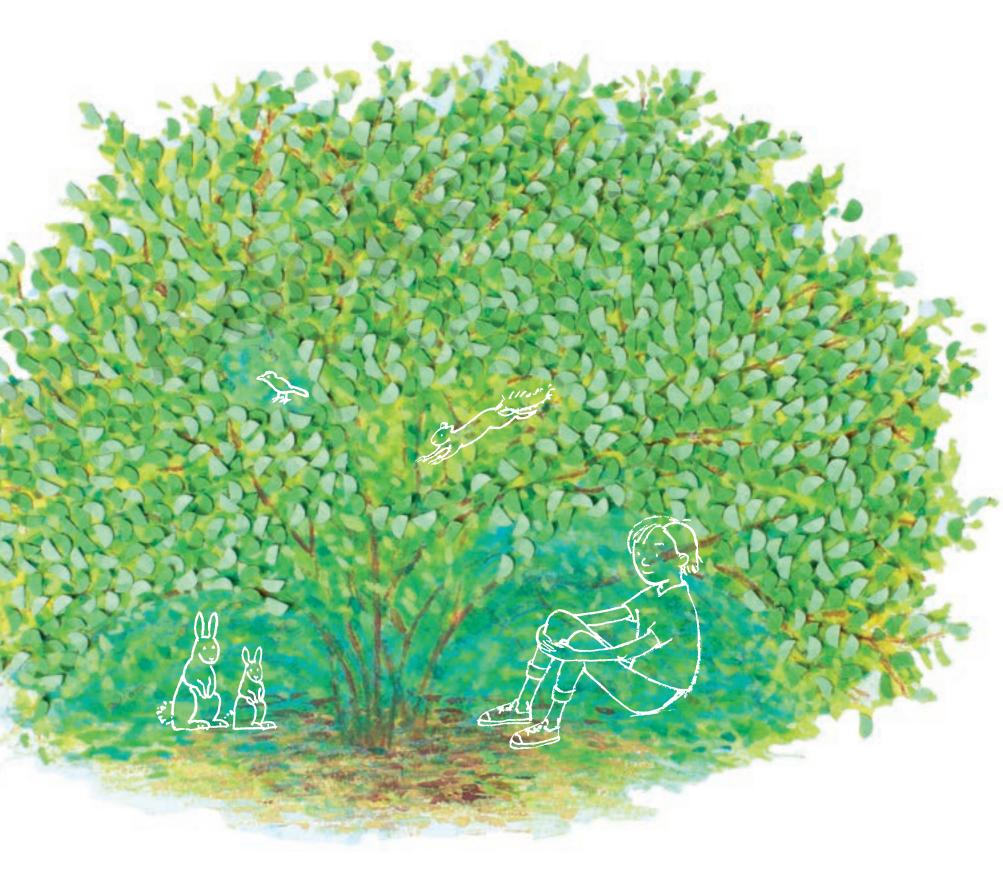
Maybe even some experimental, science fiction-type bushes. I like them all.

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There is a bush that, every time I see it, I think, that would be a good hiding place. For birds and little animals, but even for a person. I will have some of these bushes, for people to hide out in.

But maybe the hiding-place bush should be in a Museum of Hiding Places.



What if you walked right into a Museum of Hiding Places, and you didn't even know it? What if we're in one right now, and we can't even tell?

Look around . . . look in the shadows . . .

I might make a whole museum just of shadows.



It will have all of the usual kinds.

All of the kinds you would expect. But also some kinds you don't expect.



When snow falls on a car, and then the car drives away, the car shape that didn't get snowed on could be a kind of shadow.



Or when a leaf, warmed by sunlight, melts a perfect leaf-shaped hole in the snow. A shadow of melting.

A shadow could be made of blossoms that fell from their tree overnight.



There is a place between streetlights where the shadow from behind you disappears, and the shadow from in front of you hasn't started yet. Is it a place with no shadows?





Or is it a place with 100 percent shadows?



The Sky Museum is already there. It's on a hilltop. Or on the roof of a building. Or anywhere, really. It's open all the time. It's different every day. Usually there are birds, and sometimes airplanes.

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n cloudy days, the sky reminds me of the page of a huge, giant book. The first page might be woolly and gray, but if you turn it over . . .



the other side of it is fluffy and sunlit.

There might be a wispy page, delicate like lace.

Then of a page of the bluest blue.

And then the pages of the whole universe. A bunch of them, with stories of the stars and the planets. And spaceships.



One day at the Sky Museum, a feather floated down and landed on my nose: a free souvenir. I took it home and put it on my windowsill between my very small island and a couple of shadows and some other stuff that I have.

It's a real museum, a Museum of Little Things. I like to sit and look at them, one at a time and all together.

And then I go back outside, where it's busy, and big, and sometimes kind of noisy. Because sometimes I love that.



I walk right into the jumble. I see the little pieces of the world all fitting together, like the biggest puzzle ever. Like the notes in a song.

Like the Museum of Everything.



If you like to be in a quiet place sometimes (even if it's only in your mind), or if there is a lot that you wonder about, or if you like to make things, I made this book for you.

So many thanks to Michael Poehlman, our wonderful photographer!

The art in this book is made of watercolor on (Arches® 300lb cold press) watercolor paper, sometimes cut and/or folded, along with sand, stones, twigs, wood, moss, wool, foamcore board, fabric, embroidery thread, modeling clay, lights, and many, many odds and ends. It was the most fun ever. More info at www.lynnerae.com.

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