

## Bloody scratches, treasure hunting, nature inspiration of NW art exhibit



Untitled, Anne Allen  
Alice Hale/The Collegian

*Skin Games*, Anne Allen's collection of drawings inspired by geocaching, is on display in NW's Lakeview Gallery until Feb. 16.

The drawings were mainly inspired by the treasure-hunting exploits of Allen's close friend, but Allen said she drew inspiration from several sources.

The scratches and cuts Allen's friend sustained while geocaching were the main inspiration behind *Skin Games*.

Geocaching is a worldwide treasure hunting game in which players find and hide "treasures," called caches, for each other to find.

The drawings, which use red ink, color pencil and watercolors on vellum, mimic bloody scratches on skin. Each drawing is named after a different place either Allen or her friend has gone geocaching.

“They’re meant to be fun,” she said, “They’re celebratory. They’re not gross or macabre. When you find a tough cache and you get scratched up in the process, it’s like a badge of honor.

“You’re successful, and you get torn up on the way, and that’s how you know you did it right.”

She said her idea for the collection began when she took photos of bare vines on a wall during winter.

Allen said the photos inspired the first drawing in the collection, which uses gold ink instead of red.

“I have been doing two-dimensional work for the last 12 years,” she said “I’m very interested in patterns. I had been doing a lot of work with doilies, hairnets, a little bit of lace. Once I got away from patterns and focused more and more on the organic, it led me back to those photos of those vines. I’m exploring the beauty in those random patterns.”

— RHIANNON SAEGERT